



November 20, 2020

Dear Friends of UCP Heartland:

I hope everyone is well, healthy, safe, and in good spirits. As we all approach the holiday season in the year 2020, it is my hope that we can focus on the blessings we have encountered amidst an unprecedented time of crisis, fear, loss, restriction, isolation and sadness. I strongly believe we will come out better on the other side, but no doubt it is a struggle getting there.

I wholeheartedly believe it is important to be real and not to mince words in a time like we have lived in the past 8 months. If you and/or your family have been impacted on a personal level through this difficult time, our thoughts are with you. No doubt, COVID-19 has affected all of us and I could not have imagined when I started my journey with UCP Heartland in late January, 10 months later I would be typing this letter in the middle of a global pandemic. But here we are and yes this crisis has caused significant challenges to UCP Heartland and the upcoming season of giving is vital for the organization. We had to pivot and cancel a building purchase and expansion in south St. Louis County. We had to suspend 75% of services in March and even though we worked extremely hard to get 100% of services operating again, health concerns and restrictions have kept us from directly supporting everyone we would like to. We have experienced a \$1 million loss in revenue from client services at the same time have seen an increase of \$50k in health and safety supplies in order to keep clients and staff safe. We have had to make tough decisions to become more efficient with our resources and consolidate administrative offices off Manchester into the new Community Services North location on LaGuardia in Berkely, MO.

But through this difficult journey and decisions, I have witnessed and watched amazing people selflessly step up and meet the incredible needs of the people and families we support. A family of a young man we serve amongst the struggle of the pandemic, lost their entire house to a fire. Our Services Navigator team without hesitation, made sure the family had a safe place to reside and obtained funding to replace the accessible and communication equipment their son needed that was destroyed in the fire. Dozens of our direct care staff immediately said yes to working back to back shifts, day after day to care for individuals that tested positive for the COVID-19 virus and needed to isolate and have extraordinary care. I have watched a group of passionate employment staff work side by side with clients that lost their job due to the pandemic but never gave up and ended up gaining another successful job. I have watched a group of leadership staff work hundreds of hours in residential homes because of staffing issues experienced during the pandemic. I have watched employees grocery shop and deliver food to residential homes in the community in order to keep the staff and clients healthy and safe. I have watched our employees follow strict protocols and go the extra mile to make sure all our program and service areas are safe in order to support people that have called upon us during this time. I have listened to phone conversations between our staff and families checking in, making sure they are doing well, and ask how can UCP Heartland be of assistance. I have watched our leaders, Board of Directors, administrative staff, nurses, and maintenance staff, all of whom have pitched in to keep the operations of UCP Heartland moving forward.

Our community has also stepped up during this time and as we approach the end of 2020, your support to UCP Heartland is more important than ever. Here are a few things to consider as we approach this important season:

- Give unrestricted general operating support dollars as these are needed the most.
- Give online and utilize social media and your circle of influence to encourage others to give.
- Make a multi-year pledge to help build sustainability and have a consistent flow of cash for the future.
- Give even if you are concerned about the volatility in the stock market and the impact on your investment portfolio. Just as we have seen, the stock market can and will survive difficult times.
- Most importantly, become engaged and be a vocal advocate for UCP Heartland and the entire not for profit sector.

I know I have not had a chance to meet many of you but I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart. UCP Heartland Strong is a message you will see over the next couple months. I am optimistic about the future but there is still work to be done and our strength comes from all of you, our community.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or would like to know how you can support UCP Heartland.

With mission in mind,

Clint Bolser, CEO