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UPDATE

ORCAS COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER



Deb Exton - Coates Cabinet volunteer

Olivia

Olivia never imagined she'd be in a position where she couldn't provide the basics for her family. But when unexpected medical bills piled up and her health forced her to stop working, the security she had built over years unraveled in weeks.

Suddenly, choices that had once been automatic — buying laundry detergent, replacing shampoo, picking up dish soap — became impossible luxuries as every dollar went toward keeping the lights on and food on the table.

Because of your generosity, Olivia found support through the Coates Cabinet Hygiene Bank. Access to essential household items and personal care products helped restore a sense of normalcy during her recovery. Her children could go to school with clean clothes. Her family was able to maintain their routines and sense of normalcy during one of the most difficult periods of their lives.

Olivia also met with our Financial Literacy Specialist. Together they applied for assistance for her medical bills and created a new household budget — giving her a path forward, rather than just a moment of relief.

Your support ensured that Olivia was one of the 488 households we served last year, providing dignity when it was needed most.

"When you're struggling, you feel invisible. Coates Cabinet reminded me that our community cares."

—Olivia, island neighbor



Miguel enjoying a walk on a path near his home

Miguel

When Miguel's rental property was suddenly sold, he faced an impossible deadline: find new housing in one of the state's tightest rental markets — or leave the island community he'd grown to love. With limited options and language barriers complicating his search, Miguel reached out for help.

Our housing navigator worked alongside him to understand tenant rights, navigate applications, and connect with island landlords. When he found a potential home, emergency housing assistance covered the security deposit and first month's rent — costs that would have been insurmountable on his own.

Today, Miguel has a stable home and continues contributing his skills to our island's economy.

Your support ensures that hardworking islanders can remain rooted here in the community they call home.

Amy

Amy, an islander facing serious mental health challenges, reached out for help when managing her medical needs felt overwhelming. Between navigating insurance coverage and understanding treatment options, the system itself had become another barrier to her healing. She felt lost in a maze of paperwork and phone calls when what she needed most was simply to feel better.

Because of your compassionate support, our dedicated team provided personalized navigation, connecting her with essential care and counseling.

Today, Amy is regaining her stability and building a foundation for a healthier future. **Your contributions restore the hope and health that every neighbor deserves.**



Cory Harrington
Resource Center Staff

A local island family

Jamie and Alex joined our Orcas Money Smart program with a heavy admission: they had no idea how to plan for their future. With a one-year-old daughter, the pressure to find stability was mounting.

Through our workshops and one-on-one counseling, they transformed their relationship with money. By the end of the program, they learned to budget, established Roth IRAs for retirement, and opened a 529 college savings plan for their daughter.

"We're changing our financial future," Jamie says, "and breaking a generational pattern of limited financial knowledge."

Your gifts make these educational tools free and accessible to every islander looking to build a stronger foundation.

BOARD MEMBER STORY

Jan Ehrlichman

Earlier in my life, I was a single parent raising two small children while working two jobs to make ends meet. Those years were hard, and I know how stability can feel out of reach.

I was fortunate to have family support — but without it, I would have needed help from an organization like the Orcas Community Resource Center.

Today, after moving to Orcas 13 years ago with my husband, Mark, I'm grateful to give back. I stay active volunteering in the community and supporting the Resource Center because I believe deeply in its mission. Having lived through financial uncertainty myself, I understand how critical it is to have support during life's difficult moments.

It's comforting to know there's a place on Orcas where people can turn for help — and meaningful to be part of making sure that support is there when it's needed. Every family deserves the kind of stability that allows them to truly thrive.



Jan Ehrlichman
Resource Center Board Vice Chair

**Names changed to protect privacy while the stories reflect actual client experiences.*