

July 2024 Newsletter



In This Issue

1. Founder's Corner
2. WIN & Community Colleges
3. Fall Fundraiser-Save the Date!
4. Team WIN Spotlight
5. Pride Month
6. Cooling Center Alerts
7. OCLA in the Community

8. Thank You to United Way
9. Staff Updates
10. OCLA on Social Media

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 am proud to share with you some highlights of Q2! At the end of May, we wrapped up the first year of our college outreach pilot (see report below in WIN Supports Community Colleges) and are eager to move into year two and build upon early successes and lessons learned. In June, working with the social impact team at [Tzunu Strategies](#), we have begun to develop a targeted Spanish Outreach campaign designed to raise awareness about WIN more broadly within the Spanish speaking community.

While it is truly summer time, school is only a month away! We are excited to be working with the LA County Office of Education Homeless Liaison Department on a new "*Did You*

Know" Campaign: designed to teach both struggling families with school-aged children and school district staff around the county how they can use the WIN app to find help for themselves and their children. *The campaign will kickoff with an Instagram Live on July 11th, to be followed by weekly posts how to use WIN to find what you really need!* Follow us on social media and check it out!

As always, OCLA's work is only possible because of private philanthropy funding-- from you! LA County homelessness numbers failed to significantly decrease in the last year and those many of our resource insecure neighbors are continuing to struggle in an economy where prices have grown about 20% overall since 2020. Please help us offer invaluable connections of support to those in need by [donating to OCLA](#) today or considering a [sponsorship for Connections Count](#), OCLA's fall fundraiser!

With Appreciation,
Dr. Denise McCain-Tharnstrom
Founder/President OCLA

The WIN app helped me look for a home because my parents kicked me out of the house and I'm looking for a home and that app helps me.

Feedback submitted from user on 6/2/2024 7:53 PM

WIN Supports Community Colleges



Community College Outreach Pilot Report:

Year 1 of our YYA grant funded Community Colleges Outreach program was completed on May 31st. This outreach program was implemented on 4 campuses- LATTTC, ELAC, Compton College and Rio Hondo College. OCLA was pleased to have exceeded the grant target number of youth to be directly educated about WIN in year one. In addition, numerous youth were served by the HUD Screening tool-- 1548 HUD eligibility screening surveys were taken to the completion!

We also provided both "How to Use WIN" training (to 20 college staff in 8+ departments over the 4 colleges) and WIN outreach materials for staff to use to educate students about WIN & the HUD survey .

[Support OCLA, Donate Here!](#)

Save The Date: Connections Count

2024

Join us for...

Our Community LA's Connections Count Showcase

Auction & Raffle, Wine & Cheese,
Entertainment and Inspiration

Sunday October 20th, 2024
2-4pm

1210 Fourth Street
Santa Monica, CA 90401



Sponsorship Opportunities Available!
Please contact OCLA at grants@oclawin.org

SAVE THE DATE!

(ticket purchases
to follow)



[Click Here for Sponsorship Opportunities!](#)

Team WIN Spotlight



Pursuing College While Pregnant: Blog Post by Andria, Team WIN Member

"Pursuing college as a student struggling with resource insecurity can be a battle in itself but going to college while pregnant can be an even bigger challenge. I found out I was pregnant last year at the end of August and was extremely shocked about being pregnant. I am only part way through my community college degree and I have worked hard to find ways to study and pursue my education while working to support myself. Now I would not only have to care for myself but for another human being. In this post I will share some of the struggles I've experienced and discuss strategies I used to overcome some of the obstacles I have faced while continuing to pursue my college education while pregnant."

Read the rest of Andria's blog post [HERE!](#)

Andria gave birth to her baby boy in May; Mom and son are doing well!

Celebrating Pride Month



As we celebrated Pride Month in June as well as the many contributions of our LGBTQ+ friends and family to our society, we also want to highlight how homelessness and resource insecurity impact our neighbors and community members who are a part of that community.

- "28% of LGBTQ youth reported experiencing homelessness or housing instability at some point in their lives" (The Trevor Project, 2022).
- "LGBTQ youth are at more than double the risk of homelessness compared to non-LGBTQ peers" (University of Chicago, 2018).

The WIN: What I Need app supports LGBTQ+ youth and adults by enabling them to search for providers who have programs that serve them:

- Users can select LGBTQ under the Community filter. This will result in a list of programs that serve the LGBTQ community.

Beat The Heat With Cooling Centers Across LA

Have you ever thought about how seniors, families or others who are unhoused or living in a vehicle survive the heat? High heat can be extremely dangerous, so local organizations & government entities across the county open "Cooling Centers" to provide safe shelter and respite from extreme heat.

When OCLA receives word that these Cooling Centers have been activated, our staff sends out WIN Alerts to WIN users phones to spread the word that the centers are open.

Environmental Awareness: Weather Impact in Los Angeles

Did you know: There have been over **150 cooling centers** & areas dedicated across LA County to help our unhoused neighbors beat the heat?

LAHSA publishes a list each year of cooling center locations from all areas of the county.

OCLA™

Source: LAHSA.org

Environmental Awareness: Weather Impact in Los Angeles

Cooling Center Map



OCLA™

Source: LAHSA.org

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

OCLA In the Community



SPRING 2024 OUTREACH



Highlights from a few of our Spring events:

- Venice Family Clinic Food Giveaways
- Lennox Middle School Health Fair
- Santa Monica Probation Job & Resource Fair
- Denim Day - Union Station Homeless Services
- Pico Union Connect Day
- SPA 3 Connect Day

Thank You to United Way!



(Image Credit: United Way)

UNITED WAY OF GREATER LOS ANGELES

We were thrilled to participate in the United Way of Los Angeles's 2024 capacity building cohort.- which was designed specifically for local small nonprofits who are making a difference in the combatting homelessness! Many thanks to United Way Project Lead, Ed Braxton for his leadership and cohort management, LAHSA who provided cohort funding and counsel on grant seeking and to the fine consultants Raymond Diaz, (the Center for Nonprofit Management) and Jessica Huey, (BDO) for an invaluable learning experience! OCLA is looking forward to implementing the capacity building objectives in the year ahead!

Staff Updates



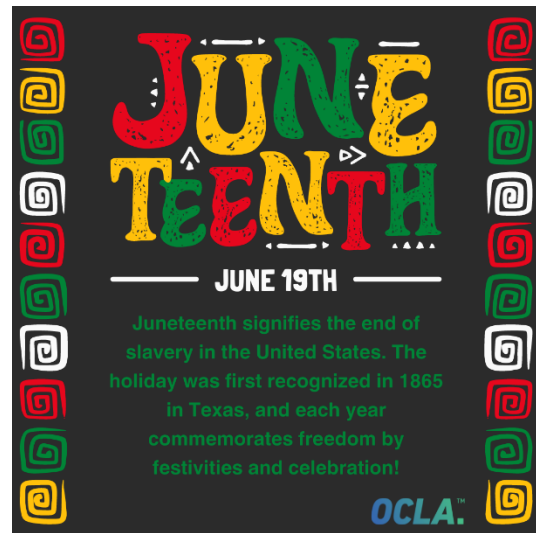
Saying Goodbye by Joranne, Campus Outreach Coordinator

Joranne Joseph has been an integral part of the OCLA team since April 2023. During her year with OCLA, Joranne led the development of OCLA's WIN college campus outreach programs, and curated intentional relationships with community partners. We are so excited to see where Joranne's future takes her, but we will miss her immensely at OCLA! Thank you for helping raise awareness for WIN across college campuses across LA County.

Joranne's Farewell:

My time working with OCLA was nothing short of creating great connections, continuous growth, and excellent development where I needed it most. It is a heartfelt feeling to be able to come into an organizational space with a vision of how wonderful the experience can be. It was incredibly empowering to these visions become a reality for those who want to make the 'WIN difference' and for everyone we connect with throughout our community. OCLA has patented a monumental stepping stone within the resource world and I truly feel that being a part of this organization shaped what I envision as success!

OCLA on Social Media



- This July, we will be starting a social media partnership with the LA County Office of Education! We will be sharing information about the WIN app to parents & families across the district.

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 @oclavin, Instagram @ourcommunityla, TikTok @winwhatineed, and Facebook @ourcommunityla



Donate to OCLA and WIN

We welcome all contributions to support our services!

[**Donate**](#)

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