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Anonymous Donor Helps Renton RFA Reach More Community Members in Need

[Renton, WA – November 21, 2022] Renton Regional Fire Authority (Renton RFA) has received a generous, anonymous donation to help provide thorough care to the most vulnerable members of the Renton community through the FD CARES Program. The donation has enabled the organization to partner with the Renton Regional Community Foundation to establish the Renton Regional Fire Authority FD CARES Fund.

Establishing the Renton RFA FD CARES Fund is an exciting development for the organization, as partnering with the Renton Regional Community Foundation allows for the establishment of an official 501c3 charitable fund. As a result, the organization can now collect donations that go directly toward providing aid to vulnerable members of the Renton community. In addition, it allows donors to qualify for charitable tax deductions —a win-win for the Renton community as a whole.

WHAT IS FD CARES?

The Renton RFA FD CARES Program is specially designed to provide aid to low-acuity patients. A patient is considered low acuity when their 9-1-1 call is important, but not an emergency. A good example of a common, low-acuity call would be a slip and fall incident, where a community member has fallen and is not critically injured but does need assistance getting up. The FD CARES program takes the assistance for these patients one step further.

It is presently staffed by a licensed nurse and a dedicated firefighter/EMT. This specialized team can operate out of a smaller apparatus, outfitted with gear that is specialized for these call types, and spend more time thoroughly reviewing the patient's immediate needs, as well as their long-term needs, to develop a care plan that ultimately removes the patient's reliance on the 9-1-1 system altogether. This frees up 9-1-1 operators and firefighters to focus on critical, emergency calls, and it also provides low-acuity patients with long-term solutions that improve their overall quality of life and independence.

Unlike a traditional 9-1-1 incident, the FD CARES team is empowered to make pro-active patient visits, as well as follow-up visits. This key difference between FD CARES services and traditional emergency response services helps ensure that patients are following their care plan and that the care plan is continuing to work for them.

As of January 1, 2023, the FD CARES team will shift to being staffed by a licensed nurse and a social worker. Over the life of the program, data has been collected that indicates that this new staffing model will create a more effective resource to meet the needs of community members, creating a direct link between patients, their long-term care needs, and the various programs available to help them live their best quality of life.

WHAT DOES THE FD CARES FUND SUPPORT?

While Renton RFA, in partnership with other local agencies, funds the staffing and apparatus for the FD CARES program, the unique equipment and resource needs of every patient vary wildly and can be very costly. The fund will focus on providing specialized lift equipment for bariatric patients, which is vital for the safety of both patients and staff. It will also focus on providing patients with durable medical equipment (DME) such as wheelchairs, walkers, toilet seat bars, grab bars, and transfer chairs, which enable patients to live more safely and

independently.

It's important to know that the types of patients FD CARES helps most often are as varied as the care they need. The most common FD CARES patients include the elderly, those with disabilities, those struggling with mental health issues, and those dealing with drug or alcohol addiction. This program meets people where they are, and as a result, the fund will also help provide them with the necessities they need to be safe and healthy, including items such as clean socks and underwear, shoes, coats, blankets, and basic hygiene products.

“We have such a generous and warm-hearted community. People throughout the Renton community consistently ask us how they can help those in need through our organization. We are so incredibly grateful to the anonymous donor who made the Renton Regional Fire Authority FD CARES Fund possible. Their kindness and generosity have enabled us to connect with our caring community in a way that we simply couldn't have without their support. Now, so many more vulnerable people will gain access to the tools and resources they need to live happy, healthy lives in our community. This donation and this fund embody the vision of Renton RFA: Making our community safer, healthier, and stronger.” – Fire Chief Steve Heitman

Renton RFA is excited to announce the launch of the Renton Regional Fire Authority FD CARES Fund and encourages anyone who is interested in participating in the fund to do so at: www.rentonrfa.com/fdcaresdono. Please note this link will automatically redirect visitors to the Renton Regional Community Foundation page for the Renton RFA FD CARES Fund.

About Renton Regional Fire Authority

Renton Regional Fire Authority serves the communities of Renton, Fire District 25, and Fire District 40. With a coverage area of 33.29 miles, Renton RFA provides fire and life safety services to over 135,000 community members (as of 2021). The Renton RFA team abides by the guiding principles of professionalism, integrity, leadership, accountability, and respect, and continually works to build an organization that reflects the unique diversity of the Renton community. Learn more at www.RentonRFA.org or call 425-276-9500.

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