

*"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,
so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope."
Romans 15:13*



The Outreach

Winter 2020 Vol. 14 Issue 1

Message from our Executive Director



Last winter my parents and I were downtown Spokane when we noticed a homeless man sitting under a parking garage without a coat and only one blanket. We stopped and spoke with him for a little bit and asked if there was anything he needed. He said he would love a cup of hot coffee to warm

up his hands. We gave him our gloves and told him we would be happy to get him a cup of coffee. We were concerned to leave him outside overnight in his condition. I made a few calls to the local warming shelters and we found out that Truth Ministries had beds open that night. We asked him if he would like to stay there for the night to get out of the cold. He was a little hesitate due to some triggers he has from past shelter experiences but he decided to give it a try. Because there were three of us we felt comfortable giving him a ride to Truth Ministries (I would not have done this alone). It took him quite a while to stand up and get into our car because his feet were so cold. He told us he had taken his shoes off because they were so wet, his coat and other blanket were wet as well. When we arrived at Truth Ministries we took him inside and helped him get signed in and the staff were AMAZING. A few other homeless gentlemen introduced themselves to us and told our new friend that they were happy to have him there for the night. One of the men was telling others about this great FREE clothing bank up on Mission Ave where he got his coat and how they provide warm clothing

to those in need. I was taken by surprise and quickly realized he was talking about MCOC. Our new friend seemed very comfortable at Truth Ministries when we left and he will now have a bed there every night that he would like to stay.

I wanted to share this story for two reasons. First, I want to thank you all again for everything you do here at MCOC. Because of you one gentleman had a warm coat and was sharing the experience he had here with others that might be in need. Secondly, I want to share something that has been on my heart lately and that is the need for compassion and love for those in need in our community. We didn't get a lot of information about the gentlemen or how he ended up on the streets but that is okay, it is not our job to judge or interrogate these individuals on how they ended up where they are. Our job is strictly to love others. So, I pray that the next time you see a homeless man or women under a bridge or on the sidewalk please don't ignore them. You don't have to take them anywhere, buy them anything or even carry on a conversation. But if you could just smile and say hello it would mean more to them than you know (of course please use common sense and do not put yourself in an unsafe situation). My hope this Christmas season is for those sleeping on the street, in their cars, fleeing domestic violence or simply having a hard time to know that they are loved. That there are places for them to go that will make them feel welcome, safe and loved. I am so proud that MCOC is one of those places and that all of you make sure our customers feel cared for and welcome here.

-Ali Norris

MCOCCovid Update

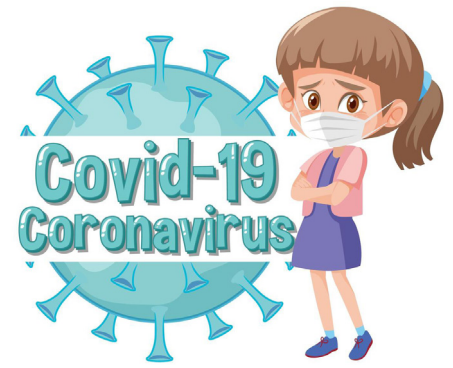
Since March we haven't been open in the same capacity as we have in the past. In order to ensure that we are keeping our customer, volunteers and community safe we have not reopened for shoppers to come inside. Honestly, we are unsure when we will be able to operate like we have in the past. But we have been able to adapt and make some changes to ensure that we are still following our mission here at MCOCC. We are still filling order for families and individuals that have been referred to us through partners agencies in Spokane as well as working with shelters to provide clothing for those experiencing homelessness.

On October 29th we had a trial reopening where we invited our customers back to get clothing, housewares, hygiene items and diapers. With the help if our volunteers we had our customers fill out shopping lists for their households on the items the most needed and the size of clothing for each family member. Our volunteers then personally shopped for

each family while our customers waited in their cars or outside our building.

In 3 hours, we served 96 people with the help of

5 volunteers. We were much busier than we anticipated which shows us our services are very important to our community. Our volunteers worked really hard to fill all these orders and we are so thankful for them as we try and navigate the best way to get these essential items to our customers. Going forward we are going to try an online order form as well continuing to fill orders from other agencies and the homeless shelters. We are working hard to make sure we can provide warm clothing to those in need this winter. We are thankful to our MCOCC community who have been so patient during this time.



Clean Clothing, New Underwear



Along with clothing we give out hygiene items to our customers. A lot of families and individuals are referred to MCOCC because they are in need in these essential items. Over the years we have increased the variety of items we stock and we have decided to add laundry detergent to the list. A few of our volunteers came up with the idea that we should offer laundry detergent to our customers since we are a clothing bank. We gave out laundry detergent at our Hygiene Drive-Thru event in August and it was a huge hit.

Starting in 2021 MCOCC will add new underwear to our yearly budget. In recent months we have seen a growing need for underwear from our customers. As a clothing bank we rely heavily on the generous donations from our community of gently used clothing. However new underwear is not something we receive regularly and it is important to MCOCC that we provide NEW underwear to our customers. If you are part of a community, church or work group that is looking for a way to get involved in the community we would love to talk with you about hosting a new underwear drive for us.

Children's Christmas Joy

Although a lot of things have changed this year our mission to give out new clothing at Christmas has not. We will be giving out new shirts, jeans, underwear, socks and books again this year to families in our community (contactless pickup for COVID safety). Our goal is to serve as many kids as we can without going over our budget.

More than ever this year we need your help. Can you help us collect jeans and long sleeve shirts for kids K-6th? We will also happily accept monetary donations so that our amazing shoppers can go purchase clothing for this event. This has been a difficult year for all of us and a lot of families are struggling this Christmas season.

We hope that you will join us in helping make this Christmas special for the kids in our community. If have new clothing donations to drop off please email us at mcoc.spokane@gmail.com or call us at 509-536-1084. Due to COVID we don't have volunteers here during normal hours as we have in the past.

“The Bare Necessities” Drive Thru Give-A-Way

On August 29th we hosted a Drive-Thru event to serve the Spokane community. We provided new socks, underwear, toothbrushes, face masks, laundry soap, shampoo, soap and a few other hygiene essentials to kids and adults. Due to COVID we have had to make a lot of changes to how we normally serve our community. We were able to safely serve 768 kids and 544 families at this event.



Thank you to our volunteers that helped with this event and the 12 local agencies and businesses who donated items and funds.



School Shoes for Kids 2020

We were unable to host our normal Shoe event this year for safety reasons, however we still wanted to give shoes to children in our community. We partnered with six agencies that serve families experiencing homelessness. We delivered 112 shoes, socks and facemasks to children at the agencies during September.

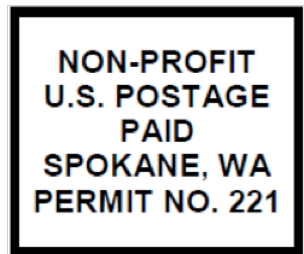
Even though we gave out a lot less shoes than previous years we are still so thankful that we could serve families and kids during this difficult time.



3 Ways to Help MCOCC

- 1** Donate high quality coats, boots, hats, gloves, socks and winter clothing.
- 2** With snow arriving early this year, we are looking to get a donated snowblower so we can keep our sidewalk clean and safe.
- 3** Make a monetary donation.

Mission Community Outreach Center
of Spokane Washington
P.O. Box 3581
Spokane, WA 99220-3581



ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED



Mission..Possible Projects Before and After pictures

A special thanks to our donors, volunteers, Rotary 21, AmeriCorps Youth Build and First Presbyterian Church for helping us complete a few projects this summer. We partnered with our landlord, AmeriCorps Youth Build and Rotary 21 to get the exterior of our building painted and it looks wonderful. Our fence was repainted this summer and our new countertops were installed. These updates show how much pride we take in our work to serve the community will make for a much better shopping and working experience for our volunteers and guests.

We are still interested in installing blinds to help with privacy for our volunteers and to keep our utility bill lower as our windows are old and not energy efficient. Our long-term goal is still to replace the carpet throughout the building. If you have connections to stores or contractors please let us know!

