

OUR COMMUNITY LA™

Technology • Empowerment • Connections • Hope



November 2023 Newsletter



BEGIN WITH **WIN**
WHAT I NEED
Technology For Good

Presented by



OUR COMMUNITY LA®
Technology • Empowerment • Connections • Hope

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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.

Founder's Corner

Dear Friends and Supporters,

I'd like to share with you some of the highlights from this fall this fall! Our Fall Connections Count Showcase, held on October 8th, was a resounding success thanks to your strong support. I am also proud to announce that in September 2023, OCLA launched a new housing survey feature in the WIN app. This interactive quiz enables any user to answer a series of questions to learn if they qualify for HUD housing and, if so, then advises the steps that are needed to apply. (see article below about this new feature!) And just last week, I was honored to be asked to present on WIN at the California's Research Bureau/Kids Data's statewide webinar on Youth Homelessness.

We are proud that we are continually strengthening our ability to support those in need. In the months ahead, our team, including new members, Amna Rustom in Outreach and Jazmin Soto on Team WIN, will be focused on spreading the word about WIN at community events and meetings, on community college campuses, and on social media and supporting our nonprofit partners who promote WIN among their clients. Supporting these efforts we welcome with gratitude our newest Foundation Funder, [the Leo Buscaglia Foundation.](#)

As you begin your holiday season, we would be grateful for your [donations!](#) All of our 'mission-critical' outreach programs are possible because of your ongoing [support.](#) *And remember, all gifts between now and the end of the year will be matched!!*

Thank you!

Dr. Denise McCain-Tharnstrom

Founder/President Our Community LA

DOUBLE YOUR DONATION!
ALL GIFTS MADE BY 12.31.23 WILL BE
MATCHED!!

STUDENTS - ARE YOU ELIGIBLE FOR HUD HOUSING?

BEGIN WITH WIN[®]



- 1) Download app
2) Select Language
3) Select Shelter

Eligible?

- 1) Homeless/Evicted
2) Fleeing Abuse
3) Living in shelter

Take WIN's HUD Housing Survey Today!

Take the WIN Housing Survey!

Supported by the YYA Grant Consortium, OCLA has developed a new Housing Survey within WIN! Based on their responses, users will learn if they qualify for HUD Housing and will also receive helpful information on how and where to apply as well as be directed to other helpful resources. Launched in September 2023, this interactive questionnaire is embedded within WIN -- There are two ways to access the survey: open the WIN app and either click on the Surveys icon on the dashboard or open the Shelter category to see the survey link. Just click the link and begin the survey!

Because unhoused students often do not know that they qualify for housing, OCLA is launching an outreach campaign to raise awareness about the survey on community college campuses! Read more Joranne Joseph, our campus outreach coordinator in our new staff section below!

[Learn how to Download WIN Now!](#)

2023 Connections Count

Showcase & Fundraiser





On Sunday, October 8th, OCLA hosted Connections Count, our annual Fall Fundraiser. Under the leadership of Event Chair, Melissa Schoonmaker, the event featured a dynamic performance by members of the [Urban Voices Project](#), a wonderful testimonial about WIN in the community by advocate Jennifer Ortiz, and honored trademark attorney, Charlene Minx. MC/comedian [Stephanie Blum](#) ensured the afternoon was tremendous fun. Attendees and supporters generously supported OCLA with their donations, sponsorships and auction bids, making the 2023 Connections Count our most successful ever! *Thank you* to all of our performers, presenters, sponsors & supporters.

Q3 WIN User Feedback:

- "WIN is like a Google app for services. I love it!" (SPA Resident, older African American woman)
- "I have so many clients who have been looking for something like this."(Latina woman from Hope the Mission)
- "The WIN App is truly a one-stop-shop." (Hollywood resident, older White man)

Food Insecurity in LA County



Did you know that approximately 1 million L.A. County households are reported to be food insecure? This number is alarmingly high. The Understanding America survey reports that as of July 2023, 3 in 10, (or 30%), of households in LA County

were experiencing food insecurity. This rate has gone up significantly from December 2021 (17%) and is well above rates reported in December 2022 (24%).

Communities of color are disproportionately affected. The 2023 survey reported that rates of food insecurity were more than 2 times higher among Hispanic/ Latino (38%) and Black/African American (38%) residents, compared to white residents (16%). (For more information read: [LA County Food Insecurity Research Brief 2023](#))

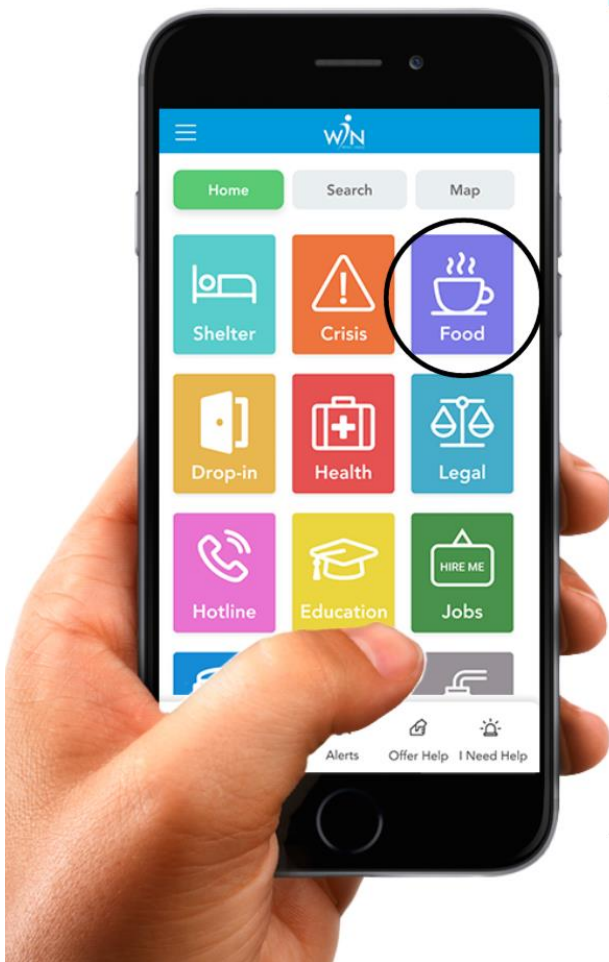
These statistics indicate how widespread the issue of food access is to Angelenos across LA County. Now more than ever it is important that people are aware of the resources are available to them.

If you or someone you know is experiencing food insecurity, use WIN to find and connect with a provider who can help you.

WIN: Food Resources

The WIN 'Food' tab is a great resource for folks to find free & affordable food in their areas. Anyone in need can locate food pantries/ food banks, and see their hours of operation, communities they serve, and contact information.

Use the WIN App to find resources near you!



< Food WIN

Filters Helpful info

Use my profile to narrow this search

Food

Select All

Groceries/Food Pantry

Meals

Senior Meals [i](#)

WIC Assistance (Women, Infants & Children) [i](#)

Clear all Search

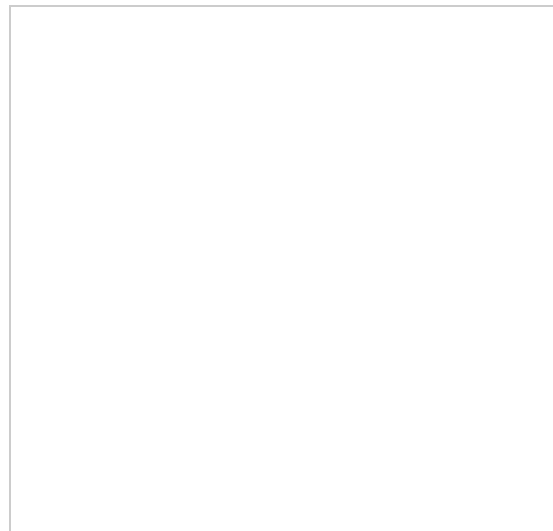
Team WIN

Our **Team WIN** members have been busy! Andria Dunbar & Perla Espinoza were recently featured on a podcast called "Young People to the Front" where they

discussed OCLA & the WIN App! [Listen to the podcast on Spotify.](#)

The Voices of Team WIN, Team WIN's blog, has filed a series of posts about college students struggling with food insecurities. Read the blog on our website or click [here](#).

Finally, Team WIN welcomed returning member Jazmin Soto who will be developing Team WIN's TikTok presence!



OCLA in the Community!

OCLA staff have educating communities around LA County about the WIN app!
Some of the community events we have attended this quarter include:

- Rio Hondo Community Resource Fair
- Compton College Farmers Market
- ELAC, LATTC, and Compton College WIN (What I Need) Focus Groups
- Venice Youth Network

- Volunteers of America - Compton
- Magnolia Science Academy 3
- Homeless Connect Days (SPA 2)
- South LA Outreach



Introducing OCLA's Newest Team Members

Alejandra Tostado

OCLA's WIN Data Coordinator

Bringing with her expertise from the nonprofit sector & data management experience, Alejandra Tostado joined OCLA to oversee WIN's community provider database. Alejandra's educational experience includes a BA from San Diego State & an MBA from UC Irvine. Alejandra is responsible for the maintenance and updating of the WIN database in English & Spanish, as well as raising awareness about WIN among community providers. To learn how to have your agency included in WIN, update your agency information or to obtain general information about how to introduce WIN to your organization, contact Alejandra at WINCoord@oclawin.org.



Amna Rustom

OCLA's Outreach & Communications Coordinator

Amna Rustom is an MPA student at USC's Price School of Public Policy & has a strong interest in supporting the well-being of marginalized communities. She joined OCLA in September of 2023. Amna is responsible for OCLA's social media, newsletter, and in building community partnerships to spread the word about WIN. Are you or your nonprofit interested in helping us get the word out about WIN in your community? Contact Amna at outreach@oclawin.org.



¿Necesita refugio, comida, o atención de salud?



Comienza con WIN
WHAT I NEED

Una aplicación GRATUITA y confidencial que te conecta con recursos gratuitos en el condado de Los Angeles. WIN What I Need® es el primer paso para obtener apoyo.

Descarga WIN What I Need® Hoy:

 No tiene teléfono?
 Utiliza WIN por Internet:
www.oclawin.org

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@OCLAWIN #BeginWithWIN
#WINAPP #TEAMWIN

NEED SHELTER, FOOD, or OTHER HELP?



Begin with WIN
WHAT I NEED

A FREE and Confidential App that connects YOU to FREE Resources in LA County.

No iPhone? Use WIN What I Need® at:
<https://oclawin.org/find-help/win-app-online/>





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@OCLAWIN #BeginWithWIN
#WINAPP #TEAMWIN

OCLA is distributing informational cards about the WIN: What I Need app to our community partners to share with their clients and neighbors. The Begin With WIN cards are two-sided; one side is in English and the other is in Spanish text. If you or your agency would like us to provide cards for you to distribute to your clients, please email Amna at outreach@oclawin.org and just let us know how many you would like! .

OCLA Social Media

Follow us on Social Media!

We use Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook to share helpful resources with our community! Every Friday we share a fact about homelessness and resource insecurity. Our goal is to continue to advocate and raise awareness for these issues.

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



ourcommunityla [Edit profile](#) [View Archive](#) [Ad tools](#)

239 posts 668 followers 403 following

Our Community LA (OCLA)

Nonprofit organization

OCLA is the creator of the WIN What I Need mobile app, a free tool that empowers people who are homeless or in need to find free helpful resources.

linktr.ee/oclawin



Outreach



Food | Comida



More | Más



COVID-19



Health | Salud



Education



Legal

[POSTS](#) [REELS](#) [SAVED](#) [TAGGED](#)



DONATE to OCLA & WIN:
ALL DONATIONS RECEIVED BETWEEN NOW AND DECEMBER 31, 2023
WILL BE MATCHED BY A GENEROUS DONOR!

[Donate](#)