In 2017 we celebrated the first 25 years of Birch Community Services (BCS): the process, the people, the successes and disappointments. Albeit challenging, each step on the path has resulted in growth. Now, we zealously look forward as 2018 embarks on the next twenty-five! Our new logo is a fresh reminder of our continued mission, and our passion to fearlessly guard the integrity of the Sustainable Families Program, focusing on financial literacy. Creatively guiding people on what often seems an impossible course is daunting, but so beneficial. There is change, sometimes radical change, but change most often through the baby steps that get families moving in the right direction – and even a baby step taken in the right direction is progress.

Keeping goals at the forefront and providing tools to accomplish self-sustainability remains the priority. We provide the encouragement, environment and education, but they make the changes themselves. Author J.R. Rim commented, “One thing God has been showing me is that I’m not called to save the world, just to point those He places in my life towards the right way.”

What a joy to be a small part of these transitions. Thankfulness is foremost in my heart these days. This community feeds me with more than food, but with inspiration and support. I’m blessed and humbled to serve in the years to come.

Always grateful,

Suzanne Birch, BCS staff, board members and the Gresham Chamber of Commerce celebrate BCS’ 25 year anniversary with a ribbon cutting on Sept. 29th, 2017.
Our Program: What We Do

**THE SUSTAINABLE FAMILIES PROGRAM**

Our mission 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.

BCS is a financial literacy program that empowers working, struggling families to become self-sustainable. We do this by providing weekly access to donated food, clothing, and household items, but more importantly, by providing families with the tools they need to move forward.

"This class gave us hope for a future that will be full of giving. It helped us strengthen and fortify the legacy we are leaving for our son."

— BCS PARTICIPANT

FALL 2017

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*Dino Biaggi, Sustainable Families Program Manager, teaches parents how to involve their children when discussing money.*

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Graduate!
2017 Snapshot: A Closer Look

- Families Served: 622
- Classes Taught: 15
- Financial Meetings: 446
- Families Graduated: 61
- Volunteer Hours: 45,000+

Upon joining the program, and on an annual basis, each family meets with our Program Manager.

"[The class] was very thought provoking and informative. It made us realize we have a lot of work to do as a couple and family. We didn’t discuss these things prior to marriage and now 8 years in, we need to, and that’s a little scary. I feel we have the tools now to start the process and be successful navigating this new path."

— BCS Participant
FEBRUARY 2017
Highlights: 2017

Program

“This past year we launched BCS’ own personal finance class, re$ta$t. This course focuses on helping families revamp their financial plan. It is very exciting to witness the transformation in the first cohort of families.”
- Dino Biaggi, SFP Manager

Gardens

BCS has two teaching gardens which serve as an avenue for families to become further sustainable by learning how to garden, eat healthier and save. Participants have the opportunity to learn hands-on how to tend the vegetable gardening cycles and processes, and are encouraged to begin their own family gardens as a practice.

Events

Annually, BCS holds a Breakfast with Birch, an Open House and a Replication Seminar. This year BCS participated in a true FUNdraiser with Daniel House, a local home design studio, which helped raise almost $10,000 through a delightful croquet event. We enjoyed this so much that we will be hosting our own version in 2018; stay tuned!

Staff

BCS hired a new office person and two new warehouse people. Each week, families are personally greeted by BCS staff, creating a community that embodies dignity, accountability and growth. Relationships are the backbone of BCS’ success.
Donor Spotlight: 2017

This year, BCS received over 9.5 million pounds of food, clothing and household items from over 250 donors. We are deeply grateful for all of our partnerships and would not be able to serve our families well without their generosity. Below we highlight 3 very special donors for their long-term commitment to the empowerment of working, struggling families.

**DANNER BOOTS**
Donor Since 1998

Danner’s remarkable craftsmanship and immense generosity has been outfitting working-struggling families for nearly twenty years as they take their first steps towards financial sustainability.

**CLASSIC FOODS**
Donor Since 1993

Since the very beginning, 25 years ago, Classic Foods has been treating BCS families with the freshest pastas and delectable spices from around the world, inspiring hope and culinary excellence with every meal.

**McTAVISH SHORTBREAD**
Donor Since 1997

McTavish’s high quality baked goods have been bringing smiles and full bellies to BCS for decades.

How to Donate Product:

- Contact us 24/7 at 503 251 8860 or donate@bsci.org
- We will schedule a pickup at your convenience
- We will show up at the scheduled time

This year, BCS received a donation of over 40 pallets from Chef’s Cut Real Jerky.
Thankful for a Wonderful Year

Open House: 25 years
Celebrating 25 Years of Growing in Gratitude
In September, we held our anniversary event which included over 600 guests and 25 booths representing our top product donors. The day was filled with alumni stories from the beginning days of BCS up until 2016. Attendees enjoyed samplers from our donors while also learning the beautiful history of BCS.

Recognition
- Oregon Recycler of the Year 2017
- Rotary Ethics in Business Award 2017
- 100 Best Green Workplaces in Oregon 2017
- 100 Best Nonprofits to Work for in Oregon 2017

2018: Goals and Challenges

Project List
- Replacement of fluorescent warehouse bulbs with LEDs

Equipment Needs
- Our warehouse water heater is aging quickly and needs to be replaced. It would be wonderful to save money and decrease our electricity consumption by upgrading to a tankless water heater.
- An in-ground warehouse floor pallet scale would help make operations more efficient but more importantly, much safer.

Ongoing Needs
- Financial sponsorship of the Sustainable Families Program
- Volunteer drivers and helpers in the warehouse

BHAG (Big Hairy Audacious Goal!)
To own our own building 😊
Generous Providers 2017

7-11
Airport Drayage
Al's Garden Centers
Albertsons
Alpenrose Dairy
Angels of God
Associated Global Systems
Auntie Anne's Pretzels
Baby & Me
Bake Mark
Bay Valley Foods
BCS' Baker Garden
Bed Bath & Beyond
Bell-Carter Packaging
Blackwell Blue Trucking
Bonneville Power Administration
Bridgetown Natural Foods
Bridgetown Trucking Inc.
CarQuest
Centennial Park Community Garden
Charlie's Produce
Chef George, Inc.
Chef's Cut Real Jerky
Children's Club, Inc.
City Bible Church / Hope Resources
City Of Gresham
Clackamas County Gleaners
Classic Foods
Columbia Gorge Helping Hands
Cooks Meat
Costco
Crossroads Food Bank
CU Business Group LLC
Danner Shoe Manufacturing
Darigold
Dave's Killer Bread
Deja Vu Consignment
DeLaSalle High School
Diamond Line
Emanuel Hospital (Legacy)
Everyday Deals
Excel Brokerage
Faithfull Disciples
Fred Meyer Swan Island Dairy
Freedom House Ministries
Frito-Lay
Fulton Meats
Gartner's Country Meat Market, Inc.
Georgia Pacific
Giltnor Inc.
God's Portion
Goodwill
Grand Central Bakery
Grayrose Marketing Group Inc.
Graziano Produce
Grocery Outlet
Gulick Trucking
Harry's Fresh Foods
Helen Bernhard Bakery
Henningsen Cold Storage
Heritage Specialty Foods
Hi-School Pharmacy
Hope Station Community Services
Horizon Community Church
Hyster
Impact Northwest
Inmar Supply Chain Services
Inn His Care
KeHe
Kinco Gloves
Life Christian Center
Lowes
Made In Oregon
Magno-Humphries Labs
Marsee Foods Inc.
Maryhill Fruit Company
McTavish
Medical Teams International
Melody Ballroom
Mercantile Portland
Microchip
Mildren Design Group PC
Morash Meats
Need 2 Feed
New Cascadia Bakery
New Seasons Market
Northwest Children's Outreach
Nossa Coffee
NW Paper Box
Oaks Park
Odwalla
Old Chicago
Olive Garden
Oregon Children's Outreach
Oregon Humane Society
Organic Valley
Organically Grown Company
Oroweat Baking Co.
Pacific NW Outreach
Pacific Seafood
Pass It On
Pat Fruth Trucking, Inc.
Pepsi Beverages Company
Pilgrim's Pride
Pizza Hut Store
Plato's Closet
Portland Adventist
Portland Food Project
Portland Fruit
Portland Nursery
Portland Public Schools
Portland Rescue Mission
Potluck in the Park
Provvista
QVC
Red Lobster Restaurant
Rescuing Leftover Cuisine
Resers Foods
Reynolds School
Roma / Performance Foodservice
Safeway Frozen
Safeway Meat
Salt & Straw
Sanctuary Church Food Pantry
Shamrock Foods
Shepherd's Door
Shriners Hospital
Silk Espresso
Skagit County Gleaners
Snow Cap
Starbucks
Sunderland Garden
Sunset Presbyterian Church
Sunshine Division
Sunshine Pantry
Sysco
Taylor Farms
Teeny Foods
The Barn
The Pumpkin Patch
Trailblazer Foods
Tri High Trucking
Trident Seafood
Tuesday Morning
TWT
Union Gospel Mission
Unisource
US Bank
Value Village Thrift Store
Ventura Foods LLC
Verdura Culinary Gardens
Walgreens
Wayne Farms
Winco Foods
WonGen Central
XPO Logistics
Zarephath's Pantry
Merry Christmas from the BCS staff!

Want to get involved?
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info@bcsi.org
17780 NE San Rafael, Portland, OR 97230

Finances 🔄 Time 🔄 Resources
To learn more or donate to BCS please visit our website at www.bcsi.org