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Pew Awards \$5.41 Million to Five Philadelphia Nonprofits to Address Human, Economic Impacts of COVID-19

Support includes first-ever 'growth grant' to Benefits Data Trust, plus pandemic recovery assistance for Visit Philadelphia and Philadelphia Zoo

PHILADELPHIA—The Pew Charitable Trusts announced today that it has awarded a total of \$5.41 million in grants to five Philadelphia nonprofits to address COVID-19's health and economic impacts. Together, these awards are intended to help Philadelphia recover by advancing new or expanded strategies to meet changing community needs as well as the operational challenges brought on by the pandemic.

- [Benefits Data Trust](#) (BDT) has been awarded the Pew Fund for Health and Human Services' first-ever [growth grant](#), totaling \$4 million over five years, to help the organization significantly expand its capacity to connect low-income Philadelphia-area residents with public benefit programs. As Philadelphians grapple with job losses, illness, and other pandemic-related challenges, the demand for assistance in obtaining food, tax and rent rebates, home energy subsidies, health coverage, and other critical benefits has grown substantially. Pew's growth grants are large, flexible, long-term investments designed to strengthen an organization's capabilities so it can grow its services and enhance their effectiveness. This support will enable BDT to develop a strategy to double enrollments of Philadelphians in benefit programs so that more people are able to put food on their tables, stay safely in their homes, and access care for themselves and their children.
- [Boys & Girls Clubs of Philadelphia](#) has received a Pew Fund [venture grant](#) of \$250,000 over two years to provide full-day academic support and enrichment to public school students in under-resourced neighborhoods while they participate in virtual learning. Once in-person classes resume, the funding will be used for out-of-school-time support. Venture grants are designed to fill an underserved population's service gap or emerging need.
- [Puentes de Salud](#) has received a Pew Fund venture grant of \$160,000 over two years to help meet the health needs of the city's growing Latino immigrant communities—which already faced barriers to health care before the pandemic and have been disproportionately affected by the coronavirus and resulting economic downturn. The funding supports the increased use of telehealth technologies, standardized electronic health records, and patient-focused communications to ensure more accessible care for patients and better coordination among community-based providers.

- [Visit Philadelphia](#) has been awarded \$500,000 over two years, which will help the agency research and develop long-term marketing strategies designed to strengthen the region's tourism and hospitality sector. Pew's support will help Visit Philadelphia's ongoing efforts to celebrate and promote businesses owned by people of color, analyze industry data, and align with diverse stakeholders to develop a coordinated approach as it works to bring back local, regional, and other visitors to explore the Greater Philadelphia region.
- [The Philadelphia Zoo](#) has also been awarded \$500,000 over two years. The zoo has been hard hit financially during the pandemic due to revenue losses from periods of closure and reduced visitor capacity. Pew's support will allow the zoo to adjust its revenue model to better weather future challenges and to position it over time to boost visitation back to pre-pandemic levels once public health guidelines allow. Support will also make the zoo's resources more available to adjacent West Philadelphia communities—including expanding from one local elementary school to eight a curriculum-aligned science education program, paired with class visits to the zoo.

"For over 30 years, Pew has remained deeply committed to supporting Philadelphians' health and welfare as well as the overall civic and economic vitality of our region," said Frazierita Klasen, senior vice president leading Pew's work in Philadelphia. "Even as we begin to see light at the end of a difficult year, the region continues to struggle with the health and economic impacts of the pandemic. Pew is very pleased to reaffirm our commitment to helping Philadelphia and its residents navigate the longer-term consequences and move toward recovery."

Kristin Romens, project director of the Pew Fund for Health and Human Services, added that "COVID-19 has laid bare long-standing disparities in access to health care and education in Philadelphia and has intensified the need for public benefits. The Pew Fund is pleased to award its first-ever growth grant to Benefits Data Trust to support its critical role in the region's recovery, and new venture grants to Boys & Girls Clubs and Puentes de Salud to fill services gaps for individuals and communities most affected by the pandemic."

For more information on Pew's support for the Philadelphia region during the COVID-19 pandemic, including details on the Pew Fund's growth and venture grants, click [here](#).

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The Pew Charitable Trusts is committed to helping Philadelphia by informing discussion on important policy issues facing the city, encouraging a thriving arts and cultural community, supporting the health and welfare of the region's most vulnerable populations, and pursuing civic initiatives to strengthen the area's appeal to residents and visitors alike. Learn more at pewtrusts.org/Philadelphia.