



Contacts:

David Little, executive vice president, communications. Email: dlittle@nvcf.org, 530-891-1150, ext. 300.

Ashiah Scharaga, marketing and communications director, True North Housing Alliance, ashiah@truenorthbutte.org, 530-209-5427

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Feb. 1, 2022

The Torres Community Shelter's urgent request for help dealing with a surge in COVID-19 cases has been quickly answered by the North Valley Community Foundation and Feather River Health Foundation.

True North Housing Alliance, which operates the Torres Shelter, announced last week it needs to raise more than \$30,000 to purchase insulated tents, a mobile shower and portable toilets to isolate those who test positive at the shelter. NVCF was able to stitch together the funding rapidly.

An anonymous community member with a donor-advised fund at NVCF donated \$10,000. Feather River Health Foundation, which has partnered with NVCF on many coronavirus response grants, also contributed \$10,000. NVCF fulfilled the rest of the request with a \$11,858 grant from its COVID-19 Rapid Response Fund.

"This is a well-conceived and vital plan that will help slow the spread both in the Torres Shelter and in our community," said Alexa Benson-Valavanis, NVCF president and CEO. "We are fortunate as a community that the Torres Shelter is there to serve people experiencing homelessness. People who test positive still need a place to stay. This will help keep those people isolated, warm and safe."

The Torres Shelter, like all of Butte County, saw positive cases rise in January. Taylor Storey, executive director of True North Housing Alliance, which operates the shelter, said the number of positive cases went from three to 30 in less than a week. Fourteen staff members and 50 guests tested positive in January.

Those guests needed to be safely isolated from the larger shelter population. They had to sleep outside in makeshift shelters of tents and tarps with propane heaters. The shelter also limited new intakes during the surge.

The new grant funding will allow the Torres Shelter to purchase 20 new insulated tents that are actually large ice fishing shelters. The shelter will also buy cots, bedding, lanterns and tarps for each tent. The tents will be set up on shelter property near the main building.

"True North Housing Alliance is overwhelmed and humbled by this generous gift from North Valley Community Foundation and Feather River Health Foundation," said Storey. "This donation will help us meet our goal to create a humane and dignified isolation space for guests at our Torres Community Shelter who become ill as we continue to work closely with our community partners to respond to this pandemic. This will allow the folks we serve to remain in a supportive environment while they recover, while also keeping the other guests in our congregate shelter setting safe and healthy. We are so grateful for the community support that made this project a reality so quickly."

NVCF has granted more than \$3 million for coronavirus response in less than two years. The NVCF Rapid Response Fund has been used to provide food; help with distance learning for students; face shields for health care workers in Butte, Glenn, Tehama and Colusa counties; face masks; cleaning supplies; support for domestic violence programs; and much more.