We have come a long way – and the work continues as we heal from COVID-19’s unprecedented burden. “Now more than ever, residents and workers need local government to support them,” Commissioner Pries said. The commissioners, along with county department directors, prioritized public health and worked with partners to disburse funding to thousands of households and hundreds of small businesses and programs.

Jose Manjon, owner of Los Tres Cubanos, said the funding helped “keep afloat” his restaurant at 540 Race Street in Harrisburg. “Thank God we had that grant – we are very happy and appreciative,” Manjon said. “The grant came in handy for salaries and other costs.”

“We had to get creative and find ways to reach everyone in need,” Commissioner Saylor said.

Todd Bear, owner of Simply Turkey & More, said: “The grant funds from Dauphin County allowed me to keep my staff on payroll during the pandemic, despite low sales and high costs of food and supplies.”

In all, the commissioners disbursed over $65 million in grant funding. “We have been extremely inclusive and fair with the disbursement of these funds,” Commissioner Hartwick said.
The COVID-19 pandemic impacted nearly every aspect of daily lives, including mental health and wellness. The need for mental health and crisis intervention services became vital – but distancing requirements made those in need harder to reach. The continuing decline of state and federal funding for mental health services meant Dauphin County needed to be flexible, creative, and urgent in response.

“The nation’s mental health crisis could soon reach pandemic proportions,” said Commissioner George P. Hartwick, III, who oversees county Human Services. “COVID-19 made struggles for those with mental illness even harder and also presented new challenges.”

In the past year, Dauphin County expended over $20 million on essential mental health services for kids and adults. “These are vital services that save lives and keep families strong,” Commissioner Mike Pries said.

Dauphin County’s Mental Health/Autism/Developmental Programs (MHADP) team assisted with more than 4,400 contacts for crisis intervention and emergency support situations last year.

“The increased need for mental health care also puts burdens on the police departments, schools, and the prison,” Commissioner Chad Saylor said.

If not for the grant provided by the county, Latino Connection would not be in existence today.”

Harrisburg-based Latino Connection is a marketing/outreach agency that, with partners, creates programs for low-income and vulnerable communities. Latino Connection developed a mobile COVID-19 vaccination clinic, “CATE,” that offered vaccines to underserved populations, including persons without homes in Harrisburg.

Fernandez connected with the Pennsylvania Department of Health on the concept, and it became a statewide model. “Dauphin County provided us a grant that allowed us to open our doors and create this program that is being used statewide.”

Commissioners Keeping Track of Mental Health Crisis

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In addition to providing grant funding to businesses and renters struggling to pay bills, the commissioners oversaw a mass vaccination effort and ensured COVID testing was available to those who wanted it.

Nearly 30,000 vaccine doses were administered at Dauphin County’s Mass Vaccination Clinic at HACC between March and June 2021.

UPMC medical staff administered the doses. Dauphin County Department of Public Safety staff, along with dozens of volunteers supported the daily, drive-thru operation.

Throughout the pandemic, the commissioners have partnered with numerous organizations and community groups to offer vaccine, testing, services, and financial support, including:

- Salvation Army
- HELP Ministries
- Dauphin County Library System
- American Red Cross
- Christian Churches United
- Capital Area Coalition on Homelessness
- Team Rubicon
- MANY others

**Dauphin County Commissioners Made Vaccine, COVID-19 Testing Widely Available**

The commissioners discuss efforts to vaccinate everyone in need.

DauphinCounty.gov @DauphinCounty @dauphincounty.org
Upcoming Events

SUNSET MUSIC & MOVIE SERIES
Fridays, June – August
Fort Hunter Park | Free
forthunter.org

LEAVE NO TRACE
(Ages 8-10)
August 16 | 5 – 7 P.M.
Detweiler Park | $10 per person
1451 Peters Mountain Road, Dauphin

DAUPHIN COUNTY CULTURAL FEST
August 20 | 3 P.M. – 10 P.M.
Free Admission
City Island, Harrisburg

Standout Students

The commissioners honored, clockwise from top, music all-stars from Central Dauphin, Hershey, and Lower Dauphin HS; Bishop McDevitt’s Riley Robell; Halifax archer Addisyn Gruzlewski.