

Appalachian Outreach, Inc.



Easing the burden of poverty.

December 1, 2022

Dear Friend of Appalachian Outreach:

At Appalachian Outreach, this year has been full of change. We celebrated the retirement of our founder and executive director of 21 years, Rose Hart; we know you are as grateful as we are for her vision and service! We began the year with a new director, who has now taken a new role in the community. The board is working together to guide AOI in navigating our new vision and mission, another exciting change this year. Our office now resides on the beautiful third floor loft of Trinity Lutheran Church in South Wheeling, near our operations center on Jacob Street.

‘What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.’

- Jane Goodall

Now serving Ohio, Marshall, and Wetzel Counties, we believe our new mission statement, “To ease the burden of poverty,” is more descriptive of how we serve the people of our area of West Virginia. We have become proactive in serving the people of these counties by polling the residents for their needs and then packing the delivery truck with the requested items and delivering them. We partner with local agencies and make regular monthly deliveries to ensure people in outlying areas have what they need to care for their families. We have activated the “outreach” part of our name to make a direct difference in people’s lives.

We made the change from serving the whole state of WV to our surrounding counties for a particularly important reason: Local need. The Northern Panhandle was once considered to be a more resourceful area of the state than the lower counties. But with the drug crisis, decline of the coal and steel industries, rising elderly population and increase of young, educated talent leaving our area, the Northern Panhandle is in no better economic shape than the rest of the state. In fact, a national study by the United Way shows that an average of 45% of the people in the three counties we serve are “the working poor”. These are our neighbors who educate our children, keep us healthy and keep our community running smoothly – and yet cannot afford the basics to take care of their families. Many work two and three jobs just to make ends meet.

AOI steps in to fill the gaps for our neighbors who need help between paychecks, who rely on SNAP benefits and disability benefits, or who are out of work. We see proud, hard-working people accepting our help with gratitude and it makes our work worthwhile. We utilized grants and donations to serve approximately 5,000 people last year thanks to the generosity of people like YOU, who understand that it is impossible to place a dollar amount on human dignity. We strive to be good stewards of everything we are given. Here are a few examples of how we have used your contributions in 2021.

- An Ohio County family was displaced when their entire home burned to the ground. When a local hotel gave them temporary shelter, we supplied clothes and personal care items for mother and three children. When they found a home to rent 3 weeks later, we furnished that apartment with a couch, four beds, a table, linens and towels and assorted household items.
- Another fire in Marshall County displaced a family of six to a donated trailer, where they immediately set up permanent housekeeping. We helped them with their needs in several phases, to make sure they had what they needed but to ensure they were not overwhelmed.

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- We helped a young family in Wetzel County replace a dilapidated porch that fell into further disrepair with the summer storms. The city was threatening evacuation until it was repaired. With both parents out of work, they were unsure how to make this happen until we made our first delivery to the area and were introduced to them.
- We helped a homeless man in Ohio County furnish his newly found living quarters.
- We provided living room furniture and beds to a grandma and her three grandchildren in Wetzel County. They were so happy to have furniture because they had been sitting on milk crates in their living room.

Yet, our mission is costly to continue.

While we rely on donated, gently used clothing, furniture, and household items to distribute to the people we serve, we purchase personal care items, cleaning products and new underwear and socks for them to help make ends meet. (These items are not covered by their SNAP benefits.) This year more than ever, we need your help with covering these costs to ensure that our neighbors get what they need to care for their families. Financially times are tight and operating costs due to inflation are high. Costs for gas for our truck and purchases of everyday necessities like soap, toothpaste, diapers, and feminine products have all increased. We want to continue to serve and be a dependable provider to those in need – and we hope we can count on you to partner with us to help change lives.

If you would like to give using a credit card, just hover your smart phone camera over the QR code below and you are on your way to our PayPal page! If you'd like to use the US Postal service, we certainly appreciate that. You may send your gift payable to Appalachian Outreach to PO Box 6761, Wheeling, WV 26003.

Please also know that you can help AOI as you shop online this holiday season – and all year long! Sign up for Amazon Smile and designate Appalachian Outreach as your charity. It costs you nothing. Amazon donates a percentage of every dollar you spend to AOI.



AOI PayPal Page



Amazon Smile

Thank you for your generosity toward our mission.

We wish you and yours the best this holiday season and all of 2023.

Sincerely,

The Appalachian Outreach, Inc. Board of Directors

*Melinda Thompson*

Melinda Thompson

*Wayne Hardy*

Wayne Hardy

*Debbie Michaels*

Debbie Michaels

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