



FALL | 2017

OREGON ENERGY FUND'S
QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

POWERED BY COMMUNITY.

"I have worked with families in financial crisis who were struggling to pay their bills and were making choices between food, rent, medication and utilities. Some of them were living in apartments that were sweltering in the summer and freezing in the winter – conditions that are particularly hard on elderly people.

I also saw how resolving one problem can go a long way towards helping people stabilize their lives enough to gain control over other issues. That's powerful! That's why I'm so glad to know that Oregon Energy Fund is here to help."

**James – Former Case Manager
Portland Metro Area**

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POWERED BY PURPOSE

BRIAN ALLBRITTON



Family, Friends, Coffee, Faith, Sense of Community ... I asked you all to tell us what powers you and your replies were just wonderful –

demonstrating so many great examples of what motivates and inspires you. Your responses tell us that while we may be from different parts of Oregon, we have many experiences in common. Your stories help us all understand common struggles and the power we have to make positive change possible for our friends, family, and neighbors – even for people that we've never met.

An example that captures the spirit of this occurred just last month as Oregonians experienced an extended heat wave combined with exceptional amounts of wild fire smoke. The temperatures in the Portland Metro area were so high that they disrupted light rail travel, forcing people to find alternative ways to get to work.

However, neighbors stepped up to set up ad hoc carpools. Folks who had some room to spare in their vehicles helped others who otherwise would have suffered long delays waiting for trains in the heat. While this wasn't a lot of effort for those who offered assistance, it did have a huge impact on the folks they helped, particularly if they had breathing issues. It just goes to show that a little can go a long way and that every bit helps.

In our upcoming newsletter issues, we'll be looking at different areas of the state. Each edition's stories are a composite of the diverse and shared experiences of people working together to solve problems. Through the power of giving, neighbors are helping neighbors, just like our carpools.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Allbritton".

Brian Allbritton
Executive Director
Oregon Energy Fund





IT CAN HAPPEN TO ANYONE

Sometimes ordinary Oregonians find themselves in hardship situations that can lead to a financial crisis. That's when getting the emergency energy assistance they need to pay their utility bills can go a long way to supporting household stability. Below are four stories from the Portland Metro area that illustrate scenarios where neighbors helping neighbors through the power of giving makes a truly powerful difference.

SNOW BALL EFFECT

Due to a winter ice storm that temporarily closed down her work place, my roommate wasn't paid and couldn't cover her portion of the rent. This happened right after my dad passed away. So I was simultaneously hit with the full cost of rent, and helping my family pay for the funeral. When we received a higher than usual energy bill that month due to record low temperatures, the bills snow balled out of control. Friends suggested I check the Oregon Energy Fund website for resources, and before long, we were getting help with our energy bill to stabilize our finances enough to keep it all together through that rocky period.

- Gresham Area Student

STAYING WARM AND HOUSED

I live alone on a fixed income and I do everything I can to keep costs down on a very tight budget. To be eligible for my affordable housing program I cannot risk a lapse of payment or a shut off of my utilities, but this past winter was so bad my utility bill jumped up to more than \$300. I was so scared I did not have enough money to pay the bill this time, but a neighbor told me about Oregon Energy Fund. With their help I was able to take care of my energy bill so that I don't have to risk losing my apartment on top of everything else.

- Downtown Portland Area Resident

FAMILY COPES WITH LOST WAGES

My husband lost his job. Since then he has been seeking employment for over two months. Money has been tight and we've had to make tough choices between things like buying food and medicine so I appreciated the emergency help we received when we couldn't pay our utility bill. I think about all the ways this helps our family function at a basic level by providing lights, refrigeration, cooking heat, and much more.

- North Portland Area Family

AGING AT HOME

My parents are doing what they can to stay in the home they have lived in for almost 40 years. They receive SSI and sometimes it is difficult to stay on top of the heating and cooling bills when they have so many medical needs and it essential expenses to take care of. They used to donate to charity to help others; and they were embarrassed when they needed charity themselves. What a relief it was to know that Oregon Energy Fund was there when they needed to get help with their utility bill.

- SW Portland Elderly Couple

Today, **1 in 8 Oregonians** will struggle with the choice between paying their energy bill or buying essentials like food and medicine.



GET INVOLVED

Everyone has a role to play at OEF. Corporate employee teams and individuals alike can contribute in unique and meaningful ways:

1. Attend an Oregon Energy Fund Event to get to know us better
2. Donate or organize a fundraiser with coworkers, friends, or neighbors
3. Volunteer for one-time or ongoing projects alongside the OEF team

To browse opportunities, visit OregonEnergyFund.org/Be-Involved

IN HONOR OF

Crete I. Olson
by Mr. Delmar Olson

OUR FIRST ROAD SHOW

Special thanks to all of our friends in Vernonia who welcomed us to the Vernonia Friendship Jamboree Parade as we kicked off our first Road Show. We look forward to making more friends as we travel to communities across Oregon. We appreciate your support! Visit our website for updates on our travels.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

With the Power Gala just around the corner, we still have lots of opportunities to get involved. For more information, contact ann@oregonenergyfund.org



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**WE BELIEVE IN
POWER FOR ALL.**

WE'RE IN THE GIVE!GUIDE



We are so excited to be in this year's Willamette Week Give!Guide for the very first time! Stay tuned for more details in our upcoming communications.