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The Question I Heard Most in May: How Does OHRA Support Families?

- A Note From Dan Cano, Executive Director

May was a busy and meaningful month—ribbon cuttings, donor appreciation events, and the chance to share meals, connection and conversations with many of you. Thank you to everyone who joined us!

I also enjoyed the opportunity to listen to your thoughts and questions. One question came up more than any other: “How does OHRA support families?” It’s an important one—and I’m glad to answer it as we wrap up our Spring Appeal.

First, it’s helpful to understand that OHRA is, above all, a Resource Center that also includes a shelter—not the other way around. With that in mind, over 45% of the people accessing our services are families with children. Here’s how we support them:

Resource Navigation

At the heart of OHRA’s work are more than 10 full-time Navigators who expertly connect families to a wide range of services throughout the Rogue Valley. While housing resources are among the highest need, we also link families to healthcare, mental health services, school-based supports, and more. These connections happen through our strong network of public and nonprofit partners. When a parent or youth walks through our doors, they are given an opportunity to access the resources they need to overcome the multitude of challenges they may be experiencing.

Shelter Services for Families

Because of our low barrier to entry policies, the shelter at the OHRA Center is not suitable for children. In response we operate a separate family shelter program using funding from Oregon's Long-Term Rental Assistance (LTRA) program. This program currently houses at least 10 families at a time in a dedicated motel, with daily meals delivered by our new OHRA Kitchen.

Navigators work closely with these families to help them move toward permanent housing. That means navigating benefits, thinking strategically about income, and building strong support systems. We don't do this alone—partners like Access, Jackson Care Connect, and the Maslow Project help us provide wraparound support.

Your Support Keeps Programs Like These Strong and Flexible. Unrestricted gifts from donors like you let us hire when grant funds fall short, pay bills while waiting for reimbursements, and say “yes” to new opportunities to help families. Simply put, they keep our doors open.

As our Spring Appeal draws to a close, we're so grateful for the support we've received. If you haven't had a chance to give yet, please consider doing so today. Your gift helps families tomorrow.

Thank you for making this work possible—for every individual, and every family, we serve.



Dan Cano

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Ribbon Cut, Kitchen Open- OHRA's New Meals Services are Underway

We officially marked the opening of OHRA's commercial kitchen and Miriam's Café with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on May 29. Thank you to everyone who joined us to celebrate this important milestone!

The new kitchen is now serving hot dinners each night and hosting a weekly morning coffee hour for shelter guests. As we establish our routines and grow our volunteer program, we look forward to expanding the services offered in the kitchen and community space of Miriam's Café.





On May 22, two Ashland High School seniors, John Harper and Freeman Rountree, hosted a breakfast for shelter and walk-in guests—a generous gesture of support from our community's youth.

Upcoming Event: Art Sale Benefitting OHRA

Saturday, June 21, 2025, from 10 AM - 1 PM at 539 Mt. Meadows Drive, Ashland

A thoughtful OHRA supporter is hosting an art and gift sale benefiting our mission. Stop by to admire handmade art and affordable gifts from various local artists, enjoy a cup of coffee and treat. All proceeds go to OHRA.



Development Corner

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Donor Insights

As the final days of our Spring Appeal draw near, we're reaching out to those of you who know us best. OHRA supporters like you truly understand how impactful your gift can be. You've already seen how OHRA helps people in crisis find a path toward stability, and we're deeply grateful.

Today, we're almost to our goal. Your continued support could be what helps us cross the finish line and enter the new fiscal year ready to meet the growing needs in our community.

Every gift to this appeal strengthens the foundation we'll carry into the next fiscal year. It allows us to respond with flexibility and heart when someone shows up in crisis, whether they're facing the threat of eviction, sleeping outside, or simply navigating the complexity of systems that weren't built for them.

If you've been meaning to give but haven't yet, this is the moment. Your gift now ensures we can continue saying "yes" when someone reaches out for help.

Thank you for being part of this work. Let's finish this appeal strong, together.

in the NEWS...

Keeping All Kinds of Families Together

Recently, OHRA guests Maureen Dolan and Frank Dietzel and their cats were featured in an article by Midge Raymond for the Ashland.News.

OHRA's low-barrier approach to sheltering allows pet owners and their pets a warm place to stay, long-term, while navigating a path to permanent housing. OHRA also partners with Rogue Valley Street Dogs to provide free vaccines, help obtain spay and neutering appointments, as well as pet food and supplies.



Maureen & Mr. Kitty

Since opening in 2021, OHRA has sheltered over 100 pets with their owners.

Our Resource Director, Katie Bloomgren, stated that OHRA aims to keep pet owners with their pets "because for so many of our guests it's everything to be able to have their family member".

To read more about how OHRA responds to the hardships that unhoused pet owners face click the button below for the whole article.



Frank & Bo

[Read the Article](#)

When Cheyenne faced a high-risk pregnancy and had to stop working, she and her partner, Aaron lost their housing. With two young children and nowhere to turn, they reached out to OHRA.

Navigator Cal King quickly placed the family in OHRA's family shelter program at the Cedarwood Motel and enrolled them in the Oregon Rehousing Initiative (ORI). From there, Cal helped them tackle multiple barriers, including repeated housing denials due to past rental debt.

Determined to help, Cal negotiated with a landlord willing to rent to the family if they could show consistent payments toward their debt. He guided them through a debt consolidation process, while Aaron secured a better-paying job.

Finally, with support from the ORI program, OHRA covered their deposit and initial rent—bringing everything together so the family could move into stable housing and begin moving from crisis to a thriving future.

Navigator Highlight - Cal King

Cal has been with OHRA for just over three years. He began as shelter staff, transitioned to the front desk at OHRA's Resource Center, and now thrives in his role as a navigator for shelter guests. One of his specialties is working with families at the Cedarwood Motel and helping them move toward stable housing.



Whether helping guests get birth certificates, write resumes, draft letters to address past legal issues, or navigating people to appropriate resources, each form of support is a critical step in building a stronger foundation for long-term success.

His favorite part of the job? Being an anchor for people facing complex challenges—and watching them begin to rebuild their lives with his support.

Outside of work, Cal shares his home with a leopard gecko named Daisy, a bearded dragon named Aether, and a cat named Ridley.



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!

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