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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****REDF Awards \$250K in Front Line Matching Grants to Social Enterprises Providing Essential Services During COVID-19**

*Matching grants will support five businesses that have pivoted to retain employees and serve on the frontlines of the pandemic*

**SAN FRANCISCO** (May 19, 2020) – REDF has awarded \$250,000 in grants to five social enterprise businesses that have pivoted to offer essential services and support frontline workers during the pandemic. The \$50,000 general operating grants will be matched by the social enterprise business' own fundraising efforts to double the impact of this investment. All grants will also be paired with technical assistance to support social enterprise leaders through these business transitions.

“Social enterprises across the country are standing out among businesses with their timely pivots to serve local communities. These five grantees are great examples of the resiliency and agility of the sector,” said REDF President and CEO Carla Javits. “The employment, training, and services that social enterprises provide are vital to communities and will become even more important as the country recovers from COVID-19. This funding is part of REDF’s commitment to ensuring the sector can continue to meet that demand.”

The following social enterprises were awarded grants for their work:

- **[Empowerment Plan \(Detroit, MI\)](#)** – The Empowerment Plan, a sewing factory that hires women who have experienced homelessness, shifted from manufacturing coats that transform into sleeping bags to sewing personal protective equipment (PPE), including thousands of isolation gowns, for healthcare workers in Michigan.
- **[Farestart \(Seattle, WA\)](#)** – Farestart, which employs individuals overcoming barriers to employment through its restaurants and catering business, has repurposed its kitchen to produce over 9,000 meals daily to over 70 organizations, including quarantine shelters and public schools. To date, Farestart has provided 330,00 meals.
- **[Osborne Social Ventures \(New York, NY\)](#)** – Osborne Social Ventures, a janitorial social enterprise employing individuals who have been in the criminal justice system, is serving on the frontlines at the request of the City of New York by providing COVID-prevention sanitation and janitorial work.
- **[The Town Kitchen \(Oakland, CA\)](#)** – Town Kitchen, a catering business that employs opportunity youth, launched TK Provisions at the beginning of shelter-in-place orders to provide contactless grocery delivery and prepared meals directly to consumers.
- **[Valeo Vocation \(Seattle, WA\)](#)** – Valeo Vocation, a staffing employment social enterprise that employs individuals who have experienced homelessness, has developed new contracts with local public health agencies, homeless shelters, and meal delivery programs.

In addition to these Front Line Matching Grants, REDF has awarded [\\$450,000 in COVID-19 Relief Grants](#) and partnered with the County of Los Angeles to award [\\$500,000 in Employer Assistance Grants](#). Collectively, these grants have supported 74 social enterprises and small businesses across the country.

To learn more about how REDF is supporting our partners during this crisis, [click here](#).

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## **ABOUT REDF**

REDF (the Roberts Enterprise Development Fund) is a pioneering venture philanthropy accelerating a national movement of employment social enterprises – revenue-generating businesses that invest the money they make into helping people striving to overcome employment barriers get jobs, keep jobs, and build a better life. Independent research shows this approach works. It leads to greater economic security and mobility and a significant rate of return to society—\$2.23 in benefits for every \$1 invested.

For more information, visit [www.redf.org](http://www.redf.org).