

Good morning, everyone, and happy 2009!

We're only a few days into the New Year, and you've already managed to amaze me! We've been scrutinizing our donation roster for 2008, and it's clear that you came through for Modest Needs applicants like never before. Shortly, I'll send out a detailed update on the impact of your 2008 donations. But in the meantime, I have more fantastic news to report: a new grant type that can't come soon enough for people who've recently lost their jobs.

In light of the current economic crisis and the ever-increasing number of layoffs every month, we've just launched an exciting new "Bridge Grant." With it, we're inviting newly unemployed people to apply for short-term financial assistance as a way to ensure that they survive those very precarious first 90 days of joblessness.

Why did we create this new grant? For many, a month without income -- during a time when they're out looking for work or waiting for their unemployment benefits to kick in -- can have disastrous consequences. Imagine losing your car, your childcare, your electricity, or even your home, just as you're trying to find a new job. That's exactly the predicament we're trying to prevent with this new Bridge Grant. My hope is that, through a crucial few hundred dollars, we'll eliminate the paralyzing financial hurdles that could otherwise sabotage our applicants' job searches, and therefore their ability to get back onto their feet.

If you're like me, you probably know at least a handful of people who've been laid off recently. For months, in fact, I've been hearing from newly unemployed acquaintances and friends alike, people who've always been financially responsible, who now have fear and uncertainty in their voices. The truth is, I've been mulling over the idea of this Bridge Grant for a while now.

Historically, Modest Needs has always required our applicants to demonstrate their financial self-sufficiency before we approved their applications. We go to great lengths, in fact, to confirm that our applicants are fully prepared to support themselves once their emergency expense is paid off. But as I listened to more and more jobseekers describe the uncertain, anxiety-filled first days of unemployment, I began to realize that this period represents a short-term emergency not unlike the others we deal with -- a time when a few hundred dollars can mean the difference between securing your livelihood and falling through the cracks. And actually, it was an exceptionally moving email from one applicant in particular that inspired me to get this Bridge Grant into motion as soon as humanly possible.

It wasn't easy, but I'm so extremely proud to tell you that we're now accepting applications for Bridge Grants. With your help, we'll give newly unemployed individuals and their families the little boost they need to start seeing paychecks flow in again.

For anyone interested in applying, we offer full eligibility details on the Bridge Grant on our website at <http://www.modestneeds.org/help/grants/bridge.asp>. And, as always, if you'd like to contribute toward applicants in this difficult situation, we welcome any amount of donation at <http://www.modestneeds.org/donation/>.

As you all know, the holiday season represents our most popular time for charitable giving. But January and February promise to be some of the toughest months on record for low-income families facing job loss, illness, and other unexpected crises. During this time, any contribution

you might be able to afford will be greatly appreciated. I'd also love to enlist your help to spread the word about Bridge Grants to individuals in need. The more people who know about this Bridge Grant, the more families we'll ultimately be able to assist.

So thank you again for reading. Here's hoping we can make a real difference for out-of-work individuals as we keep rolling into 2009.

And with that, I wish you all a safe and happy start to the New Year!

My very best,

Dr. Keith P. Taylor
Chief Executive Officer
Modest Needs Foundation
<http://www.modestneeds.org>
'Small Change: A World of Difference'
(212) 463-7042

=====
If you believe in the power of human kindness to change lives, please consider making a tax-deductible contribution to Modest Needs.

You can make an instant, secure contribution of ANY size in 60 seconds or less by visiting <https://www.modestneeds.org/donation/online>

Remember, the work we do at Modest Needs is funded exclusively through the generosity of persons just like you. Without your support, this work would not be possible.

=====
If you're in need of short-term financial assistance, please visit <http://www.modestneeds.org/help> to request assistance from Modest Needs.

We'll do everything we can to help you in your time of crisis.

=====
All contents (C) Modest Needs Foundation.
<http://www.modestneeds.org>
"Small Change: A World of Difference"
All Rights Reserved