



SUMMER 2020

NEWSLETTER



So much has changed in our world since mid-March. EChO has work diligently to best meet the needs of our clients while keeping everyone safe. One part of the organization that has had to change the most has been our food bank. On Monday, March 23rd we opened the food bank distributing emergency food boxes containing shelf stable items. Clients remained in their vehicle and staff delivered the box of food to them along with a few fresh food items of their choice. The items they wanted and staff would go collect those items and deliver them to client's cars. This was not a sustainable option for very long due to the limited number of staff we had to assist. With the nicer weather has come the option of moving the food bank outside on the covered porch! New shelves on wheels were purchased and a ramp was constructed to transport them in and out the front door. Clients are enjoying being able to choose their food once again and a limited number of volunteers have returned to assist in keeping the new shelves stocked. The rooms and doorways in the building that houses the food bank are much too small to satisfy social distancing requirements. Our new challenge will be preparing for cooler weather and transforming our current building space into a "COVID compliant" food pantry!



Did you know...that you can set up an online donation that is charged to your credit card monthly? All donations can make a HUGE difference ! To schedule your \$10, \$20, OR ANY AMOUNT gift, go to : www.coloradogives.org/EChO

Keep reading inside for more....

- New housing successes
- Wrap up of the shelter season
- Resale is OPEN to shoppers and donors





In January, Ray Dowdle (above) took over as the EChO Board President after the conclusion of Joe Niemeyer's term. Thank you to both for their service.

Since our last newsletter, we have welcomed 2 new Board members: Rick Whittlesey and Leslie Hess, pictured below.



We say thank you and farewell to long time Board member, Bud Madigan.

Board of Directors

Ray Dowdle, President
John Olson, Vice President
Virginia Hartmere, Secretary
Sue Dunlop, Treasurer

Jim Benson	Joe Niemeyer
Leslie Hess	Jan Stadler
Mark Hines	William Weisenborn
Pat Korbøl	Jean Wells
Gretchen MacArthur	Rick Whittlesey

EChO extends our appreciation to the following funders for their generous grant support:

- Colorado Blueprint to End Hunger
- Colorado Community Health Alliance
- El Pomar Foundation
- Energy Outreach Colorado
- J.M. McDonald Foundation
- Jefferson County "Hope" Grant
- Safeway/Albertson's "Nourishing Neighbors"
- Conifer Newcomers and Neighbors
- Colorado Food pantry Assistance Grant
- Community First Foundation

Contact Us:

Evergreen Christian Outreach

PO Box 1515, Evergreen 80437
Phone: 303-670-1796 Fax: 303-679-2721

Food Pantry:

Physical Address: 27640 Hwy 74
Monday 10 am – 6 pm
Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday 10 am – 4 pm
info@evergreenchristianoutreach.org

EChO Job Center: 303-670-7123

3721 North Evergreen Parkway Suite 6
Hours: Mon 10 - 5pm, Tue 10 - 6pm, Wed 10 - 7pm,
Thurs 10 - 2pm CLOSED FRIDAY

EChO Resale Shop: 303-679-8280

3763 North Evergreen Parkway
Located in the Evergreen North Shopping Center

Store hours – Monday- Saturday 10 am – 4:30 pm
Donations accepted by appointment

echoresaleshop@evergreenchristianoutreach.org

EChO STAFF

Sharon Smith
Executive Director

Kaethe Zellner
Director of Client Services

Kathryn Cantrell
Amy Lankutis
Rachel Saylor
Client Advocates

Jo Haynes
Food Bank Manager

Lynn Kutalek
Food Bank Assistant Manager

Mary Petrich
Volunteer Services Director

Cindy Costello
Bookkeeper

Maggie Jones
Paula Mann
Candy Kemble
Front Desk Receptionists

Nancy Judge
Development Director

Brenda Gibson
Job Center Director

RESALE SHOP Staff

Kim Gaudet
Manager

Luci Goss
Assistant Manager

Samantha Austin
Roxann Berland
Donation Processing Supervisor

Mary Sousa
Floor Merchandiser

Sheri Zoburst
Donation Clerks

Sue Foster
Lisa Keeler
Cashiers

Mark Duckworth
Bryce Pearson
Furniture Donation Clerks

Thank you to our 2019 Turkey Trot Sponsors....

Inglennook Energy Isle Casino/Lady Luck Casino Craig & Jan Stadler

Inspired Fitness Church of the Transfiguration Shirley Septic Sport-Kids Stewardship Colorado
Ambarry Gardens Anytime Fitness Evergreen Assist-2-Sell Beaver Brook Pet Center EPRD Evergreen Country
Day Evergreen Dental Group Evergreen Mountain Area Historical Society Evergreen Tennis Center GeoWater
Liv Sothebys Lutheran Church of the Cross Return to Sport Physio Rocky Mountain Spine and Sport Physical



Trans-for-ma-tion: *A thorough or dramatic change in form or appearance*

If one word could best describe what we do and what happens at EChO—transformation may be that word! It's certainly true right now as we look at the physical appearance of EChO. COVID-19 has altered the look and feel of our Food Bank, and quite dramatically I might add. Who could have imagined that we would be serving people from our porch, instead of inside? Adaptability, flexibility and creativity have led us to where we are today, and change will be forthcoming once again, as we look for ways to move back inside when the weather changes, while still maintaining a safe environment for all.

But physical changes aren't the only transformations occurring at EChO. People change, their situations change, and their life changes. Some transformations occur rather quickly. A person dealing with food insecurity can go from "hungry to fed" rather quickly after a trip to the food bank. A transformation from "homeless to housed" isn't quite as simple. It's sometimes like putting a big puzzle together. Lots of little pieces that all have to line up just right to complete the final picture. But when it all comes together—what a beautiful thing. And, what a dramatic change that is for someone!

Each of us has experienced a transformation that has come about in a response to a life event. Marriage, divorce, a birth, a death, a career change, an illness are just a few things that have the ability to make a profound impact on who we are. Good or bad, these events transform us. People coming into EChO for assistance are generally responding to a situation or event that has had a negative impact on them. But, with help, guidance, and resources they receive the hope and assistance needed to transform their lives.

What we say or do has the potential to transform a bad situation into a good one. A smile, a hug, a helping hand, a listening ear— all offered freely at EChO with tremendous payouts. Sometimes it's the little things that make a big difference.

As we look to the future, no one knows how much COVID will impact our lives. What will "normal" look like? It has definitely changed how we operate as an organization and how we as individuals live, work and play. Since March, 2020 every one of us has undergone a dramatic change in how we "do life"— we have all experienced transformation. Going forth we will continue to do our best at EChO to help our neighbors and our community by making the changes needed to adapt to our new normal. And we will continue to transform lives.

Sharon Smith

Executive Director



How COVID-19 has impacted and transformed EChO services

Number of new families coming to the food bank weekly (as of June 15): **102 New Families**

Food spending budget for the food pantry March - May: An increase of **235% over budget**

Summer Lunch participation has **almost doubled** from last years numbers

Average Number of clients assisted with Job Search: An **increase of 40%** per month

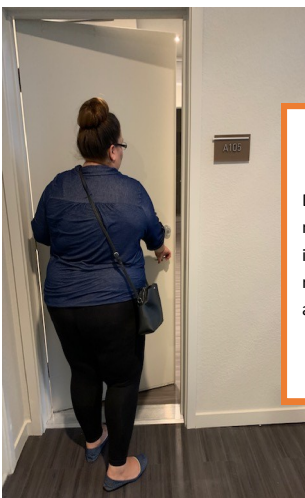
Number of Client Advocate Services provided: A **50% increase in requests for service**. Currently 450/requests per month.

HOUSING

Housing is a basic fundamental need of all people. Without stable housing, everything else falls apart. Food insecurity, unemployment, job related issues, medical problems -are a few things individuals experiencing homelessness deal with. At the end of the day, we all need someplace to go.

For years affordable housing has been identified as a need in our mountain communities. At EChO we noticed an increase in the number of individuals struggling with the high cost of living, and the number of individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Our response was to create a housing navigator position to help our clients find permanent, stable housing. In 2019 Client Advocate Amy Lankutis expanded her role to focus on housing. The timing was perfect as it coincided with the opening of Jefferson County's newest affordable housing apartments, Vista El Rancho. Amy was able to quickly develop relationships with Foothills Regional Housing representatives to help our clients work through the somewhat difficult application and approval process for this housing. Already Amy has successfully assisted 11 people in obtaining housing at Vista El Rancho!.

The new residents at Vista El Rancho moved into beautiful units, all equipped with modern kitchens and washer and dryers. And, with the help of EChO Resale Shop and donations from community members, our clients moved into furnished apartments! What an exciting time for everyone involved. The new residents will continue to work with EChO client advocates as they transition from homeless to housed. For many, it had been years since they had a place of their own.



Diane moving into her new apartment

Diane found herself recently divorced, battling alcoholism, and homeless. She spent time living in her car, couch surfing at friends' places, and staying in shelters down the hill. She turned to EChO for assistance and began staying overnights in our Shelter Program. She is now a leader in a local civic organization, has secure employment but is looking to improve with either a second job or a better job, and has moved into **Vista El Rancho**, Jefferson County's newly- opened, affordable living apartments in Evergreen.

For many of our clients, life choices and past circumstances have created barriers and challenges that prevented them from obtaining permanent housing in the past. Overcoming these obstacles requires extensive case management and it is often a long process with a significant time commitment from both the housing navigator and the client. The opening of an affordable housing development in our community, Vista El Rancho, and the addition of the EChO Housing Navigator position has provided an opportunity for a second chance for many to secure a stable, permanent place to live.

Identifying and obtaining affordable housing is still a challenge in our mountain community. Vista El Rancho has been a welcome and much needed addition, but additional resources are needed to meet the need. EChO will continue to develop partnerships with other county and area agencies and organizations to address the housing issues.

Stable and permanent housing is essential for all people. Becoming homeless or becoming housed are both transforming life events.



From “Homeless to Housed”More Success Stories

After years of unstable housing and employment, John came to EChO for shelter and assistance in finding a job. Always one to help at the food bank with chopping wood, John settled into the Emergency Shelter over the winter months. Our job center director assisted him in finding employment at a local grocery store and the store manager has promoted him to receive training to become a licensed butcher. Amy also worked with John to gain approval to move into Vista El Rancho. John is excited to be setting down roots, making new friends, and is looking for ways to give back to his community.

Julie and Sarah have been friends for so long, they consider themselves sisters. Sarah suffered a debilitating stroke some years back and Julie has been her primary care-giver ever since. Julie is a trained Certified Nurse’s Assistant and found work with the assistance of the EChO Job Center at a local nursing facility as a “hero worker” during this pandemic. Julie focused her savings on purchasing a car so she and Sarah would have a place to sleep while also getting Julie to work each day. When they learned about our Emergency Shelter, the two women stayed until Julie was able to save up enough for a deposit for a new home for the two ladies. They moved into a small cabin this Spring.

The 2019/20 Shelter Season at a Glance

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Nights Open	47	29	117	143
Registered Guests	28	33	28	35
Shelter Stays	109	36	411	705
Guests that Utilized	8	7	16	29

The “Stay At Home” order issued by Governor Polis was uncharted territory for our overnight shelter guests. For individuals without a home, how and where do you shelter in place? During normal times our shelter doors opened at 6pm and guests left the next morning at 6am. Now where could guests go during the day? The library, recreation centers, and non-essential places of business were all closed. Access to showers and laundry facilities also closed. The Evergreen Shelter Program (ESP) had just started operating out of Spero Recovery Center, a local addiction recovery center, a week or two prior to COVID-19. When the shelter in place order went into effect, Spero was able to obtain authorization through Jefferson County to allow the shelter to operate 24/7. Guests now had a safe place to stay with laundry and shower facilities and were provided three meals a day. Spero Center Director, Butch Lewis committed to being the on-site, 24 hour “manager” of the shelter program living with the clients. EChO staff provided additional on-site help, food and supplies, and volunteers brought in some prepared meals. At the shelter Butch and the guests cooked and ate together, cleaned their living spaces, and bonded during their time together. EChO client advocates met regularly with the shelter guests and worked diligently to help them prepare for the end of the shelter in place order. Working on identifying housing options became a priority. On May 8th, all were able to leave, with many moving into their permanent residences found with the assistance of EChO Client Advocates.

EChO Resale is OPEN



Your favorite Resale store is open with new precautions to keep you safe!


We are now accepting donations via appointment. The sign up link for a donation appointment can be found at: www.evergreenchristianoutreach.org

COVID-19 Guidelines and Precautions in place:

- **Everyone must have a mask to enter the store**
- A maximum of 20 shoppers at any given time and you will be asked to maintain 6 feet spacing from one another
- All shoppers will enter the store through the door in the men's department and will exit out the front door
- A Hand sanitizer station will be set up at the entrance for all customers to use
- Bathrooms and dressing rooms will be closed for trying on clothes
- Customers are encouraged to bring their own bags and they will be asked to bag their own purchases
- Any furniture purchases will require the purchaser to load their own purchases.
- No returns will be accepted
- If you are sick in any way, please do not come to the store

EChO staff will be taking extra precautions to clean the store before opening and throughout the day.





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EChO Job Center

303-670-7123

3721 N Evergreen Pkwy, Suite 6


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Volunteers Transform to Perform

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has. — Margaret Mead

When Covid-19 rocked the world, all volunteer support at EChO was suspended. There was no question about the necessity to keep the food bank functioning but immediate steps had to be taken to insure the safety of all involved. When the Resale Shop closed, staff was shifted to maintain food bank operations and make sure that lack of nutrition would not be a consequence of the pandemic.

A surprising response took hold almost instantaneously. EChO was the recipient of a barrage of offers of volunteer support. In addition to the EChO volunteers who were unwilling to be sidelined, forty-four new volunteers came forth from the local community. Those willing participants enabled innovation. Since many people could not come to the food bank, a delivery service to the homes of clients was established. At the peak of the crisis, seventy-six clients were receiving home delivery each week in addition to the large numbers that were still coming to the food bank themselves.

Gradually volunteers came back to work in the food bank with careful measures in place. While not at all the same operation, the food bank is returning to volunteer staffing numbers before the pandemic. Every box packed, every shelf stocked and every home food delivery has made a difference. While the crisis created uncertainty and isolation, because of our volunteers, people had enough to eat.

Thank you EChO Volunteers! You are our essential workers!

3 EASY WAYS TO HELP....

1. Connect your King Soopers Rewards card to EChO

This is done at www.kingsoopers.com. A percentage of your total purchase will be donated to EChO on a monthly basis. It's easy and once you are registered, this automatically occurs every time you shop at King Soopers.



2. Shop at: [smile.Amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) rather than just at Amazon.com

At "smile.Amazon.com" select Evergreen Christian Outreach as your beneficiary and then from then on, go to smile.Amazon.com to do your shopping and a % will be donated to EChO by Amazon. Note, your Prime benefits will NOT be impacted.

3. **Cars Helping Charities:** "Dead or Alive" - your extra vehicle can help EChO! They will pick up your vehicle and convert it to cash with proceeds coming to EChO. For more info: <https://evergreenchristianoutreach.org/donate/donate-a-car.html>

EChO

Evergreen Christian Outreach

P.O. Box 1515

Evergreen, CO 80437

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