

## FALL 2021 NEWSLETTER GIVE A LITTLE FOUNDATION



Dear Friends and Supporters,

Poets have always written...about the seasons, so inevitably they have produced numerous tributes, laments, elegies, ballads, and lyrics to autumn. Setting aside the more antique "mayest's" and "fadeth's" of Shakespeare and the "oft's" of Keats, we come to these lines from Emily Brontë's poem "Fall, leaves, fall."

*Every leaf speaks bliss to me  
Fluttering from the autumn tree.*

Like Emily Brontë, let's welcome this gentle season of autumn, with its brilliant foliage and soft sunlight, and remind ourselves to feel gratitude, perhaps especially for small things that bring joy.

We are grateful to all of you in our Give a Little community who continue to care for and about those among us who are struggling or in trouble.

As you'll see in this newsletter, your commitment to giving a little can provide hope to them in a number of ways. These ways may seem small, but they can significantly improve the quality of people's lives, and, in some cases, even give them a fresh start.

As F. Scott Fitzgerald's character Jordan says in **The Great Gatsby**:

*Life starts all over again when it gets crisp in the fall.*

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## WELCOME TO OUR NEW STAFF MEMBER & NEW BOARD MEMBER

At this time of seasonal transition, we are happy to announce our own special change—the addition of two members who will be central figures in the work of Give a Little.



We're delighted to welcome Sandy Soohoo-Refaei as our first Director of Community Outreach. Some of you may know Sandy from her work in international education at Linfield College for more than 30 years. For the past five years, she served as a university Director of Global Studies in San Diego, traveling to 15 countries to build educational partnerships worldwide.

Sandy is passionate about working with underserved populations, especially youth and the elderly. She loves to travel, bike, walk, bake, cook, read, work on art projects, and spend time with family and friends. She volunteered with us from May to September this year, and she is now looking forward to supporting many Give a Little projects in the future.

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We are also most pleased to announce that Brandy Penner has accepted a position on our Board of Directors. In addition to serving on the Newberg School Board, Brandy is a small farm owner and, in her words, “mom to three pretty amazing kiddos.” She is currently pursuing her Master's in Organizational Leadership at Gonzaga University and is a proud graduate of Washington State University, where she majored in social work. She says she “carries these experiences with her in every situation and believes that everyone has strengths to build upon.” Brandy also says that she strives to keep in mind the life experiences of those she serves in all of her decisions.



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## SPECIAL OUTREACH PROGRAM TO 100 SENIORS

**As the pandemic continued into 2021, we've been especially concerned about elderly citizens who may be housebound or isolated.**

Because of this, in early spring we distributed a short questionnaire to several hundred seniors living in McMinnville, Newberg, Sheridan, and Willamina to learn about their specific needs.

We received valuable assistance from a number of community partners, including Linda Behrens, McMinnville Coordinator of Meals on Wheels, and Mary Cassady, Resident Manager, Housing Authority of Yamhill County. An even 100 people responded with a wide range of requests. **One urgent need was for fans**, and we feel most fortunate to have ordered, assembled, and delivered desk fans (about 40) to everyone who asked for one just before the withering historic heat wave!



We also ordered and delivered a large number of other practical items, such as magnifying lamps (pictured here after assembly), transistor radios, gas and grocery gift cards, clothing, cleaning and toiletry items, and a humidifier.

**An unexpected success:** dozens of seniors, many of whom said they had no easy way of keeping up with the news or staying in connection with the local community, were grateful to receive subscriptions to the *NewsRegister*.



**In addition to the practical items, we have been arranging for services such as:**

- eye exams and glasses
- dental exams and teeth cleaning
- haircuts
- foot and nail care
- podiatry exams

We are being generously assisted by a large and growing number of local professionals who are cooperating with us. We extend our most sincere appreciation to them.

Since you, as our supporters, are also playing an important role in making these things happen for seniors, we would like you to hear directly from some of them.

**Here are some excerpts from the many letters of appreciation we have received.**

*What a special surprise to arrive in my mailbox! Thank you so much for the two \$25 gift cards for Walmart to help with shoes. I am so pleased to say my feet are very grateful. Again thank you is just a word. But I say thank you from the bottom of my heart.*

*When I was told about your foundation possibly helping I was in shock!! I had busted my savings to get fixed what I thought was wrong with my car. I got the estimate from my mechanic and I guess the ball was rolling. NEVER did I think this would happen. When I found out the Give a Little Foundation would be able to help me with funding, I broke down in tears and couldn't believe it.*

*There really are no words that can fully express the feelings in my heart when a person does something nice for me out of the goodness of their heart. I just want you to know that it means a lot. The gas card will enable me to go to Oregon City and meet an old friend I haven't seen but once the last seven years. He lost his sweetheart last October and the visit will mean a lot to him as well. The pandemic has disrupted all our lives, but every act of kindness means more than ever. So thank you for caring.*

*Thank you so very much! Not only did your organization gift me a gas card, but I've also got a subscription to our local paper. It really means so much that you care and are helping us seniors. We are very lucky to be able to receive your very generous gifts!! Your organization really makes us smile...We aren't forgotten. Thank you again.*

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## **CHEMEKETA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS**

Give a Little continues to provide special scholarships to attend Chemeketa Community College. Through the fine efforts of our Leadership Council member

Ginny Upton and Chemeketa Director of Development Jamie Wenigmann, this program, now in its fourth year, **grants scholarships to promising applicants who have experienced homelessness or are first-generation college students.**

For 2021-22, two young women students are each receiving \$1,000 a term (renewable for two further terms) toward their tuition. Their stories are heartening; here are excerpts from the "thank you" letters they wrote after learning they would receive scholarships.



*I want to thank you for this scholarship. I can't express the happiness I felt once I knew I had been selected. I have been stressing over not being able to pay for my classes because of my tight income. With your immense help, I will be able to enroll full-time this fall. My academic goal is to get my associate's degree at Chemeketa, and then transfer to Linfield University to earn my bachelor of science degree in nursing. I then plan to work toward receiving a doctorate in medicine. I want to take advantage of any educational opportunities, and challenge myself to become what I always dreamed of, a medical doctor. I am the first of my family to go to college, and will be the first to graduate too.*

*I was born in Mexico and brought to the United States at the age of six. I remember worrying because I didn't know English. In school I would always put the extra effort into being the student of the month to make my parents proud.*

*My family and I are so thankful for your kindness. I hope one day I can do the same for someone else.*

*The path to college has been an uphill battle for me. . . . As a first generation college student, there have been many times in my life when it has felt impossible to afford an educational path for myself. I was born and raised in South Dakota by my single mother, who spent her entire life ensuring I will have a bright future. We moved to Oregon when I was in eighth grade and it was the best change of my entire life. In Oregon I have been able to . . . develop core morals that have guided me through high school. My academic goals at Chemeketa are to maintain an excellent GPA . . . as I work toward a degree in Psychology. One day I hope to become a psychologist for special needs children.*

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## JEWELRY SOUGHT

Can we help you find good homes for gently used jewelry you no longer wear or want?



We are collecting again! You may drop items off at Currents Gallery 532 NE Third St. McMinnville or mail them to us at Give a Little PO Box 232 McMinnville, OR 97128. (See [currentsgallery.org](http://currentsgallery.org) or call 503-435-1316 for hours.)

If you stop by Currents, be sure to look at the beautiful display case the gallery has kindly dedicated to Give a Little. Currents sells jewelry for us in the shop and also online.

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## WE APPRECIATE YOUR CONTINUING SUPPORT



***We are immensely grateful to all of you who are longstanding or more recent donors, sustaining members, community partners, volunteers, or who lend support in other important ways.***

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As always, we welcome your ideas, suggestions, and thoughts, especially as we go forward with new plans and possibilities. Please contact us in whatever way works best for you. You may talk with our Executive Director Francine Fiore or send her an email at [francine@givealittlefoundation.org](mailto:francine@givealittlefoundation.org), talk with or email a board member, send us a comment through our website at [givealittlefoundation.org](http://givealittlefoundation.org), or call 503-857-2964 and leave a message (we'll get back to you). Stay safe and be well. We send our warmest wishes for the season,

*Francine Fiore, Bonnie Mann, Brandy Penner, Phillip Pirages, Sandy Soohoo-Refaei, Rob Stephenson, Ellen Summerfield, Ginny Upton, and Patti Webb on behalf of everyone at Give a Little.*

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