March 23, 2020

Dear Learning Works Supporters!

Well...I did not think my Spring ask for funds would be in the context of the Coronavirus and what feels like madness in the world. Fears are high with health concerns, economic concerns, and personal finances. I had anticipated our normal outreach for help with Prom, Grad Night, graduation expenses... But no, the problems are much bigger than that.

My students were already poor. They are in broken homes, and many living with their grandparents—often their grandparent IS their caretaker. All of the elderly are at high risk to contract the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and possible death could be the unfortunate outcome. Given how fast things have been developing in this pandemic, my students have not even been given the opportunity to get educated and to protect themselves and others. If my students were living in trauma before, it just now got much worse. They might not be feeling it yet. However, our problem as a school is that in about 3 weeks when their families don’t have paychecks and the elderly are getting sick, we will have a problem. We need help!

We are not closing our doors. We will physically be available 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Monday to Friday with food and other necessities. Because, while everyone else is switching over to connecting through virtual platforms that do not require face to face instruction, my students do not all have access to technology and connectivity (Spectrum is offering free services to students but they wouldn’t get the information or know how to do it). Hence, Learning Works can not go to on-line curriculum like all the school districts. We are “OLD SCHOOL,” that means we use textbooks, projects, and do fieldtrips/experiences. We are in-person people, built on contact and relationships. We are a Safe Haven for students. We need your help in two ways:

- We have opened a pantry for pick-up and Chaser delivery. We need beans, rice, cereal, juice boxes, canned veggies and fruits, peanut butter, ramen, Cup O’Noodles, soap, feminine hygiene products, baby food and formula, diapers, and wipes. AND COME ON! Donate at least one roll of toilet paper, paper towels, Clorox wipes, and sanitizer. Give, share, and love please.

- We need money and gift cards. Our families are going to be in trouble on supplies and funds in an estimated 2-3 weeks. Our school does not know for sure if the State is going to pay us or not for lack of attendance at this point. I promise you...we are your best investment for two very different motives. If you care about the poor, we got them and are irrationally committed to them especially in these times
of need. If you care about the economy, my population is going to be a drain on the economy. The hospitality industry is getting hit. Most likely, my population has a bread winner in that industry which will no longer receive income. We have to help them!

On a good note, my staff is amazing… they’ve got this. A student walked onto the main campus all depressed at how the world has changed before his very eyes, and not being able to be at school every day—his home. His words were beautiful. “How is Jamal doing, I am really worried about him. He has no stable home or food source. I feel really bad for him and keep thinking about it.” This is a statement from a Latino student worried about an African American student…from different neighborhoods…from different worlds… both really poor. Nonetheless, he sees him as a human in this crisis. This is beautiful to me! This is why we are different, we create a way to have everyone see their brother and sister without difference… kinship. We are more than a school.

We belong to each other. We need you more than ever. Thank you in advance.

Love,

Mikala

Mikala Rahn
Founder/CEO

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**Dropouts Into Graduates**

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