

Birch

Community Services, Inc.

BCS Celebrates 25 years!

A lot can happen in twenty-five years. The passage of time marks life-changing events, memories, joys and sorrows, and so it has been for BCS. As we begin our 25th year of serving the community, it's humbling and overwhelming to see the enormous growth of this organization. Just as the Israelites heaped stones of remembrance in the desert during their wandering for 40 years, we are stopping to take stock of the significant experiences – to contemplate our piles of stones – and be THANKFUL for all that has occurred in arriving at this place of blessing.

"...we are stopping to take stock of the significant experiences..."

This year will be a continual process of highlighting memories beginning with the generosity of bags of bread from Union Gospel Mission and celebrating the efforts of the innumerable volunteers, board members, staff and participants who have grown BCS into a thriving community of working, struggling families who are helping themselves into sustainability.



It's not labor for the faint of heart! These last few years have been especially challenging for me personally, but as we move forward as a healthy, evolving entity, the support of so many and reflection on our piles of stones makes each task achievable.

I'm spurred on by these words:

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go. Joshua 1:9

Thankfully, BCS doesn't look the same as it did 25 years ago, nor will it be the same 5 years from now. It's a joy to stand with so many and delight in 25 years of growth and gratitude.

With blessing,

Suzanne

Growing in Gratitude

Grateful for Alumni



Jamie and Nate Snell

"By 2007, I was a full-time, stay at home mom with three kids under four years old. Nate's new job fell through when the housing crisis hit, followed by a couple of other short-lived jobs in struggling companies. Recovering from a marriage separation that equaled 2 rents, we found ourselves in credit card debt. Living from paycheck to paycheck, we sold a lot of our furniture and Nate supplemented our income with his Ebay skills. We needed BCS and were invited to join in 2007.

At BCS, we were able to get most of what we needed: our groceries, baby clothes and household items. The spirit of the staff at BCS was so encouraging. I was blessed to get to volunteer using my painting skills in the kid's area and for different signage needs. One time Barry, a sweet, Christ-like man, made me a latte while I painted. BCS was a gift of God's faithfulness to our family. I found part-time work, and then in 2009, decided to start my own catering company. We were climbing out of debt and stabilizing and in 2010 we bid farewell to BCS.

We finally found a space and decided to sell hot, made-to-order mini doughnuts, house-made chai and espresso drinks under the name of **Pip's Original**. Though our credit was an ongoing challenge, we were not ready to give up. Pip's was built with the help of many people and with God's provisions, and in three months we opened on Valentine's Day in 2012. Pip's took off and we paid off everyone we borrowed from. Looking back, BCS was a blessing to us because it encouraged our spirit of resourcefulness to keep growing. We were so blessed by them."

Jamie, BCS Member 2007-2010

Most people don't know, or sometimes forget that Birch Community Services used to go by the name of Birch Gleaners. This is the name Mary and her family remember when they were a part of this community 15 plus years ago. Throughout their time at BCS, they benefitted greatly from the product they received. Mary also contributed to BCS' operations as a volunteer driver for Zupan's pick-ups.

During this period in their lives, Mary and her husband truly learned what it meant to be resourceful. In particular, they learned how to reverse grocery shop. Instead of going shopping with a grocery list, you receive what is given and use creativity to develop a meal plan and recipes to go with it. Mary describes this as a valuable lesson she received during her time at BCS.

Most recently, after receiving a letter from BCS, Mary responded, "How blessed and inspired I was to reconnect with BCS, since now I am running a food pantry." In Mary's own words, her 'biggest take-away' from BCS has been gleaning from the depth of leadership and commitment along with care and dignity she has observed that the late Barry Birch & current Executive Director, Suzanne Birch (BCS Founders) and their staff freely give in their own community.



Tigard FoodShare Pantry

Now, Mary's own **Tigard Community Friends Church FoodShare Pantry** spends about \$400-\$500 on food and feeds 50-90 people per month. She also puts out donated household/miscellaneous items to share. For November and December she will be distributing gifts for children and Christmas decorations for families in addition to food. We are grateful for people like Mary who bring a part of BCS to their own community and continue the legacy of dignity, accountability and empowerment. **Mary, BCS Member 1997-2003**

Gratitude in 2016



Sustainable Families Program

"I get the opportunity to see hope in families; after they've met with me, taken a finance class, or met with their mentor, their eyes light up. It is a joy to hear when they talk about paying off debt, meeting their savings goal or just finally paying all of the bills on time. This is SFP. This is BCS." *Dino Biaggi, Sustainable Families Program Manager*



New Staff

BCS hired a new Development and Communications Manager, Madeline Allen; Office Assistant, Ameena Farrouge, and promoted Andrew Rowlett to Operations Manager. It's been an exciting year working with old and new team members, all driven by the same mission to serve working, struggling families in our community.



Increased Product

BCS continues to be abundantly thankful for the product donors who grow in generosity each year. BCS surpassed last year's record of 9.1 million pounds by bringing in over 9.7 million pounds of product for our families this year!



Program Growth

Due to increased product and our commitment to financial literacy, BCS has the opportunity to grow by adding 250 families to our program. All past and current participants (in good standing), volunteers and donors are encouraged to be a part of this referral effort. For more information on referrals reach out to info@birchcommunityservices.org



Gardens

For the first time we offered garden classes that families could use as a part of their home schooling curriculum. We are very grateful for the two families that donate their homes and space to serve BCS and its families through classes, events and fresh produce.

Mission Statement

The mission of Birch Community Services, Inc. is to provide a community where people can be responsible and accountable for meeting their basic needs, and to equip them with tools to overcome financial difficulty.

25 Years of Growing in Gratitude

Since 1992, We've Accomplished with Your Help:



8000+

Families Served



50M+

Pounds Redistributed



7

Replications throughout the U.S.



Countless

Number of Lives Impacted by Financial Freedom

2017: Goals and Challenges

Project List:

- Time to freshen up our facility with some new paint! Help give our warehouse a face lift. 😊
- Want to help BCS look its best? Know how to repair the inside of a box truck? We are looking for you!
- Safety! Safety! Safety! We have pesky potholes and cracks around our parking lot and in our warehouse that need patching.

Equipment Needs:

- Electricity is expensive these days. We want to shed some light on this issue and start replacing our older fluorescent warehouse bulbs with new, refreshing T8 LED bulbs. (A wonderfully generous volunteer got us off to a great start by donating 10 LED bulbs!)
- Ever been surprised by a cold shower?! Our aging water heater has been frequently surprising us in the kitchen. BRRRRRRR!
- Our electric pallet jacks are showing their age. Several are even older than BCS!

Ongoing Needs:

- Sponsorship of the Sustainable Families Program
- Volunteer Drivers and Helpers in the Warehouse
- Financial Mentors for Families

2020



Serve 700 Families Weekly

2022



100 Families Mentored and 40 Classes Taught Annually

2025



Building Acquisition

Join the Celebration! Grateful for You

Adding 250 Families

In honor of our 25 Year Anniversary, BCS will GIVE BACK by adding 250 families to our program; you heard it, 250 families!

To celebrate this monumental milestone, and in light of increased product, BCS will be accepting referrals for qualified candidates. If you are a current or past participant in good standing, donor or volunteer, you have the opportunity to refer others you believe to be a good fit for BCS. Join us today in giving the gift of dignity, empowerment and accountability to those who need it.



September 30th Blowout Event

Throughout the year BCS will celebrate by being continually appreciative of the amazing product, clear progress, but most importantly the people who make up BCS. Join us on September 30th, 2017 for an end of the year blowout event. We will honor top volunteers and donors, and everyone who has helped BCS get to where we are today. Interested in being a part of the planning and/or the event itself? Want to learn more about corporate sponsorship opportunities? Reach out at info@birchcommunityservices.org to join the fun.



Board Member Rick Teeny joins BCS Staff Member Madeline Allen and friends at the BCS Open House 2016

Grateful for Union Gospel Mission



The late Barry Birch,
Cofounder BCS, 1999

"My phone is ringing, God is calling." For decades Barry Birch, belated co-founder and beloved husband to Suzanne Birch, could be heard relishing in this statement as he answered the Birch Community Services' donation hotline. These words never held more truth than on an evening in September of 1992. A distant friend and former bank robber (you must ask Suzanne about this story!), while volunteering at Union Gospel Mission, was invited to creatively redistribute a bag of squished bread. Apprehensively, he called Barry's phone not knowing if Barry had a use for the bread and as they say, the rest is history.

Twenty-five years later, millions of pounds of food distributed, and thousands of families served, that single phone call from Union Gospel Mission changed the Portland metro community forever.

1.5M
Pounds
of Food
Donated

Founded by the good stewardship of over 40 churches that led to that transformative phone call, Union Gospel Mission has been "feeding the hungry, restoring the addict, and loving [their] neighbors" for over 75 years. Annually, Union Gospel Mission repurposes donations from the community to provide over 200,000 meals to people in need as well as supporting other non-profits like BCS to further touch the lives of many.

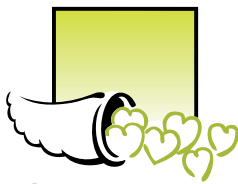


The families BCS serves are truly grateful for the personal generosity of Union Gospel Mission and their staff which has totaled over 1.5 million pounds of food. Their extraordinary example of good stewardship unknowingly helped start an outpouring of support for thousands of struggling families creating help for today and hope for tomorrow.



Grateful for our Generous Providers

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| 7-11 Food Stores | Graziano Produce | Pepsi Beverages Company |
| Airport Drayage | Grocery Outlet | Pilgrim's Pride |
| Alpenrose Dairy | Gulick Trucking | Pizza Hut |
| AlSCO | Harry's Fresh Foods, The Harris | PJ Food Services |
| Auntie Anne's Pretzels | Soup Company | Portland Food Project |
| Baby & Me | Helen Bernhard Bakery | Portland Nursery |
| Bake Mark | Henning's Cold Storage | Provvista (Chef's Warehouse West Coast) |
| Bay Valley Foods | Heritage Specialty Foods | Red Lobster Restaurant |
| BCS Teaching Garden | Hi-School Pharmacy | Rescuing Leftover Cuisine |
| Bed Bath & Beyond | Horizon Community Church | Resers Foods |
| Bell-Carter Packaging | Inmar Supply Chain Services | Roma / Performance Foodservice |
| Boys & Girls Club | Jazzy Bagels | Safeway Frozen |
| Centennial Park Community Garden | KeHe | Safeway Meat |
| Charlie's Produce | Kinco Gloves | Salt & Straw |
| Chef George, Inc. | Lessors Trucking | Sanctuary Church Food Pantry |
| City Of Gresham | Lowe's | Shriners Hospital |
| Classic Foods | LTA Bros. | Signup.com |
| Costco | Made In Oregon | Silk Espresso |
| Danner Shoe Manufacturing | Marsee Foods Inc. | SSI Express Trucking |
| Darigold | Maryhill Fruit Company | Starbucks |
| Dave's Killer Bread | McTavish | Sunderland Garden |
| DePaul Industries | Medical Teams International | Sunshine Division |
| Direct Avenue | Melody Ballroom | Supply Source |
| Donald Erdman Trucking | Microchip | Syigma |
| Elliot Powell Baden & Baker | Mildren Design Group PC | Taylor Farms |
| Legacy Emanuel Hospital | Mission Foods | Teeny Foods |
| ESCO Corporation | Nat Food Corp/Delphina's | The Barn |
| Everyday Deals | New Cascadia Bakery | Trailblazer Foods |
| Excel Brokerage | New Seasons Market | Tyson Food Inc. |
| Feed the Hungry | Northwest Children's Outreach | Union Gospel Mission |
| Franz Bakery Outlet | Odwalla | Unisource |
| Fred Meyer Swan Island Dairy | Old Chicago | US Bank |
| Frito-Lay | Olive Garden | Value Village Thrift Store |
| Fulton Meats | Oregon Children's Outreach | Ventura Foods LLC |
| Gartner's Country Meat Market, Inc. | Organic Valley | Winco Foods |
| Georgia-Pacific Corporation | Organically Grown Company | XPO Logistics |
| Giltner Inc. | Oroweat Baking Co. | YRC Freight |
| Goodwill | Pacific NW Outreach | Zupan's |
| Grand Central Bakery | Pacific Seafood | |
| Grayrose Marketing Group Inc. | Pat Fruth Trucking, Inc. | |



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www.birchcommunityservices.org

503.251.5431

***Celebrating 25 Years of Partnership
with Families in our Community since 1992***

GIVING PRODUCT.

1. Contact us 24/7 at 503.251.8860 or donate@birchcommunityservices.org
2. We will schedule a pickup at your convenience.
3. We show up at the scheduled time.

BCS accepts:

- Near and past expiration date food fit for human consumption
- New or like-new clothing and footwear
- New or like-new household items

GIVING FINANCIALLY.

1. Donate \$25 Monthly
2. Corporate Sponsorship of \$2,500.
3. One Time Gift of \$25, \$250, \$2,500



***Happy Holidays
from
the BCS Staff Family!***

To give back to BCS please visit our website at www.birchcommunityservices.org/give