

EASTERN OREGON MISSION

Winter 2020

INSIDE:

- 'A Story of Hope' - Pinky Ojeda's journey from homelessness to Martha's House coordinator
- A word from Eastern Oregon Mission interim director Cathy Putnam
- Volunteer and service update for the fourth quarter of 2019
- Find out how you can support Agape House and Martha's House



Pinky Ojeda (bottom right), with children Elizabeth, Alyssia, Abril, Francisco. Her husband, Francisco Gallardo, is not pictured. The family found Martha's House when they were struggling with medical bills and homelessness, and after graduating from the program Pinky became the resident coordinator at Martha's House.



A STORY OF HOPE

By Pinky Ojeda | Resident Coordinator for Martha's House

I was really sick and weak from surgery. Our funds were low – very low – so we ended up in a weekly rate motel. The motel was not an appropriate place for my four kids. Terrible things going on by night there that I rather not remember. Things got even worse when I had to be admitted back into the hospital again because I wasn't healing from the surgery.

When I was at the hospital, a person from the Connexions program asked me if I needed help with anything. I was embarrassed and ashamed to ask for help but we were in a desperate situation with no food, personal items, clothing, or money for gas – so close to homelessness. I wrote a list of items that we needed. I was grateful he told me about Martha's House and helped me submit an application.

I didn't like the idea of staying at a transitional house. I thought it was going to be like the shelters you see on TV. Just a big space with many single beds with no privacy, one shower everyone shared, one large table full of strangers to eat meals. I was afraid for my children, too.

I soon learned this was so wrong. Martha's House felt comfortable and safe. We were thankful we had our own room with a bathroom, kitchen and beds. We could cook our own meals.

We finally felt a sense of hope. While our stay was meant to help us get on our feet, we acquired so many things – friendship, strength, independence, and financial tools, but most of all a new beginning. We got our life back. We will never forget Martha's House

and the wonderful people, the example of humanity for all of us. I learned so much and will be forever grateful. Thank you for this program. It has helped so many families. I want everybody involved to know that my family and I are forever grateful for your help in saving our lives and for giving us this opportunity.



“While our stay was meant to help us get on our feet, we acquired so many things ... most of all a new beginning.”

After completing the Martha's House program, Pinky was chosen as the resident coordinator for Martha's House.

Martha's House is a transitional family housing program that opened in 2013. It provides temporary housing for families and single women in our area while addressing the underlying causes of homelessness. Through mentorship and training opportunities, we work with residents to find gainful employment and transition into permanent housing.

It is a home-style atmosphere that encourages change, structure, and accountability and services that are suited for the entire family. For many of these parents it is their only opportunity to get back on their feet.

The program stresses responsible living and decision making. We offer assistance, encouragement, support, train and freely give prayer. We are a community-based and completely privately funded with support from community businesses, local churches and individuals.

The 18-room facility is at 305 SE Fourth Street in Hermiston. If you know of a family in need of a fresh start, **call (541) 567-8774 or visit www.marthashousehermiston.org** to learn more and get an application.

Want to get involved?

Each family that completes the Martha's House program receives their home starter items to take to their new home. You can help by sponsoring a kit or purchasing items to help us stay in stock.

Bedroom items

- Sheet sets
- Pillows
- Blankets
- Bedspreads
- Mattress covers (zippered)

Bathroom items

- Bath towels
- Hand towels
- Washcloths
- Bathtub rug
- Small garbage can
- Toilet brush/holder
- Shower curtain/rod/liner
- Toothbrushes
- Toothbrush holder

Kitchen Items

- Microwave
- Toaster oven
- Electric skillet
- Dish drainer
- Dishes
- Can opener
- Coffee maker
- Pots and pans
- Silverware and tray
- Glasses
- Kitchen towels
- Dishrags
- Scrubbers
- Potholders
- Utensils (spoons, spatulas)
- Mixing bowls
- Mop
- Broom
- Dustpan
- Trash can



Volunteer spotlight:

Doug Alvarez

Doug Alvarez has a passion for helping people. After Doug retired, he decided to take his passion to help Agape House and has been here for over 10 years as a volunteer working 25-30 hours weekly.

"What motivates me to continue? When I see a client's basic need met like the time I watched a mother of six children tear up when she received food for her family. But I'm just a little bitty cog in a great big wheel that makes Agape House run." - Doug

Service Statistics for October-December 2019

- **1,321 HOUSEHOLDS RECEIVED FOOD ASSISTANCE AT AGAPE HOUSE**
- **4,761 INDIVIDUALS SERVED AT AGAPE HOUSE**
- **21 RESIDENTS RECEIVED HELP AT MARTHA'S HOUSE**
- **1,850 STUDENTS SERVED THROUGH BACKPACK PROGRAM**

SPECIAL THANKS: Thanks to Robert Luke for taking photographs of our staff and volunteers, and to Eastern Oregon Telecom for providing free internet access at Martha's House, and Simmons Agency for printing services.

Agape House Services

Food Service Program

Even in the world's greatest food-producing nation, children and adults face poverty and hunger in every state and county. Our programs and services reach the elderly, children, the working poor, single-parent families, the homeless, and the newly unemployed. Agape House provides emergency food boxes, shares food with senior centers, food banks and local free lunch programs.

Parking Lot Yard Sale

We hold monthly sales to help provide clothing and household items at a low cost. The sale also provides funding to

sustain Agape House programs. We always need volunteers for set-up, during the sale, and for clean-up.

Backpack Elementary School Weekend Food Program

With the help of many volunteers and donations, each school week Agape House provides elementary students in Hermiston, Umatilla, Stanfield, Echo and Irrigon with food to eat over the weekend. By providing kids with the nutrients they need when they are away from school, they show up on Monday morning healthy and ready to learn. We currently serve over 185 students each week.

Wish List for Backpack program:

- Spaghetti or ravioli, 15 oz. can
- Chicken noodle soup, 10 3/4 oz. can
- Macaroni and cheese, 7.5 oz.
- Tuna fish, 5 oz. can
- 100% juice box or pouch, 4-8 oz.
- Instant oatmeal packets
- Applesauce pouches or cups, 3-6 oz.
- Ritz crackers, small tubes
- Sandwich cracker packs
- Top ramen noodle packs (not cups)
- Peanut butter plastic jar, 15-18 oz.
- Raisins box, 1.5 oz.
- Chewy granola bars

From the director

God is at work through changes at Eastern Oregon Mission

Wow! It has been three months since I stepped in as interim director and the days have flown by. Everyone has been so helpful and welcoming. Every day I learn more about this wonderful organization. Our staff and volunteers are eager to share their knowledge and assistance on a daily basis. I am so grateful to play a small part in this important mission.

Eastern Oregon Mission is blessed to be part of such a wonderful, giving community. You make a difference in so many lives. Donors who keep on giving make our mission possible. Whether it is monetary, donations of goods, services provided, time given or all-important prayers, this community steps up to fill the need. Every day I see God working through others, I am in awe. Thank you!

The year of 2019 ended with a huge challenge to Agape House and Martha's House. Our longtime director Dave Hughes and his wonderful wife Jodene retired to Globe, Arizona.

Thankfully, our board of directors and our volunteers were up to the task. While we are still in the process of finding a permanent replacement for



"Eastern Oregon Mission is blessed to be part of such a wonderful, giving community ... Every day I see God working through others."

Dave at Agape House and Jodene at Martha's House, everyone has come together to continue serving our community. We are reaching out to local organizations to help us improve and strengthen our programs.

As we begin a new year, we ask for continued community input. We are updating our web page and Facebook page to keep the community aware of who we are and what we are doing in our community.

Please e-mail me with any information requests or suggestions at agapehouse@eotnet.net. If you wish to be on our e-mail contact list please let me know. I cannot say it enough, thank you

for letting me share in this awesome organization.

Cathy Putnam
Interim Director

Get involved

We're planning for the future, and we hope you'll join us! Here are a few ways you can help Eastern Oregon Mission meet our goals of community service.

- **Donate Funds.** Make a one-time donation, set up a recurring plan, make a memorial or tribute donation. We also greatly appreciate our local business sponsors.
- **Hold a Food Drive.** Agape House provides food for hundreds of families in our community, as well as students in our school system. We gladly accept canned and boxed foods.
- **Volunteer.** We run on volunteer power, and can use your help. We need your skills for special events, warehouse operations, parking lot sales, food packing and clerical duties.
- **Attend a Fundraiser.** We'd love to have you join us at our golf tournament (**mark your calendar for July 11, 2020**) or for a parking lot sale the third Saturday of each month.

From a client

You guys are amazing. This has been the roughest time in our lives and you are so helpful.

I want to support Eastern Oregon Mission!

Please put me down as a monthly sustaining supporter:

☐ \$10 ☐ \$15 ☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$_____

I'd like to make a one-time donation:

☐ \$50 ☐ \$75 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$150 ☐ \$_____

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

☐ Check Enclosed ☐ Bill My Credit Card



CREDIT CARD # _____

EXP DATE _____

CIV/SEC# _____

PHONE # _____

E-MAIL _____

Donate Now! (541) 567-8774

Online: bit.ly/agapedonate