

inside OHRA
the latest news and happenings



IT'S THE LAST WEEK OF OUR SPRING APPEAL!



[Donate Now](#)

Greetings!

Dear OHRA Supporters:

Sometimes it's a struggle to share successes amid so much need. Statistics show that for every two people we move from living on the street into permanent housing; one person is becoming unhoused; and for 32% of those going into homelessness it's for the first time. At OHRA, we witness this heartbreaking juxtaposition every day, and I'm reminded of Charles Dickens' famous opening line *In the Tale of Two Cities*: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times."

Yet, much like Dickens' novel, we also see hope restored every day. We see it in the single parent who moves from a place of despair to becoming a motivated job seeker after we helped her secure Long-Term Rental Assistance following a job loss. We see it in quiet moments like when someone sits peacefully in the sun, smiling faintly, after a warm shower. Someone who only hours before, walked onto campus weary, suspicious, and hungry.

Perhaps the challenge is not in sharing OHRA's many successes, but in recognizing that we can't become complacent because of them. It's the challenges that inspire innovation and move us closer to lasting solutions. So, if sometimes I lean into the challenges rather than the many successes at OHRA, it's with a desire to stay focused, continue to improve our outcomes, and to keep you, our supporters, better informed.

On that note, this month's newsletter highlights the Jackson County Continuum of Care (CoC), which plays a critical role in coordinating services to the unhoused. As we continue to address the challenges of job shortages, lack of affordable housing, and changing federal policies, the CoC's work to increase capacity through system alignment and coordination is even more critical.

Just as strong partnerships among service providers make this work possible, so does the generosity of our community. I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all of our supporters and donors who have made our Spring Fundraising Appeal a success. Your support has helped make OHRA financially strong and focused on working toward the "best of times" in our future.



Dan Cano

Dan Cano, Executive Director

 (541) 631-2235 ext. 303

 danc@ohrahelps.org

 OHRAhelps.org



Finding Stability Through the Rent Well Class

When Imir and his partner, Grace, connected with OHRA last December, they were facing an incredibly difficult time of life. After experiencing multiple housing setbacks and periods of instability, the couple found themselves without a safe place to live while preparing for the arrival of their baby.

“We would be on the streets right now if it weren’t for OHRA,” Imir shared.

Since then, OHRA staff have worked alongside the couple to help them move toward stability and permanent housing. One important step in that journey has been participation in Rent Well, a six-week tenant education course offered to guests in OHRA’s low barrier and family shelter programs.

Rent Well helps participants build the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to successfully navigate the rental process. Through lessons on fair housing, tenant rights and responsibilities, landlord communication, application screening, maintaining housing, and avoiding eviction, participants gain practical tools for becoming successful tenants. Graduates also complete a personalized housing portfolio that includes identification, proof of income, reference letters, a sample rental application, and a cover letter designed to address potential housing barriers.

For Imir, those tools are already making a difference. He recently secured full-time employment as a caregiver and has begun applying for housing through property managers and private landlords. His Rent Well portfolio, particularly the cover letter explaining a past eviction, has helped him present a stronger application and demonstrate his readiness for housing.

“It’s been very helpful, and we’re eternally grateful for OHRA’s assistance and guidance,” Imir said. “We have faith in the things they’re doing for people.”

For families like Imir and Grace, Rent Well provides practical skills, stronger rental applications, and the confidence needed to take the next steps toward stable, permanent housing.

[Donate Now](#)

Staff Spotlight: Meet Our Development and Communications Assistant

At OHRA, every team member plays an important role in improving the lives of our neighbors, and we're excited to introduce one of our newest staff members, our Development and Communications Assistant, Julie Gillis.

Julie joined OHRA just over three months ago. She was drawn to the organization because of its strong mission and deep commitment to the Ashland community. Long familiar with OHRA's work, she saw this role as a natural fit and an opportunity to contribute to a cause she believes in.



When asked what she enjoys most about working at OHRA, Julie share; "Everyone has been so warm, welcoming, fun, and easy to get to know," she shared. "It makes coming to work a real pleasure." She also notes that having a very cool office dog doesn't hurt! In her role, she helps tell the stories that bring OHRA's mission to life. Through the newsletter, website, volunteer engagement, and other communications, she works to increase awareness, advocacy, and support for the organization. By sharing the experiences of our guests and the impact of our programs, she helps connect you, our community members, to the work being done every day at OHRA.

Outside of work, she enjoys writing, cooking, comedy, watching scary movies, and spending time with her family and pets—two cats and a dog.

She hopes others will take the opportunity to learn more about OHRA and get involved. "OHRA is a great organization to be part of," she says. "I'd encourage anyone reading this to get to know us. Come get involved, volunteer, and learn how you can support our community."

We're grateful to have her on the team and look forward to the many stories she'll help share in the years ahead.

[Volunteer Application](#)

Partner Highlight

This month, OHRA is shining a spotlight on the Jackson County Continuum of Care (CoC), a community and agency-led network dedicated to ending homelessness in Jackson County. ACCESS is the fiscal sponsor of the CoC and provides staffing and administrative support for many of its activities.

As one of eight HUD-designated Continuums of Care in Oregon, the Jackson County CoC brings together over 30 member organizations and continues to grow. Its



members include nonprofit service providers, housing agencies, faith communities, healthcare organizations and local government partners, all working toward a shared mission: to coordinate prevention and response services that address the root causes of homelessness.

OHRA is proud to be an active member of the CoC and a committed partner in advancing this work. Much of the CoC's work happens in committees and work groups that include governance, coordinated entry, housing strategies, regional planning, and more. These collaborative efforts help ensure that people experiencing homelessness can access services more quickly and efficiently while creating a stronger, more responsive network of care throughout Jackson County.

OHRA's Executive Director, Dan Cano, serves on the CoC Board. He noted that the "the CoC ensures that funds allocated to the county from the state are prioritized based on the needs we service providers identify through the CoC." He also noted that "by facilitating that in a coordinated way with shared data, we avoid duplication and improve the experience of the consumers who use the programs."

Other OHRA staff members contribute their expertise through Jackson County CoC committees and workgroups. Their participation helps strengthen regional collaboration, identify service gaps, improve communication among providers, and develop solutions that better serve our community. This work ensures that those seeking support are entered into services faster and also sets high standards of care.

At its core, the CoC is built on the belief that everyone deserves a safe place to call home. As the organization states in its description, "when homelessness happens, our community must respond quickly—with access to safe, stable housing and the support needed to foster healing and hope." OHRA is grateful to be part of this collaborative effort and proud to work alongside partners throughout Jackson County to create pathways from crisis to stability.

For more information, please click below.

[Jackson County Continuum of Care](#)



Development Corner

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



Development Corner: The Power of Belonging

June is Pride Month—a time to celebrate the diversity, resilience, and dignity of our LGBTQIA+ neighbors and friends. At OHRA, we believe everyone deserves the opportunity to feel safe, valued, and welcomed. That belief is reflected not only in our mission, but also in the extraordinary kindness we see in our supporters and community across Southern Oregon.

Every day, we witness people stepping forward to help one another. Volunteers give their time, donors share their resources, and community members offer compassion to neighbors facing difficult circumstances. Together, these acts of generosity create

something powerful: a community where people can move from crisis to stability and from uncertainty to hope.

As our fiscal year comes to a close on June 30, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who has already contributed to our Spring Appeal. Your support helps ensure that individuals and families have access to shelter, resources, meals, and the guidance they need to build stronger futures. Every act of generosity—whether through a donation, volunteer service, or community support—makes a meaningful difference.

If you have been considering a contribution, there is still time to participate in this year's Spring Appeal. Your year-end gift will help OHRA continue providing critical services while strengthening our ability to respond to emerging needs in the months ahead.

Thank you for standing with your neighbors, for believing in the possibility of change, and for helping create a more compassionate and inclusive community for all.

With gratitude,

Brandy MacDonald
Development Director

[Donate Now](#)

Connect with 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!

[Learn More About OHRA](#)

[Help End the Cycle of Homelessness](#)

[Visit our Website](#)

[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!