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GUEST COLUMN: It's in solidarity that we will rise

Chris Reen, Tim Kranz and Tony Rosendo
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David McNeese

Today we celebrate GivingTuesday, a global movement meant to unleash the power of people and organizations in order to transform their communities and the world.

GivingTuesday has inspired hundreds of millions of people to do good through giving, collaborating, and celebrating generosity.

The spirit of giving is rooted in American society and is fundamental to sustaining our democracy and way of life.

There is enormous power in giving to others with no expectation of receiving anything in return.

It is the ultimate sign that collectively, we understand we are all human and are responsible in caring for each other.

When we give from the heart, it is a deeply meaningful experience. A single act of generosity that can transform cities, build communities and, most importantly, change lives for the better.

Collectively, we are grateful to see individuals, businesses and foundations step up every year, through campaigns that generate millions of dollars from a simple \$1, \$10, \$100 or \$1,000 gift.

The spirit of giving is the spark that motivates us – but this year, there is a sense of urgency.

Typically, thousands of families rely on the services provided by nonprofit organizations in our community. This year, the need is exacerbated by the pandemic.

Since the March onset of COVID-19, our community has been forever changed. The pandemic has stifled the economy, closed businesses, laid off workers, shuttered nonprofits, canceled longstanding events – and threatened the health of those we love.

Many in our community are hurting.

According to the Pikes Peak United Way's 211 Help Hotline, the demand for individuals and families seeking basic human services – rent and utility assistance, food, and health care – due to COVID-19 impacts remains steady and strong, and first-time user numbers continue to increase.

This GivingTuesday, we are asking more of you – we need you to lean in, step forward and stand up for our community.

Here are a few simple ideas to consider.

Add \$25 to your annual, year-end gift to your favorite nonprofit. That small act feeds a family for a week, provides transportation to a working Mom for one month or supplies annual flu shots to low income families.

The CARES Act is providing generous tax incentives for 2020 charitable giving to include high net worth donors, corporations and individuals who give more than \$300 by year end.

Please take those perks into consideration when writing a year-end check.

Support a new initiative in 2020. The Pikes Peak region has countless nonprofits that are focused on building a strong community — from health equity to social justice, open space to veterans. Give to a new organization this year.

And it is easy to make an impact with the help of these year-end community giving campaigns:

The Gazette Charities/El Pomar Foundation Empty Stocking Fund provides resources for local health and human service agencies in the Pikes Peak region on the front lines of helping people in crisis and assisting others in attaining self-sufficiency. Explore 20 partner agencies and donate at Emptystockingfundco.org/

Give! supports local nonprofits across a wide range of categories including health and safety, outdoor adventure, the arts, animals and more. The annual campaign also works to build the next generation of philanthropists through its Young Donor Challenge. Explore 78 participating nonprofits and donate to ones that speak to you at Indygive.com.

The Pikes Peak Community Foundation's COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund for El Paso and Teller counties provides grants to nonprofit organizations serving those who continue to struggle due to the far-ranging impact of the pandemic. Learn more or donate at PPCF.org.

We are not concerned about where you give, we are simply asking you to act, whether it is direct to nonprofits or through a community campaign above.

We believe in this community. Time and time again, you deliver.

Together, we overcome.

Chris Reen is President, Board of Directors, Gazette Charities. Tim Kranz is Chairman, Board of Directors, Give! Campaign. Tony Rosendo is Chairman, Board of Trustees, Pikes Peak Community Foundation.

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