



IT'S OUR SPRING APPEAL!



[Donate Now](#)

Greetings!

This month marks the beginning of our Spring Appeal which, for me in my first few months in Oregon, has become both a moment of reflection on this community-driven success story called OHRA, and an opportunity to thank you.

Throughout the history of OHRA, it is our supporters and community partners who have proven that lasting change happens when a community comes together to support its most vulnerable neighbors. Thanks to you, we have grown from a small group of community members supporting those who are unhoused and lacking resources, into a fully staffed permanent resource center and shelter that provides services and hope to thousands of people each year.

In the process of growing, we have developed institutional knowledge and expertise in preventative and supportive opportunities for the unhoused that allows us to continue to meet the dramatically increasing needs of those faced with housing insecurity.

In the past year alone, your support has helped us:

- complete a **fully operational commercial kitchen** to keep pace with the more than **12,000** meals per year we provide,
- **expand our team of navigators and street outreach capabilities,**
- strengthen and grow our **community partnerships,**
- **keep hundreds of individuals and families in their homes through eviction prevention services and rental assistance, and**
- extend our shelter assistance off-site to include **families with children.**

Looking ahead, we are paying close attention to new policies and shifting priorities at the state and federal levels. We're doing everything we can to adapt, however, one thing remains clear- ***community support is more critical now than ever.***

We need your help to build a stronger safety net. Unrestricted gifts from donors like you provide the needed flexibility to respond quickly, fill funding gaps, and ensure that essential services continue uninterrupted.

Whether you give financially, volunteer or share our mission with friends and family, every action has impact.

With gratitude,



Dan Cano

Dan Cano, Executive Director

 (541) 631-2235 ext. 303

 danc@ohrahelps.org

 OHRAhelps.org

A Note from our Board President, Cathy Gerbracht

When I began volunteering at the OHRA Resource Center, I met people whose stories touched my heart. Many faced heartbreaking challenges, but I've also witnessed firsthand the incredible impact of OHRA's work—whether it's helping someone get a new pair of eyeglasses or an ID, securing a disability check, or finding stable housing.

With the generosity of federal and state programs and your individual donations, we've supported so many people in need. But the landscape is shifting. Funding cuts are affecting aid programs both locally and globally. Some nonprofits in our region have already lost critical federal support. It's disheartening—I've always believed in this country's capacity for generosity. Rather than dwell on what's beyond my control, I choose to focus on what I can do: caring for my neighbors and supporting those in need right here in our community. That's exactly what OHRA continues to do every day.



We all have the power to make a difference. Every act of kindness—whether a donation of time, money, or resources—can create ripple effects throughout our community. Together, we create a stronger, more resilient support system for those who need it most.

While our funding is secure through this fiscal year (ending June 30), as we begin drafting next year's budget, uncertainty looms. That's why we are prioritizing the growth of our unrestricted cash reserves—this cushion could be critical in the coming year. As I deepen my commitment to this work, I invite you to do the same. By giving to OHRA, you support real, tangible change in people's lives. Now more than ever, your support matters.

Cathy

Bricks for Change

Be a part of OHRA...*forever!*

When you give \$500 or more you have the option to engrave a brick for the tribute garden at the OHRA Center. Become a permanent part of this incredible community resource and help ensure that every neighbor in need in our community can come to OHRA and receive help. To learn more click the button below to email Brandy.

[Inquire](#)



Development Corner

Brandy MacDonald
brandym@ohrahelps.org
541-631-2235 ext 316



Donor Insights

OHRA was built by a community that believes in helping neighbors. Our success has always been rooted in the trust and generosity of our donors and volunteers, who understand that OHRA's model—offering low-barrier, flexible support—works. We remain confident that you the community will continue to stand by OHRA, ensuring that we thrive even in challenging times.

In 2025, as operating costs continue to rise and economic uncertainty persists, unrestricted donations are more critical than ever. Without flexible, unrestricted support, we face the risk of scaling back essential programs.

We are deeply grateful for the ongoing generosity of OHRA donors-Thank you! Your support during our Spring Appeal helps strengthen our financial stability and ensures our continued success. If you haven't had a chance to give yet we invite you to do so today. Thank you for stepping up during this important campaign.

[Donate Now](#)



Community Movie Screening



Kitchen Grand Opening

OHRA, along with HomeShare Oregon, will be presenting a showing of the movie *No Place to Grow Old* as a fundraiser on **April 29th, 2025 at 6:00 PM at Rogue Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship**. Located at 87 4th St in Ashland.

This movie explores the rising crisis of senior homelessness in Portland, Oregon, the systematic challenges they face, and the personal stories of those who have found themselves with no place to grow old. Please join us for a showing of this important movie!

A donation of \$10 is suggested to benefit both organizations, but no one will be turned away for lack of funds. To register to attend, click the link below.

[Register](#)

Our commercial kitchen is now complete, and we're so excited to open its doors!

OHRA has onboarded a dedicated cook and support staff to help launch this important new on-site service for our guests.

Please join us for a ribbon-cutting ceremony on **May 29th from 4:00–5:00 p.m.** to celebrate this meaningful milestone. There will be light refreshments, a short presentation, and guided tours of the kitchen and shelter. All are welcome—we'd love to celebrate with you!



Volunteer Spotlight

Jennifer Bagshaw volunteers in the OHRA office, sorting the mail for those we serve. As a successful landlord, Jennifer felt compelled to support those experiencing housing insecurity. Jennifer appreciates OHRA's low-barrier, stigma-free approach and its focus on keeping people in their homes.

Jennifer's compassion is especially driven by the alarming fact that more **than one third of people in shelters experiencing chronic homelessness are older adults**. "When you realize how close just about anybody is to being unhoused, especially without the support systems we used to have, it's heartbreaking,"

she reflects. "How could anyone be expected to work or rebuild their life in those circumstances?"

A Thoughtful Approach to Volunteering

Jennifer's deepened her understanding of the complexities of homelessness through her participation in the **American Leadership Forum**, a statewide training program that brings together diverse leaders to address pressing issues, where she engaged with experts addressing the crisis in Portland and beyond.

Before committing to volunteering at OHRA, she consulted with these leaders to assess whether OHRA's model was sustainable. "I wanted to make sure that what OHRA was doing was making a real difference," she recalls. "And the numbers spoke for themselves—people staying in their homes, receiving utility assistance, and avoiding the devastating consequences of homelessness."

Finding the Right Fit

With a demanding work schedule, Jennifer sought a flexible volunteer role. Mail sorting turned out to be the perfect fit. “I’m able to plug in when I can, and the flexibility is ideal,” she says.

Volunteering has given Jennifer insight into the breadth of needs in the community. “I hear Martha at the front desk helping people problem-solve—whether it’s a utility bill or something more urgent. Some of the hardest moments are when I hear her say, ‘I’m sorry, we’re out of money right now.’”

A Moment of Connection

One moment that stands out for Jennifer was when she helped an elderly woman with a Lyft ride arranged by a navigator. “I stood outside with her, helped her figure it out, and waited until her ride came,” Jennifer recalls. “It was such a small thing, but it meant a lot to her. It’s those little moments that remind me why I’m here.”

Understanding Both Sides of the Story

As a property owner, Jennifer also understands the concerns of business owners. “I want to support people so they don’t have to live along the creek, but I also feel for business owners worried about their properties. It’s a difficult balance.”

Spreading Awareness About OHRA’s Impact

Jennifer wishes more people recognized OHRA’s full scope. “People see the most visible part—the folks standing outside—but they don’t realize how many are being helped behind the scenes.”

For Jennifer, volunteering is about understanding, connecting, and contributing to solutions. Her quiet dedication reminds us that change starts with small, consistent acts of kindness.

Thank you Jennifer!

[Volunteer Application](#)

Power of Partnerships

At OHRA, we know that no single organization can meet all the needs of our guests. It takes a network of dedicated partners — 60 and counting — to provide the wraparound services that help people move from crisis to stability. These partnerships ensure that our guests not only receive immediate relief but also have access to the tools and resources they need for long-term success.



Our partners offer a wide range of critical services. For example, **Addictions Recovery Center (ARC)** provides substance use disorder treatment, helping individuals on the path to recovery. **Jackson County Public Health** offers HIV and HCV testing, vaccinations, and harm reduction services to protect community health. **ACCESS**, our local Community Action Agency, supports families with emergency food and utility assistance, and rental assistance. These diverse partnerships allow us to meet people where they are, addressing their unique situations with expertise and compassion. Whether it’s securing stable housing, accessing healthcare, or providing harm reduction

resources, our partners amplify the impact of OHRA's work, ensuring that every guest has a pathway toward stability.

We are deeply grateful for these partnerships, which strengthen our ability to respond to the complex challenges our guests face. Together, we are building a stronger, more resilient community where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

Highlights of Hope

Since opening
the OHRA Center
in 2021

960*

#of households
receiving eviction
prevention services

705
624
510

women
children
men

512*

of unhoused
households
newly housed

303
163
290

women
children
men

2,595

individuals impacted
through February 2025

Donors Making a Difference

Recently, a pair of longtime supporters—who prefer to remain anonymous—found themselves deep in conversation with friends about the ongoing housing crisis in the Rogue Valley. When asked, “*What is our community doing for the unhoused?*” these two had a clear answer.

Believing in OHRA's mission and the impact of its model, they invited their friends to join them in a tour of the OHRA Center and meeting with leadership for a thoughtful discussion about the challenges facing our vulnerable neighbors. Through open dialogue and firsthand insight, this group gained a deeper understanding of how OHRA not only provides shelter, but also empowers individuals to regain stability.

By the end of the visit, OHRA had gained several new supporters. Those in the group left with a renewed sense of purpose, exemplifying how generosity and compassion can quickly spread, creating ripples of meaningful change.

At OHRA, we know that a thriving community is built on connection, awareness, and action. When individuals engage with our mission—whether by volunteering, donating, or simply sparking conversations—we see the impact multiply. This story is a testament to the power of advocacy and the role each of us plays in strengthening our community.

Thank you to all who continue to support OHRA, sharing not just your resources, but your belief in a better future for everyone. Together, we are making a difference- one conversation, one action, and one life at a time.



Stories of Hope

After five long years living on the streets, sleeping in parking lots and under stairwells, Jackie's life changed in ways she once only dreamed of—thanks to her own strength and faith, OHRA, our community partners, and the Oregon Rehousing Initiative (ORI).

Jackie's path to permanent housing began in a dormitory-style shelter shared with 80 people. "It felt like prison," she recalled. "I was overwhelmed and broken." But it was there, during a moment of desperation and prayer, that she met someone she would later call her "earth

angel"—Options for Southern Oregon caseworker Lynette, who recognized Jackie's need for safety and dignity and connected her to OHRA.

At OHRA, Jackie found more than just a room—she found healing. The privacy and peace allowed her to begin emotionally recovering from the trauma of homelessness. "It was a healing time for me," she shared. "I could finally close a door, breathe, and feel human again."

With the compassionate support of OHRA staff navigator Kasey, Jackie began preparing for her next chapter. During their regular meetings they explored multiple housing options, navigating mobility issues and health scare challenges —until they finally found the perfect home: a peaceful, one-bedroom with a fenced yard for her beloved dog, Percy. "I wake up every day and can't believe this is mine," Jackie said. "It's paradise." Jackie's rent is subsidized with money from ORI.

Jackie's journey is a testament to the power of persistence and partnership. OHRA walked alongside her, and Options and ORI also played a vital role in bringing stability into her life, but it was ultimately Jackie's resilience, faith, and readiness to embrace a new beginning that made this transformation possible.

Today, Jackie is settling into her home. Her days are filled with prayer, gardening, and joyful playtime with Percy. Her story reminds us all: with the right support, a little hope, and a safe place to land, lives can be transformed.

[Donate Now](#)

Navigator Highlight

Natasha is OHRA's new Landlord Engagement Housing Navigator. Her position involves meeting and greeting local landlords to tell them about OHRA, what we do, and developing a relationship with them. Natasha also helps resolve any barriers that guests have, such as getting a driver's license or birth certificate.

Strengthening OHRA's connections to local landlords is an important part of achieving our mission. OHRA works with many community partners to maximize our impact in our community, and landlords are a key partner in getting and keeping people housed. Natasha develops a rapport with local landlords, explains how we do our work, and what financial resources we have for our guests.

Natasha was born and raised in Southern Oregon and has previously worked in the medical field before transitioning into property management, where she has worked for the last thirteen years. Natasha decided she wanted to transition into a community-based role and started at OHRA in January.



Our OHRA Team

OHRA has grown and evolved over the years to better meet the needs of our community, but one thing remains the same-the passionate people behind the good work we do.

See how many original OHRA staff members you can spot!



Upcoming OHRA Events

Movie Screening

Tuesday, April 29th, 6 p.m.

OHRA and HomeShare Oregon will be co-hosting a viewing of the film No Place To Grow Old. Scroll down for more details.

Ribbon Cutting

Thursday, May 29th, 4-5 p.m.

OHRA is hosting a ribbon-cutting event celebrating the opening of our commercial kitchen and Miriam's Cafe.



Come Visit Us...Tour the Center!

We love showing people where their support does its magic. Call or **email** us anytime to schedule a personal or group tour!

Connect with Us



Learn More About OHRA

[Visit our Website](#)

Help End the Cycle of Homelessness

[Make a Donation](#)



[Share This Email](#)



OHRAhelps.org

OHRA | PO Box 1133 | Ashland, OR 97520 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email & social marketing for free!