Concerned Citizen and Local Nonprofit team up to Establish GoFundMe for Calvert Residents Affected by COVID-19

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PRINCE FREDERICK, Md. – May 5, 2020 – Calvert resident, Andrew Ellison, will soon go on active duty with the Air National Guard. With just weeks to go before his departure, Andrew wanted to help those in his community who have become unemployed due to COVID-19. Andrew reached out to Calvert Family Advocates, a local nonprofit that operates under the umbrella of the Maryland Association of Social Services Boards (MASSB) Foundation, with the idea of establishing a GoFundMe to raise $25,000 to benefit impacted Calvert residents. Calvert Family Advocates helps struggling families with expenses such as rent, mortgages, utilities, car repairs, medical bills, and job training. The nonprofit is expecting a significant rise in the number of Calvert families needing assistance this year.

“These are unprecedented times,” said Ellison. “We’re all trying to navigate COVID-19 and assimilate to a new normal. Stimulus checks are coming, but for some they may arrive too late. Individuals and families will continue to face mounting debt when payment deferrals and moratoriums end. We’re all one community. The goal of GoFundMe is to tap into local resources and generate an additional income source for those most in need so we can minimize the financial stressors Calvert residents are facing.”

Anyone interested in helping local families impacted by COVID-19 may make a donation at www.gofundme.com/f/calvertcounty. GoFundMe has no platform fees; however, there is a standard transaction fee per donation of 2.9% + $0.30. Receipts will be provided from PayPal Giving Fund. Donations are tax deductible and because Calvert Family Advocates is an all-volunteer organization, all donations received will be directed to families in need.

“ Everywhere we can see businesses that are shuttered or trying to stay afloat with a skeleton staff,” said Calvert Family Advocates Chair, Karen Lane. “We are fortunate to have a robust network of food pantries and a proactive school system that have been providing meals, but even they have been overwhelmed by the need. At Calvert Family Advocates, we are looking ahead to the next phase when the moratorium on evictions and utilities shut-offs ends and families with depleted savings accounts are faced with mounting bills. We expect to see a surge in applications for help, including from people who have never asked for help before, and don’t know how to navigate the social services system.”

Calvert Family Advocates will use established processes to distribute contributions to Calvert County residents who have lost income or jobs due to COVID-19 and seek assistance from the Calvert County Department of Social Services (Calvert DSS) at (443) 550-6900. Applications will be vetted by Calvert DSS prior to distribution of funds.

“According to the Maryland Department of Labor website, more than 5,000 unemployment claims have been filed in Calvert County,” said Lane “Calvert Family Advocates’ funds are used to build the bridge to independence. Now, more than ever, Calvert families need a bridge.” In addition to GoFundMe, donations may be made by check payable to MASSB Foundation, and mailed to P.O. Box 1861, Prince Frederick, MD 20678.