Northwest Credit Union Association
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VERITY CREDIT UNION COMES THROUGH FOR SEATTLE SCHOOL

With the credit union's help, the Leadership Preparatory Academy is still paying teachers, rent, and engaging students when they most need it.

April 21, 2020

When Washington's schools were ordered closed to slow the spread of the coronavirus, it threw an unexpected curveball to the team at the Leadership Preparatory Academy, a micro-school serving middle and high school students in Seattle and Kirkland.

"We have a number of kids who have been in residential treatment for anxiety," said Dr. Maureen O'Shaughnessy, Founder and Executive Director. "We are in unchartered territory, and sometimes screens and home learning are a source of stress."

O'Shaughnessy and her staff worked full time, full throttle to build an engaging online platform for their 45 students. But creating the program was only part of the challenge. The academy is not taxpayer funded. Keeping bills paid might have meant borrowing from next year's tuitions – had it not been for the academy's board chair who had heard about the Small Business Administration's Paycheck Protection Program.

O'Shaughnessy, a member of Verity Credit Union, reached out right away and was pleasantly surprised when Tina Narron, the Chief Lending Officer, reached back to work with her all weekend long until the loan was approved.

"Tina nailed it," O'Shaughnessy said. "We are on our feet trying to be as nimble as possible. Having Verity's team work over the weekend for us was so appreciated. The service is amazing."

As a result, the academy will keep paying teachers' salaries and benefits, and the rent, while continuing to educate their students.

"Verity's well-being depends on the financial health of our members and communities," said John Zmolek, President and CEO. "Doing whatever we can to help them navigate COVID-19 is an easy call."

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