



## YOUR IMPACT - SUMMER 2023

Thank you for working together with the Orcas Community Resource Center (OCRC) to support our neighbors on their path to physical and mental health, stable housing, food security and more. Your understanding that it takes a village for our community to thrive makes all the difference. In 2023 to date, your support has enabled OCRC to:

### **Deliver 7,260 life changing services and programs to over 550 islanders**

Together we are helping islanders transition to more resilient and successful lives. Many OCRC clients need multiple levels of assistance to address their life challenges. Other times, a single simple request for help gives clients a way forward.

*“Thank you from the bottom of my heart! The work you are doing is truly amazing and makes a difference in people's lives. I had almost given up hope and you gave me my strength back. I will be forever grateful.”*

### **Provide 517 Food Access services connecting islanders to healthy food**

Together we are connecting islanders with food security programs that provide access to fresh, nutritious food to ensure no one goes hungry in our community. Thanks to your support this year, we have provided nearly 100 services to help clients with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program applications for food benefits, enrolled 66 senior and low income clients in the Farmers Market Nutrition Program for a total of \$5,280 in vouchers redeemable for locally grown produce at the Orcas Island Farmers Market, and provided 304 hot meals to islanders without access to adequate cooking facilities through OCRC's own Food Access program.

*Through our partnership with the WA State Department of Social & Health Services (DSHS), staff helped a local islander on a limited income sign up for DSHS SNAP food benefits, as well as Medicaid- Apple Health to cover their healthcare needs. They were grateful for the guidance and peace of mind that comes from not having to worry about meeting essential needs.*

### **Help islanders maintain stable housing with Housing Services programs**

Together we help islanders maintain stability through housing security. Programs and services include short-term rental and housing assistance grants, as well as case management to ensure long-term success. Thanks to you, to date this year, OCRC has helped over 30 households with available housing assistance grants and connected countless others with San Juan County and Whatcom County Opportunity Council rental assistance programs.

*A longtime islander with significant physical and mental health issues was overwhelmed and facing eviction. OCRC staff helped them plan for and secure a rental payment plan as well as apply for assistance from the Opportunity Council to cover a portion of their past due rent.*

### **Keep energy flowing for local households through Utilities Assistance programs**

Together we find solutions for islanders to afford power, heat and water for their homes, as well as to stay connected through free or reduced cost phones. Thanks to you, OCRC has assisted 256 households since January with applications for our utility partner programs, resulting in an astounding \$96,358 in utility assistance for islanders in need.

*A recently divorced parent struggling to keep up with expenses reached out to OCRC. Staff helped them apply for and receive utility assistance through both the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) & Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP), to cover mounting balances and ease their transition to a one-income household.*

### **Provide 1,100 Health & Medical support services to ensure islanders receive care**

Together we help individuals navigate health insurance enrollment, affordable mental health care and medical treatment through partner programs ensuring the well-being of islanders. Examples include coordination of mental health care for a monthly average of 14 islanders and connecting 67 individuals to affordable dental care, eyeglasses and hearing devices thus far in 2023.

*A young man came into the Resource Center office very stressed about medical bills. He was flown off island for an emergency and left with nearly \$50,000 in medical bills. Staff coordinated to help him sign up for Medicaid - Apple Health. His application was approved along with retroactive coverage that paid his outstanding medical debt. What a huge relief allowing him to recover without added stress!*

### **Provide 750 Transportation Assistance services for affordable travel**

Together we assist islanders with limited or no transportation options for essential medical appointments and obligations. To date this year as an example, through our partnership with San Juan County and the Transportation Voucher Program, you and OCRC staff have ensured that 216 income-eligible clients each received \$300 worth of as needed ferry tickets and taxi fare. In addition, your support allows OCRC's Emergency Assistance funds to help with medical lodging or emergency ferry tickets/taxi fares on a case by case basis when not covered by existing programs.

*A disabled senior client was in need of help coordinating transportation to a last minute off island medical appointment. Through our community transportation partners, staff scheduled a roundtrip ride to the ferry and arranged for mainland taxi transport. Assistance allowed this senior to get safely to and from their essential medical appointment.*

### **Provide stability for unsheltered islanders**

Together with your support, OCRC staff helped secure housing for several vulnerable unsheltered islanders this year - including a senior, an individual living with a disability, two locally raised young adults, and a youth working to finish high school on Orcas.

*A islander experiencing homelessness came to us looking for help with housing, steady employment, and support in working towards stability. Through their own determination and OCRC's resourcefulness, we assisted them in securing housing. They continue to meet weekly with a social worker, and now have a steady income at a job that plays a key role in the support of our community.*

## Keep islanders supplied with essential household needs

Through your support and that of the Coates Family Foundation, we are combating hygiene poverty. To date this year, 191 households have participated in our Coates Cabinet hygiene bank program, ensuring access to personal care and cleaning supplies such as toilet paper, dental care products, shampoo, body wash, feminine hygiene products, baby wipes and diapers. Community need for this program has grown to an all time high and we aim to have an ongoing wish list established in the near future for in kind donations to continue to keep up with demand.

*An island family found themselves struggling to afford rent costs during a time of hardship. They reached out to OCRC about our Coates Cabinet program and were able to receive diapers, wipes and other household items to free up some funds towards their monthly budget. With a newly established remote work opportunity, they are doing well with secure housing and have turned a corner with better times ahead.*

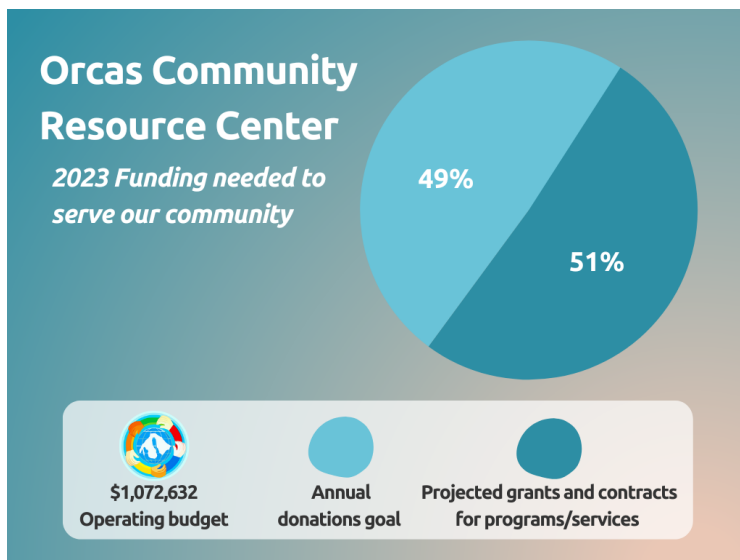
## Give the gift of financial literacy to promote stability for islanders

Together with your support, we've established a financial literacy program. Orcas Money Smart is a 9 month program where volunteer mentors teach the basics of budgeting, savings, banking, housing decisions, debt, credit, disaster preparedness and more. Mentors work with students to set and achieve individually determined goals using the SMART goals system. Our pilot program students graduated in May and the program is being offered again this year in September.

*"Thanks to the Orcas Money Smart program and mentors, I have gained the tools to break down any financial situation into manageable steps for success. I can apply SMART goals to many aspects of my life in the future."*

## Increase OCRC's capacity to meet our community's growing needs

Together we've kept pace with increased community needs. Thanks to your support, OCRC employs a team of 8 staff specializing in Housing and Health Services, Energy Programs, and Bilingual Community Support along with 2 in-house Licensed Independent Clinical Social Workers and a team of 11 Community Wellness therapy providers.



OCRC clients are our neighbors and important contributors to island life. The work we do together makes Orcas Island a better place for all of us. The accomplishments described throughout this report wouldn't be possible without YOU as our partner. Thank you for your commitment, care and generosity.

Please let us know if you have any questions about OCRC or your impact as a supporter. We'd enjoy having an opportunity to meet with you to learn more about you, your interests and your thoughts about our community. We also invite you to tour behind the scenes at OCRC to see how you are making a difference. Let's connect soon through [erin@orcascrc.org](mailto:erin@orcascrc.org) or (360) 376-3184.



Thank you for helping further our  
**MISSION**

**We foster a healthy community by connecting  
Orcas Islanders with the services needed to  
thrive and achieve equitable well-being.**

**In addition to YOU and your generous support,** OCRC is grateful for our strong local, county, state and federal partnerships. A list of our major partners is below and gratefully continues to grow.

*American Legion Women's Auxiliary, Arcora Foundation, Brighthouse Health, Coates Family Foundation, Consejo Counseling, Federal Communications Commission, Island Hospital, Island Rides, John Henry Mason Foundation, Medical Teams International, Northsound ACH, OPALCO, Opportunity Council, Orcas APS, Orcas Island Community Foundation, Orcas Island Food Bank, Orcas Island Co-op, Orcas Island K-12 schools & preschools, Orcas Island Lions Club, Oddfellows, Orcas Senior Center, PeaceHealth, San Juan County, San Juan Islands Ag Guild, Sequel Consignment, SmileMobile, Sons of the American Legion, The Exchange, U.S. Dept of Agriculture, United Way of San Juan County, WA State Dept of Children Youth & Families, WA State Dept of Commerce, WA State Dept of Labor & Industries, WA State Dept of Social & Health Svcs, WA State Dept of Transportation, WA State Health Care Authority, WIC.*