



Shangri-La Life Newsletter

 **ACCESSIBLE
EGG HUNT
DRIVE THRU**
For individuals
with disabilities

Saturday, April 3
Learn more online at
www.ShangrilaOregon.org/Events

Winter 2020-2021



February ice storm leaves challenges, damage in it's wake

In early February, an ice storm downed thousands of trees and branches. It caused widespread power outages for Shangri-La residential programs serving individuals with developmental disabilities or mental illness.

Over 20 of Shangri-La's 33 residential program locations were left without power for some time, many for 24 hours or more. One home went without power for ten days, and another didn't see power restored for 14 days.

Despite warmer temperatures quickly melting the ice, the storm left a wake of challenges, including fallen trees and branches on homes, in yards and on vehicles, food spoilage, travel difficulties, and communication challenges due to limited or non-existent cell phone

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- Tiffani Olsen, Residential Director

service.

Shangri-La's Direct Support Professionals (DSP) and program leadership worked diligently and creatively to meet critical needs. They rationed battery power and charged necessary devices (e.g., medical equipment and blenders required to puree food) in cars. They kept individuals as warm as possible with 'warm-up sessions'

in running vehicles and shuttled individuals to Shangri-La's Salem office, which had restored power.

Some programs transitioned individuals to hotels, although the availability of these rooms was very limited, or moved individuals to a program that had restored power or a generator.

"We learned that as much as we regularly focus on emergency preparedness, we have more work to do. Specifically, when such a large area is affected, and resources like fuel, groceries, and hotel rooms become limited," said Tiffani Olsen, director of IDD residential services, about the experience.

Shangri-La's operations director estimated the cost of damages to Shangri-La property to be around \$15,000. As of March 17, most debris has been removed and damages repaired.

Ice storms: Another thing you'll help us overcome.

Recurring donations help ensure we can stay mission-focused regardless of what life sends our way. Set-up your automatic, recurring *Better Together Giving Community* donation at www.ShangrilaOregon.org/give or to make a one-time donation.

**GIVE
\$10**



Courtne Young, operations officer at Citizens Bank, shows off one of the gifts collected at the Salem branch.

Donors reach new generosity levels with holiday wishes

Shangri-La's eighth annual Holiday Wishes Project provided gifts to 83 individuals with disabilities and nine families with disadvantages served by Shangri-La. Individuals and families with no or limited income and no or little support from family received gifts.

All-in-all, approximately 150 gift wishes – valued at nearly \$3,100; a new record for this project - were donated by Shangri-La supporters.

The project started in October with the collection of gift wishes from individuals served by Shangri-La. Some of the wishes this year included Pokémon wall décor, an assortment of cat toys, and a gift card to STEAM gaming. Wishes were then posted on virtual giving trees. All the gift wishes were fulfilled by donors -- a first for this project.

"Thank you to everyone who played a part in giving my children and I Christmas gifts. We loved them. Thank you so, so much," said Kai, a participant in Shangri-La's Housing Assistance Program.

Unlike previous years, participating businesses were encouraged to host a virtual giving tree instead of the usual on-site physical trees due to COVID-19.

"Our fifth year participating in Shangri-Las Holiday Wishes project definitely looked different for 2020. The [gift wishes] page they designed for us made it so simple for our staff to select an individual, shop online, and have the items sent directly to Shangri-La. We enjoy participating in the Holiday Wishes Project and were happy to see how easy Shangri-La made it for our staff to continue this partnership," said Jenny Hudson with Aldrich CPAs and Advisors.

Shangri-La extends our many thanks to the countless donors who donated gifts and the volunteers who wrapped gifts. An extra special thank you to **Aldrich CPAs & Advisors** in Salem, **Citizens Bank** in Salem, **Bledsoe Santana Team Realty**, and **Philadelphia Insurance** in Tualatin for hosting giving trees.

David finds comfort, voice and worth in faith-based goal

Virginian preacher and author, T.D. Jakes, once said, "If you can't figure out your purpose, figure out your passion. For your passion will lead you into your purpose."

David, one of the individuals in Shangri-La's I/DD Housing program, takes that quote and many of the other things Jakes says to heart.

"I listen a lot to T.D. Jakes. He's very inspirational," David explained. "Whenever I feel angry, frustrated, or upset, I listen to his audio tapes, and the power of God gives me strength. I thought, 'that's what I want to do. Because it helps so many people.'"

Jakes' sermons inspired David to pursue preaching as a career of his own.

While David says he was raised in the church, he remembers it wasn't until he was in his thirties that he decided to take seriously what the church had to offer.

"I was dealing with loneliness and darkness in my own life, and I had had enough," David recalled.

"People out there who are broken, lonely, or frustrated and they don't know where to go or what to do, I can be that person that tells them they aren't alone and that God loves them and He's with them."

David has dealt with anxiety over leaving the house

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Program closures allow for focus on integrated, community employment

After much consideration regarding mission impact and alignment with the organizational vision, Shangri-La closed its All Seasons Grounds Care businesses and coastal janitorial services, which employed individuals with disabilities, on January 29, 2021.

Although these programs have provided many meaningful employment opportunities to individuals served over the years, for over a decade now, Oregon has been moving away from sheltered and segregated employment services towards integrated employment at community businesses.

"We felt like it was the right time to change our employment services philosophy and fully embrace integrated employment, -- one person, one community-based job," explained Janet Yousey, CEO. "We are excited to enhance our integrated employment program over the next few years to help individuals with disabilities increase their skills and find meaningful careers with community businesses.

Read more at www.shangrilaoregon.org/news

better together

This list represents supporter contributions made between Nov. 1, 2020 - Feb. 28, 2021

Thank you to these donors and volunteers whose contributions helped people with disabilities and families with disadvantages thrive at home, at work, and in our community.

We truly are, *better together.*

Better Together Giving Community Members

* denotes new Better Together Giving Community member

Alan Apodaca	Julia Frisbie	Teri Marsh	David Sloves
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Greatest Need Givers + In-Kind Supporters

Karen's Sewing Studio	Stacy Erb
Maps Credit Union	Chris Fox
Barbara Emily Knudson	Kathleen Hecht
Charitable Foundation	Lowell and Grace Herr
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Sandra Bjorkman	Justin Neiswander
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Barrier Free Home Builders

Wayne Belmont	Michael and Susan Mahoney
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Judy and Jim Kennedy	Mary Lu Snodgrass
Lonnie and Patricia Kennell	Brian Way
Jane Klemm	Rose Wilgus

Holiday Wishes Project Wish Makers

Marisa Balbo	Winifred Ju
Dawn Brockman	Michael Kemry
Vicki Caldwell	Judy and Jim Kennedy
Donna Cote-Welch	Meredith Kuhl
Megan Denison	Sheree Peruchini
Debbie Denton	Martha Russell
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Volunteers + Service Groups

Ingrid Aosved	Anita Olson
Megan Dominguez	Laila Pickett
Gail Dominguez	Ashlee Ries
Marcus Gauna	Emiliano Ruelas
Pardeep Kaur	

missionmoments

David's story, continued from page 2



Pokémon Wish Come True

Colin holds up the gifts he received at Christmas through Shangri-La's Holiday Wishes Project. *Thanks again donors!*



Ready to Roll

An accessibility ramp was installed at a home in Keizer thanks to contributions by donors to the Barrier Free Home campaign.

and is a shy person, but he says that practicing with his staff has helped him overcome these challenges.

"David comes to me in the living room with his bible prepared and ready, usually on Sunday morning," explained Tom Fannion, a direct support professional working at David's home. "He reads a passage then asks if I have any questions. Sometimes I will have a few questions, or we will discuss the daily reading, but I always thank him for sharing his time and passion for ministry."

While David doesn't feel ready to go out and start preaching yet, David does talk about an interest in preaching in a church someday or become a traveling evangelist.



Working from the Heart

Carrie Wilson is one of five *Works of Heart* award winners from Shangri-La selected by the Oregon Resource Association (ORA) for their outstanding work as Direct Support Professionals.



Doing With, Not For

Stacie has been working with Alex on learning how to clean and sanitize her lunch spot after eating. The two make a great team!



Goat You to Smile

These darling goats made a special appearance at a residential treatment home putting smiles on faces and causing much excitement.



Making the LEAP to Online

Participants in the Life Enrichment Activities Program (LEAP) have been meeting online for daily activities, like this spring chick craft project, and socializing.

At Our Core

Mission: Serve individuals with disabilities or disadvantages so they may recognize and achieve their full potential.

Vision: Communities where all people are accepted for their abilities and celebrated for their successes.

Become Better Together

Visit Shangri-La's website to learn more, donate, volunteer or see current job openings.

www.ShangriLaOregon.org

If you no longer wish to receive the Shangri-La quarterly newsletter or have questions about this publication, email: community@shangri-la-or.org or call 503-581-1732, x318.

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Shangri-La is a 501c3 non-profit human services organization, tax identification number: 93-0509414.