

# April 2021 Newsletter



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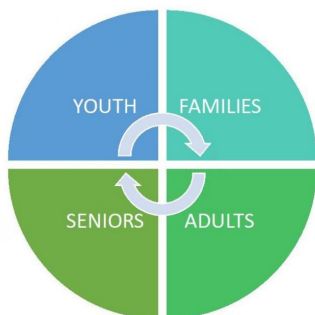
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## Our Mission

OCLA leverages technology to empower youth, adults, and families experiencing homelessness or resource-insecurity to find essential services. Our mobile and online tools break information barriers to offer our most vulnerable community members access to the help they need to make positive change in their lives.

## New Name - Same Mission

When WIN was launched in 2015, OCLA only served resource-insecure youth ages 12-25.



better reflect the broader community we serve, we changed our name from Our Children LA to Our Community LA!

[Visit Our Website](#)

## Founder's Corner

Dear Friends,

Did you notice that we have changed our name and tagline? Our new name, Our Community LA, was carefully chosen to declare our expanded commitment to support anyone of any age who is homeless or in need of essential services. OCLA's new tagline, Technology, Empowerment, Connections and Hope captures our promise to those we serve. We also have a new web home: [www.oclawin.org](http://www.oclawin.org)!

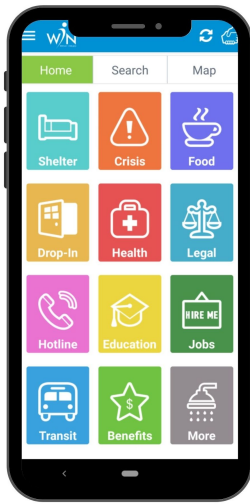
While the worse of the pandemic is behind us, many of the challenges it created remain. The number of people newly falling into homelessness is rising, domestic violence has increased, and demand at local food banks is at record levels. The need for the WIN What I Need mobile app's ability to break information barriers and empower anyone in need to find help has never been greater. Our dedicated staff and volunteers are actively exploring new opportunities and welcoming new partners to help us to spread the word about WIN. We are pleased to welcome our newest funding partner, the Carol and James Collins Foundation, who join you, our circle of friends and supporters, in making WIN and our other programs possible!

Thank you for your **support**!

Dr. Denise McCain-Tharnstrom  
Founder/President Our Community LA

[Read More About OCLA Leadership](#)

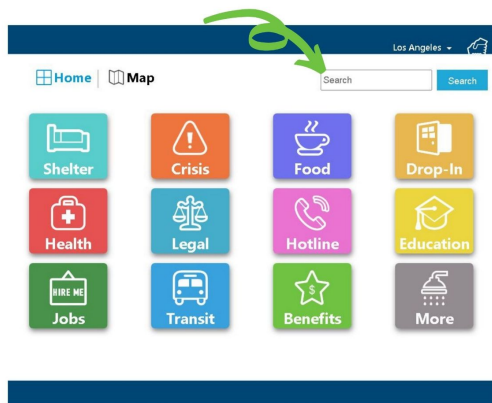
# Begin with WIN



WIN, OCLA's signature program, is a free mobile and web app designed to connect homeless or resource insecure youth, adults, and families to essential services accessible without a referral. Developed by Our Community LA with guidance from our region's unaccompanied youth, WIN users can search a database of over 2000 essential service providers and connect to 12 categories of resources.

**WIN Statistics: In Quarter 1 of 2021, there were 3.1k searches on the WIN mobile app and 2k web sessions for WIN/Directory on desktop.**

## Is Your Agency Listed & Up-To-Date in WIN?



If your organization would like to be included on our app, email [coordinator@ourchildrenla.org](mailto:coordinator@ourchildrenla.org). If your organization is already in our database, use the search function in WIN to find your agency and verify the information (hours, phone, services, etc.) is up-to-date.

**Check Your Agency's WIN Profile**

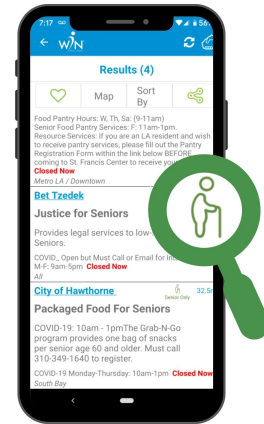
**Coming Soon:  
WIN in Spanish!**

OCLA is committed to breaking information barriers - including for our Spanish-speaking community. OCLA is currently working on

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## "Senior Only" Icon Added to WIN

Seniors over 55 often benefit from accessibility tools that help them find information. With the onset of the pandemic, seniors are more isolated than ever. OCLA has responded to meet this need by expanding WIN to include free senior resources, marked with a unique "Senior-Only" icon!



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## Team WIN: OCLA's Youth Outreach Interns

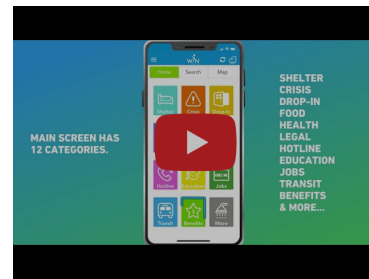


Team WIN (Left to right: Daryll "Relly" Brown, Tony Rodriguez, Perla Espinoza. Not pictured: Andria Dunbar).

Team WIN is a small group of LA youth, with lived experiences of homelessness and daily struggles for resources, who are learning how to use social media and other outreach tools to raise community awareness about the WIN app. Our interns work under OCLA's social media consultant, Tony Rodriguez. Team WIN recently shot and released "Using WIN" videos in English and Spanish.



WIN and how to set up a profile to better tailor your search results to what you need. The video is narrated by our intern, Perla Espinoza.



## April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

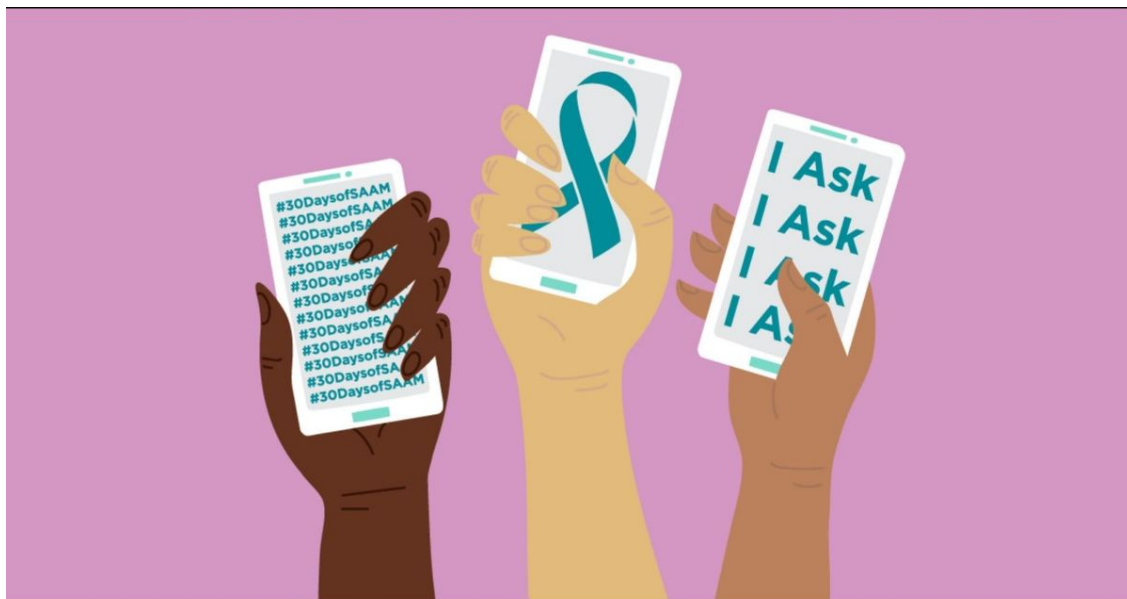


Photo credit: National Sexual Violence Resource Center

### Homelessness & Sexual Assault

April has been named National Sexual Assault Awareness month to raise awareness about the prevalence of sexual violence in all our communities. Few women are more vulnerable to the constant specter of sexual assault than those who are forced to live on the street.



## WIN 24/7 Helpline Resource for Victims

WIN's sidebar features a page labeled "I Need Help Now" that takes users to a list of 24/7 emergency hotlines, including specific numbers for domestic violence and sex trafficking crisis situations. Users can

**Did You Know: 56% of adult women experiencing homelessness in the City of LA reported also having experienced domestic violence.**

## In Our Community



### New Volunteer Partner - L.A. Works

Since 2021, OCLA and L.A. Works partnered to host two virtual volunteer events: one in January for **MLK JR. Day of Service** and a second with staff from **NBC Universal** in March. Together, both workshops hosted 230+ volunteer database researchers that helped us verify information on hundreds of agencies listed on the WIN app. Thank you to L.A. Works and all of our volunteers!

### Welcome Some of

Chrysalis, Community Job Centers, Clothing Rack in LA, East LA Corps - Salvation Army

## Newest Partners Since 2020!

Mourning Mothers  
Association (M.O.M.M.A.), People's Pantry  
LA, Union Rescue Mission, and Water Drop LA

**Did You Know: Shelter is the most searched for category (30.8%) on WIN, food is second (12.9%) and "More" is third (10.65%).**

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## Introducing OCLA's Newest Team Members



### Team WIN Intern - Andria

Andria Dunbar joined Team WIN in January, 2021. Andria is outgoing, passionate about outreach and eager to use her social media and video skills in support of getting the word out about WIN. We are excited to have her on the team!



### Outreach Coordinator - Kira

Kira Rodriguez joined OCLA in February 2021. She is overseeing our newsletter, managing the social media calendar and working with our community partners in support of our programs. To reach Kira, email her at [coordinator@ourchildrenla.org](mailto:coordinator@ourchildrenla.org)

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## Warm Send-Off to Our Program Coordinator, Samuel Reyes

Samuel has served as OCLA's Program Coordinator since October 2019. During his term with us he



partnership development, and volunteer infrastructure. While we are saddened by his departure, we wish him the best of luck as he pursues a Masters of Public Administration with a concentration in Public Management at Cal State Dominguez Hills!

## Support OCLA & WIN

### Save the Date for Our Inaugural Spring Showcase



OCLA will be hosting its first ever charitable showcase on Sunday, June 6, 2021 from 5:00-6:30PM! Artists and speakers will take the virtual stage as we raise awareness and funds for the WIN app. Please join us to support and empower people experiencing homelessness and resource insecurity across LA County. If you or someone you know would like to perform, contact us at [tinyurl.com/oclashowcase](https://tinyurl.com/oclashowcase). To become a sponsor, please contact us at: [coordinator@ourchildrenla.org](mailto:coordinator@ourchildrenla.org). Registration details coming soon.





Photo credit: SFV Community Fridge

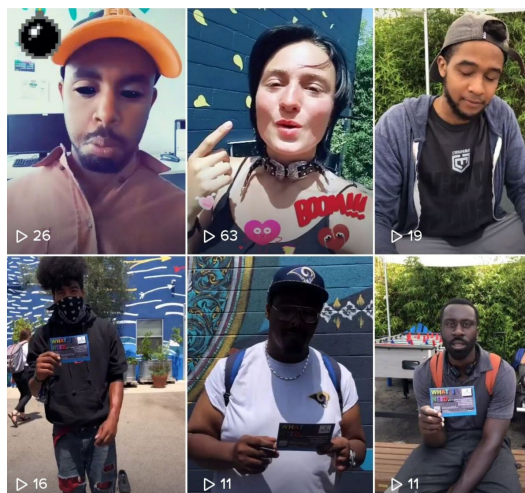


Photo courtesy of OCLA TikTok page

## OCLA/WIN Information Cards

We can provide you with free hard copies of our information cards (double-sided with English and Spanish text) to share with your community! To place an order, email [coordinator@ourchildrenla.org](mailto:coordinator@ourchildrenla.org) detailing the quantity you would like.

## Follow Us On Social Media

We use Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to share helpful resources with our community! Find us on Facebook and Twitter @ourchildrenla, @oclawin on Instagram, and @winwhatineed on TikTok!



## Donate to OCLA and WIN

We welcome all contributions to support our services!

[Donate](#)

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