

## July 2022 Newsletter



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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 changes in their lives.

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## Founder's Corner

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As COVID restrictions have eased, OCLA staff has attended numerous community meetings and resource events to raise awareness about WIN. Usage of WIN is rising quickly as more and more high-need communities learn about it. (See WIN analytics below!) WIN was purposefully designed to guard our users' privacy, so we seldom know our users' stories. I am happy to share this story which was posted in May in the GooglePlay store by a user:

*"This app has played a huge role in finding resources while living out of my car in Los Angeles County since the beginning of the pandemic...I was able to find showers and bathrooms for the day...Thank you for the most useful app I own."*

Mobile and Supportive Connections do Count! —I hope you will Save the Date for our fall fundraiser, the **Connections Count Showcase** on **September 17th** to benefit OCLA's WIN operations and outreach. Until then, stay cool!

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

[View Our Website](#)

## OCLA in South LA: New Story Church



food pantry distribution team at **NewStory Church** to raise awareness about WIN. Founded during COVID, NewStory Church's food pantry is overseen by Pastor David Kim. While LA has "reopened" Pastor David says the food pantry has continued because they "believe there is still a need and we want to be a part of meeting the needs in our backyard. We have met great people and regulars we stay connected with." New Story offers a wide variety of fresh fruit, and vegetables as well as staples, and hygiene supplies to over 200 families on the **third Saturday of every month**.

Jennifer Ortiz, OCLA's WIN Data and Community Organizations Outreach Specialist, was delighted that "Pastor David Kim was very much in support of OCLA/WIN and allowed us to distribute and discuss the WIN app with each community member that drove in to collect food bags. In March and April, the OCLA/WIN team helped staff stuff food and produce bags and then shared info on how to utilize the app with a predominantly Spanish-speaking population."

Pastor David, and NewStory Church volunteers have continued to distribute WIN flyers/postcards each month to all who pick up a food bag. OCLA highly values the relationship we have formed with NewStory Church and we look forward to continued collaboration. If you would like to volunteer at NewStory to get the word out about WIN, please contact us at [outreach@oclawin.org](mailto:outreach@oclawin.org)

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## Save the Date: September 17th OCLA's Fall Fundraiser

We are excited to announce our Fall Fundraiser, the **Connections Count Showcase!** This event will be a fun-filled afternoon that showcases talented individuals, a comic MC, and more! Please plan to join us to raise funds for OCLA and the WIN What I Need mobile app on Saturday September 17th at a lovely Venice venue! There will be opportunities to attend in-person or via live stream! We depend on donors like you who support our free programs to those who are homeless or struggling to avoid homelessness.

*Please mark your calendars to attend!*

## Begin with WIN



**WIN What I Need App** is OCLA's free mobile app that empowers anyone who is homeless or struggling to search for helpful resources in LA County. WIN connects users to over 2,200 free programs providing free food, shelter, healthcare, legal aid, jobs, transportation, education, and more!

### **Every Day WIN is Connecting People to Services**

[More people are downloading WIN than ever before!](#)

*In the first six months of 2022, 4303 users downloaded WIN for the first time.  
This exceeds all first time downloads in 2021!*

[WIN is being used for searches 24/7-- at all hours of the day!](#)

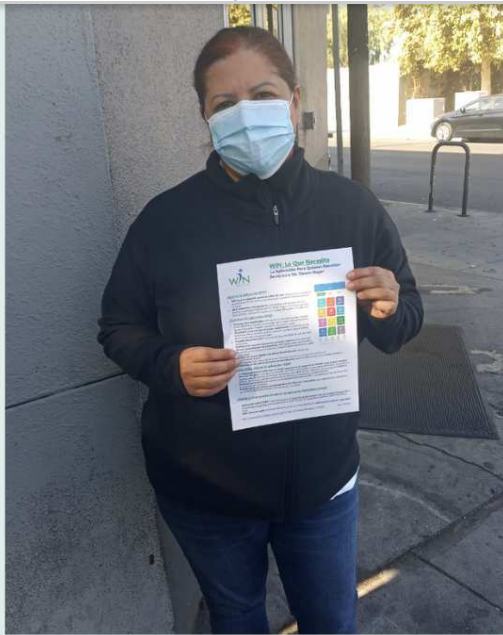
[Users are searching for help in all areas of the county.](#)

*WIN is being used in every region and in every city!*

[The most searched categories are shelter, food, money, jobs and more.](#)

[Jan-June 2022: Users used WIN to search for help over 16000 times.](#)

[Jan-June 2022: Users used WIN to call agencies for help over 1200 times.](#)



## MEET Ivonne Garcia!



Ivonne Garcia, a South LA resident, spoke to Eduardo Bracamontes, OCLA's Fall 2021 South LA Outreach member. She said that she is happy that the WIN app exists and believes that WIN can make a difference in the lives of South Los Angeles residents. She says that she likes that there's something for everyone on the app from shelter to food to resource alerts and programs in the area. Ivonne said that even if someone is not in need at the moment, it is still a good app to download in case you run into someone who needs it.

## June: Happy Pride Month!

Last month, we celebrated Pride Month. During the month, OCLA's Fact Friday focused on how LGBTQ+ individuals, especially youth have a higher risk of becoming homeless or resource insecure. OCLA celebrates and supports all agencies that offer LGBTQ-friendly and appropriate care!

Learn more about how to use the WIN: What I Need App to find specific resources for LGBTQ Youth! [Click Here!](#)

## Celebrating Juneteenth

On June 19<sup>th</sup>, we celebrated the emancipation of enslaved African American people. OCLA's Fact Friday's recognized and honored the many voices and leaders from the LA African American community and their valuable

Black residents of LA county are disproportionately affected by homelessness. OCLA's programs are committed to supporting black residents who are experiencing homelessness or resource insecurity.

## Community Partners

Meet some of our new outreach partners! Thank you to Mid City West Homelessness, Refugees & Renters Rights (HRRRTs), CORE Los Angeles, NewStory Church, and Culver City Backpack Project for spreading the word about WIN within the communities they serve!

We are always looking to grow our community outreach partnerships and welcome your suggestions! *If you would like to propose a potential partner (churches, food pantries, mobile clinics, cities, and elected official district offices, among others, make great partners!!)* please contact Genesis Torres at [outreach@oclawin.org](mailto:outreach@oclawin.org).

## Repair the World



OCLA's Volunteer WIN Database Project, which receives weekly support by the LA Works volunteer team, is expanding to include Volunteers from Repair the World who are donating one session per month in support of the WIN Database Project! Repair the World is a national nonprofit mobilizing Jews and their communities to take action to pursue a just world,. Through their fellowship, service, and episodic programming, they connect individuals with meaningful service opportunities to help communities, with the goal of catalyzing one million acts of service by 2030. Repair the World LA is opening an LA office and OCLA is exceptionally proud to be chosen to receive Repair the World volunteer support!

The first Repair the World WIN Database Project volunteer opportunity, led by Julie Busch, was held in June and was a resounding success. For more information on



## Team WIN



Team WIN joined the Culver City School District at their student/family Resource Fair in May and hosted a table to introduce attendees to the WIN app. Team WIN passed out WIN flyers and gave demonstrations on how to download and use the app in both English and Spanish to attending families and youth! OCLA and Team WIN were honored to join the Culver City School District at this important Resource Fair designed to support vulnerable families.

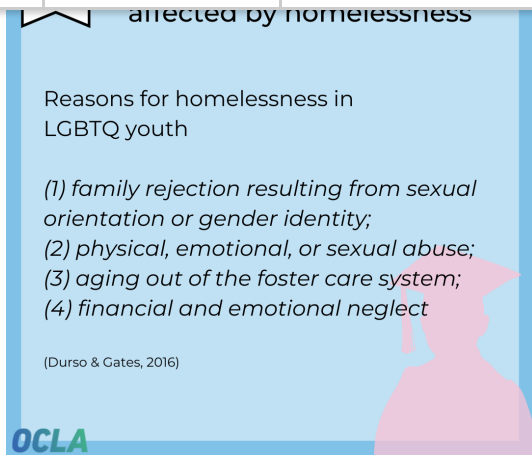
## OCLA Social Media

### Follow OCLA on Social Media!

Check out our Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook!

**Find us on** Twitter [@oclawin](#), Instagram [@ourcommunityla](#), TikTok [@winwhatineed](#), and Facebook [@ourcommunityla](#).

Our goal is to raise awareness about the impacts of homelessness while sharing resources. *Below are some of our past Fact Friday posts.*



## Donate to OCLA and WIN

We welcome your contributions to support our free programs!

[Donate](#)

[View this email in your browser](#)

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