



# NEIGHBORIMPACT NEWS

Serving Crook, Deschutes and Jefferson counties and Warm Springs Reservation

## HOPE IN THE FACE OF HUNGER

In March 2025, the White House announced a pause in certain programs that distribute federal commodities to schools and food pantries. These programs remain paused today. This is a problem, as federal commodities provide many staples in the food system, especially meat, eggs, dairy, flour, and other essential ingredients. Since March, distributions from the Oregon Food Bank—once two semi trucks a week—have fallen by 28 percent.

At the same time, funding from the Oregon legislature that has supported the food bank ended on June 30. That critical funding covered refrigeration costs, truck fuel and maintenance, and the staff managing a warehouse that provides about 84,000 meals monthly. The funding appeared likely to be renewed until an unfavorable revenue forecast created a billion-dollar hole in the state budget.

So, is the sky falling?

Fortunately, no, thanks to the generosity of our community. Despite the loss of commodities, overall food supply is down only 12 percent—and the gap is still shrinking. Donors such as Roundhouse Foundation, Albertson's, Cow Creek Band, and the Marie Lamfrom Foundation have stepped forward to help close the gap. These large gifts, along with smaller individual contributions, are helping keep the region fed. It's humbling to watch such a community response unfold.

We are not out of the woods yet. We know a 20 percent reduction in SNAP benefits is coming, and that will drive even more people to our 58 food partners. But we are preparing to meet this challenge with the continued support of our donors and community. We have met rising hunger head-on, and with your help, we have not backed down from the fight.

*Scott Cooper, NeighborImpact Executive Director*

With the help of generous supporters, NeighborImpact changed the lives of a record number of Central Oregonians. Here's a snapshot:



**FOOD BANK**  
715,510 INDIVIDUALS  
RECEIVED FOOD



**UTILITY ASSISTANCE**  
6,027 INDIVIDUALS  
MAINTAINED THEIR HEAT,  
LIGHTS AND WATER



**WEATHERIZATION**  
66 HOMES WERE MADE  
ENERGY EFFICIENT



**HEAD START &  
EARLY HEAD START**  
701 CHILDREN WERE  
PREPARED TO START  
SCHOOL



**HOUSING  
STABILIZATION**  
1,938 INDIVIDUALS  
OBTAINED OR  
RETAINED HOUSING



**HOMESOURCE**  
757 HOUSEHOLDS  
LEARNED TO BUILD  
ASSETS



**LENDING**  
5 HOME PRESERVATION  
7 DOWNPAYMENT ASSISTANCE  
LOANS MADE



**REPRESENTATIVE  
PAYEE**  
162 DISABLED  
INDIVIDUALS HAD  
FINANCES MANAGED

*Numbers reflect Quarters 1-3 of the 2024-2025 fiscal year*

## WE'RE LISTENING



Throughout the month of August, NeighborImpact is hosting listening sessions across Central Oregon as part of its effort to shape the upcoming strategic plan. These sessions give community members an opportunity to share feedback on how NeighborImpact can better serve low- and moderate-income families.

Input from local residents will be essential in identifying strengths, areas for improvement, and emerging needs. The feedback will help guide NeighborImpact in its mission to strengthen communities and enhance its programs.

For dates, locations, and additional details, visit [neighborimpact.org/listening](https://neighborimpact.org/listening).

## THANK YOU SPONSORS!

July 2024- July 2025

107.7 Gold Radio  
Abbas Well Drilling and  
Pump Services  
BASX Inc.  
Bend Anesthesiology Group  
Caruso Produce  
Cascade Hasson Sotheby's  
International Realty  
Cascade Natural Gas  
Central Oregon Health  
Council  
Central Oregon Radiology  
Associates  
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CO Daily News  
COHC  
First Interstate Bank  
Griffin Construction LLC  
Hooker Creek Companies,  
LLC  
Julia Gehring  
Kirby Nagelhout Construction  
Kollective Technology Inc.  
Lithia Motors  
Lonza Pharma & Biotech  
Mike's Fence Center  
Nothing Bundt Cakes  
OnPoint Community Credit  
Union  
Pacific Power  
PacifiCorp  
Pahlisch Homes  
Redmond Athletic Club  
Source Weekly  
St. Charles Health Systems  
Stellar Realty NW  
Summit Bank  
TDS Broadband Service LLC  
TDS Telecom  
The Brewer Wadsworth  
Group at Morgan Stanley  
The Kollective  
US Bank  
Windermere Central Oregon  
Real Estate

## TINY TASSLES, BIG FUTURES



This summer, more than 270 bright-eyed 4- and 5-year-olds celebrated a major milestone at nine Head Start locations across Central Oregon—graduating from preschool and preparing for their exciting leap into kindergarten. Wearing handmade caps and beaming with pride, the young graduates marked the end of an important chapter in their early education journey. Families and teachers gathered to honor their hard work and growth over the past year.

NeighborImpact's Head Start program plays a powerful role in the lives of children and families, offering not only early education, but also health and dental screenings, nutritious meals, and personalized family support. This holistic approach helps ensure that every child, regardless of circumstance, has the support and opportunities to thrive.

NeighborImpact is honored to walk alongside these young learners as they begin the next chapter of their lives. The future looks bright.



## FROM DREAM TO DOORSTEP

When Carlos and his wife Elena returned to Central Oregon after living abroad, they were eager to put down roots. But settling into life in the U.S. came with unexpected challenges—especially when it came to affording a place to live. Carlos worked as a landscaper and Elena at a nonprofit, but even with two incomes, the dream of homeownership felt out of reach in an increasingly expensive housing market.

That changed when the couple discovered NeighborImpact's Individual Development Account (IDA) Matched Savings Program. The IDA program helps income-eligible individuals save toward major financial goals—like buying a home—by matching every dollar they save with additional funds. Carlos and Elena applied right away and were thrilled to be accepted.

But it wasn't just the matched funding that made a difference. Through one-on-one sessions with financial counselor Jeff Belzer, Carlos and Elena learned how to manage debt, build credit, budget strategically, and prepare for the homebuying process from start to finish.

"Through the guidance of our wonderful advisor, Jeff Belzer, we gained a wealth of knowledge in the process of buying a home," Carlos said. "From credit reduction techniques, to budgeting, to lender info and so many other helpful tips and tricks for getting ourselves prepared."

With a stronger financial foundation and real savings to support their goal, the couple finally felt ready to purchase their first home—and make their dreams a reality.





## CHILD CARE WORKFORCE GROWS



Head Start children were not the only ones to celebrate a graduation milestone at NeighborImpact this summer. Through the Partners in Practice (PIP) program, 152 early childhood educators across Central Oregon took important steps in their careers, with 42 earning credentials ranging from certificates to master's degrees.

Partners in Practice is a transformative scholarship program made possible through a partnership between Central Oregon Community College, the Early Learning Hub of Central Oregon, and NeighborImpact Child Care Resources. Designed for working professionals in the early learning field, the program offers flexible evening, weekend, and online college courses to help participants earn one- or two-year certificates or degrees in early childhood education. Scholarships can cover the full cost of tuition, making higher education more accessible to those shaping the region's youngest learners.

This year, NeighborImpact had a special reason to celebrate: six of the graduates were staff members from within the organization.

"The PIP program is instrumental in increasing the number of high-quality child care slots in Central Oregon," said PIP Specialist Clare Nieto. "We are incredibly proud of our graduates—especially our own staff—and grateful for the opportunity to invest in the future of early learning."

## TAKE A BOWL, GIVE BACK



NeighborImpact's beloved Empty Bowls fundraiser is back this fall, bringing together art, community, and compassion to help feed our neighbors in need.

This year's event, presented by OnPoint Community Credit Union, Central Oregon Radiology Associates, and Redmond Athletic Club, will take place on Sunday, October 26 at the COCC Campus Center in Bend. Guests will enjoy a relaxed dining experience featuring gourmet soup prepared by Cascade Culinary Institute students, live music, and a beautifully handcrafted bowl to take home—a meaningful symbol of the thousands of bowls that remain empty each day across Central Oregon.

Empty Bowls is part of an internationally recognized effort to raise awareness of hunger and food insecurity. Proceeds from the event support NeighborImpact's Food Assistance program, which distributes over 323,000 pounds of food and serves more than 52,000 individuals in Central Oregon each month.

Tickets go on sale Tuesday, September 2 at [neighborimpact.org/emptybowls](https://neighborimpact.org/emptybowls). Seating is limited—reserve early to ensure your spot at this special event!

# MAKE AN IMPACT ON YOUR COMMUNITY

Give today! Private donations are vitally important to delivering on our mission of supporting people and strengthening communities. We depend on donations from members of our community to provide crucial services.



Your support helps us keep essential, life-giving aid flowing to the neighbor next door.

**NEIGHBORIMPACT.ORG/GIVE**

## About NeighborImpact

NeighborImpact is a nonprofit organization serving Crook, Deschutes and Jefferson counties and the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. It is a major provider of emergency food, energy assistance, childcare provider resources, housing and supportive services, early childhood education services and self-help programs for the economically disadvantaged. To learn more about NeighborImpact, please visit [www.neighborimpact.org](http://www.neighborimpact.org).

## Board of Directors

Thank you to our Board of Directors for donating their time to serve our community!

**Catalina Sanchez Frank**

*Deschutes County*

**Catherine Zwicker**

*Deschutes County*

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*Deschutes County*

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