About the Fund

In the winter of 2018–2019, the federal government shut down for a record 35 days, causing financial strain and crisis for many Alexandria families. ACT for Alexandria quickly created the ACT Now Fund to support nonprofit organizations responding to this unanticipated crisis and the increased demand for services and financial support. With donations from ACT, the City of Alexandria, Virginia Theological Seminary and other generous donors, the Fund provided $57,344 to eight organizations supporting local individuals and families.

Beneficiaries

Families and individuals directly or indirectly impacted by the partial shutdown received critical support from the ACT Now Fund partners. Recipients included:

- Individuals working in industries being underutilized because of the shutdown, such as retail, hospitality, ride-sharing, food service, construction, housecleaning and child care
- Government contractors
- Furloughed federal employees
- Individuals living in residential facilities that receive government funds

“I applaud the creation of the ACT Now Fund. Since its founding in 2004, vulnerable communities in Alexandria have been able to count on ACT when they need it the most — and this shutdown is no exception.”

— U.S. Sen. Mark R. Warner of Virginia
Lessons Learned

The ACT Now Fund exemplified ACT’s ability to quickly support community members in need. The Fund established a formula for emergency funding that can be activated if and when the next crisis hits the Alexandria community. Feedback from participating organizations was overwhelmingly positive:

- Funds were made available quickly.
- The grant process was efficient.
- Application was simple and direct.
- Community providers coordinated with each other throughout the process.
- Some providers were able to expand their hours of operation, the number of clients served and the number of volunteers working with them.

How To Get Involved

ACT for Alexandria donors were critical to the success of the ACT Now Fund. To learn more about ACT and how you can get involved, visit www.actforalexandria.org.

Partners

Grants were awarded to the following recipients during the shutdown: ALIVE!, Christ Church Lazarus, Christ Church Refugee Ministry, Friends of Guest House, Old Presbyterian Meeting House, St. Paul’s Lazarus, St. Vincent de Paul and West End Lazarus.

The quick and direct application process enabled these local organizations to help more than 200 individuals and families pay for rent, utilities, medical needs, food and other essential living expenses.