Our Mission

The purpose of West Marin Community Services is to support programs and services that ensure the well-being of individuals and families in West Marin. Self-sufficiency, human dignity, and social justice are the values that guide our efforts.
Dear Valued Friends,

On behalf of West Marin Community Services, please accept our deepest gratitude for your generosity over the last several months. Your support during this ongoing crisis moves us and inspires us to do our best every day. Together, we hope to continue to bring relief to our neighbors who need it most.

When we last contacted you, we were at the very beginning of the present crisis. We were overwhelmed in the face of so many unknowns, but you – our donors – responded from your hearts. Thanks to you, we’ve been able to remain open throughout the pandemic, the economic downturn, and the fires. We were able to pivot very quickly – expanding many of our existing programs and creating new ones – during this chaotic, challenging time. With your help, we were able to provide our most vulnerable neighbors with nutritious food and the resources they needed to remain in their homes.

• Our Food Pantry has remained operational five days a week and we’ve distributed nearly 200,000 pounds of food to needy families.
• So far, we’ve provided 130 families with rent assistance. (Last year we assisted 10!)
• We designed and implemented a program to temporarily house our community’s homeless during Marin’s Shelter-in-Place Order.
• We’ve strengthened our communications abilities with increased online and social media presence. In this way, we were able to continue advocating for Census participation and to assist our clients with greater flexibility.

It is only through your support that we can continue to help our community members during this global emergency and to keep pressing forward with our programs. In preparation for the next fiscal year, we are exploring ways to develop our Youth Services. Our upcoming Holiday Gift Program will bring hope and light in these times of darkness. We are also committed to continuing our vital programs that promote Latino empowerment, social justice, and racial equity.

Our West Marin community needs our essential services more than ever. Please send your donation in the enclosed envelope, or visit our website at westmarincs.org and click the “Donate” button.

Thank you for being there for us and for the most vulnerable in West Marin.

Con mucho cariño,

Socorro Romo
Executive Director

Jim Pellegrin
Board President

9,800 Approximate number of “units of service,” including emergency assistance, food pantry visits, case management, referrals, childcare scholarships and community programs.
About Us

West Marin Community Services (WMCS) is the central hub for a diverse range of services that support our neighbors in West Marin. Located in Point Reyes Station, our outreach also includes Inverness, Olema, Tomales, Bolinas, Stinson Beach, and San Geronimo Valley. We respond to ever-changing circumstances and act as a safety-net to address needs unfulfilled by other organizations or government programs. We work to bring our community closer together by building equity and fostering effective communication. For more than 40 years, we have provided critical support in many forms: supplying food to the hungry, clothing and household items to dislocated families, providing referrals for county, state or federal support services, and offering sponsorship of other local non-profits offering essential services. In 2014, WMCS established Abriendo Caminos, a outreach program designed to connect with and engage Latino-Spanish speaking community members of unincorporated areas in North/West Marin. Our goals include increased civic and community leadership of Latino community members, creation of equity-centered projects, and building bridges throughout the community.

Our Programs

WMCS provides supportive care and emergency funds to people who are in crisis and are unable to find assistance through any other means. We offer direct services and partner with county and nonprofit organizations so that all available resources can be brought to bear. In 2019-2020, we provided approximately 9,800 units of direct services to families and individuals, as well as referrals and other assistance through our Core Programs, Community Programs, Community Engagement, workshops, and events.

CURRENT
Food Pantry
Emergency Assistance & Case Management
Thrift Store (with limited hours)
Holiday Program

COVID-19 - IMPACTED
Waterdogs
Abriendo Caminos
Event Library
Breaking Bread
Community Giving Thanks

FUTURE
Youth Services
Webinars
Abriendo Caminos
Zoom Gatherings
New Website
Food Pantry

No one in our community should have to go hungry, and the WMCS Food Pantry is here to make sure everyone has food on the table. Food insecurity was one of the first concerns for those impacted by COVID-19. With support from the San Francisco-Marin Food Bank, ExtraFood.org, and community donations from local businesses and individuals (including an incredible spontaneous soup kitchen, which has provided nourishing soups twice weekly since April), we were able to pivot our food pantry’s operations so we could continue to serve our community five days a week.

200,000
Pounds of food distributed in the last fiscal year

11,400
Individuals served

“Our volunteers are very special to me. They help me feel like I’m not alone — that there are people in the community taking care of us, like we are taking care of the people who come to the food pantry.” —Alma, Food Pantry
Emergency Assistance & Case Management

Our Emergency Assistance Fund and Case Management services provided crucial support for low-income residents and those experiencing temporary hardships as a result of COVID-19. We offered fast and confidential support for a range of needs, including energy bills, rent, car and home repairs, medical bills, and other miscellaneous costs. Over the last year, we have also seen a rise in requests for car repair assistance, along with higher demand for other basic needs from our low-income community members. Last year, we provided $23,000 in funding for emergency car repair, rental assistance, medical expenses, and other urgent needs. This year we distributed $400K worth of rental assistance and cash aid to West Marin residents. Many of our requests for car repairs came from individuals who have lost their homes and are using their car as their primary shelter as well as means of transportation. As such, the funding for these repairs were crucial for keeping residents off the streets.

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Most of our requests for assistance came from residents facing homelessness due to job loss, medical expenses, or other financial hardship, many of which were due to the COVID-19 pandemic and exacerbated when combined with increases in rent costs and declining housing availability in the area.

Community Engagement/Abriendo Caminos

After five years of leadership training within the Latinx community, we decided to broaden the scope of Abriendo Caminos to bring us together as one community. This past year, WMCS created a platform for community conversations in Bolinas, Tomales, and Point Reyes, during which we identified the systemic and cultural barriers that can be overcome together. We emphasized the possibility of changing perceptions of who we are and of finding pathways to promote equity and mutual respect. The goal of this project is to develop a deeper understanding of our identities, acknowledge our similarities and differences, and begin to change our perspectives.

As a part of our Women’s Wellness Circle program, we worked closely with the Natura Institute for Medicine and Ecology to encourage Latino women to reconnect with their ancestors through the use of plant-based medicinal herbs and home remedies.

The CLAM-Housing Support, Abriendo Caminos Latinx Advisory Committee advocated for the purchase of the Coast Guard complex to the Board of Supervisors.

Before the spread of COVID-19, we continued to host outreach events such as Community Picnics and Farm Visits to connect with community members who are hard to reach due to work schedules and transportation difficulties and to inform them of the services available.
Fiscal Sponsorship & Local Collaborations

WMCS provided administrative and economic support through our Fiscal Sponsorship Services to those community programs which fall within our mission to foster inclusivity and advance equity, such as the Tomales Bay Youth Center and the Point Reyes Farmers Market.

We also supported and collaborated with local organizations on specific programs and events that confront systemic racism and support our West Marin community.

We collaborated with different agencies throughout Marin to cover the community’s needs. We worked with Marin/San Francisco Food Bank and Extra Food to ensure that everyone in West Marin has food on the table. We referred homeless clients to the Community Action Marin (CAM) CARE Team and worked with CAM to assist with applications for the Home Energy Assistance Program and Season of Sharing for rental assistance.

WMCS, Canal Alliance, Multicultural Center of Marin, and KWMR radio collaborate on a monthly radio show, “Temas de Inmigración,” that keeps the immigrant community informed of their rights and apprised of any changes to immigration law.

Locally, we joined forces with West Marin Senior Services, Coastal Health Alliance, West Marin Standing Together, The Dance Palace Community and Cultural Center, and other groups for referrals and service delivery. We were active in West Marin Collaborative, a group of nonprofits and community organizations that meets monthly to address emerging needs in the community. We continued our partnership with the Marin County Sheriff’s office to increase trust between the Latino community and our local law enforcement.

Accomplishments

WMCS has risen to the challenges of this pandemic in so many ways. On March 4th, we implemented safety protocols and best practices to make sure all employees, volunteers, and clients were protected and safe. Since then, six staff members and a band of volunteers have worked non-stop to make sure that we meet the needs of our community. Our top priorities are food security, rent assistance, sheltering the homeless, funding other emergency expenses, and making referrals to other necessary services.

- We distributed over $400K in housing assistance and cash aid.
- In response to COVID-19, we participated in the West Marin Food Distribution Committee that pooled resources of all the food pantries in West Marin — including local safety, public health, and communications personnel.
- We formed a partnership with BLT, SGVCC, and CLAM to ensure that the most vulnerable members of our community could stay in their homes.
- We provided approximately 9,800 units of service, including emergency assistance, food pantry visits, case management, referrals, childcare scholarships, and community programs.
- We worked with Legal Aid of Marin to provide legal assistance to tenants and farm workers in our area.
We, the undersigned nonprofit organizations of West Marin, add our voices to the protests against the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Tony McDade, Maurice Gordon and countless others at the hands of law enforcement and vigilantes. We acknowledge the systemic racism at play in our country and county, and commit to facilitate change and foster the inclusivity that this moment in history demands. We recognize that this is the work we must do to truly live out our values of equity and inclusion.

*See westmarincs.org for full list of participating nonprofits

Together we agree to:
• Carry out our own internal work within our respective organizations to address bias and racism, while advancing equity, diversity and inclusion;
• Share our learning with each other for more effective action; and
• Collaborate as West Marin nonprofits to work with our communities in confronting systemic racism.
We draw our inspiration from courageous leaders who over the centuries have challenged exploitation, racism and violence.

2019 - 2020 WMCS Budget

INCOME

- Direct Support $511,000
- Foundation Grants $666,000
- Program Income $206,000
- Fundraising & Fiscal Sponsorship $58,000

Total Income $1,441,000

EXPENSES

- Personnel $358,000
- Programs $409,000
- Program Administration & Sponsorship $114,000
- Facility & Occupancy $66,000

Total Expenses $947,000

NET INCOME $494,000

$300,000 deferred to COVID - 19 Relief Fund
$100,000 deferred to program and staff expansion
$44,000 deferred to upgrade technology and communications infrastructure
“In a small community such as ours, being on the board of WMCS provides a way for me to help friends and neighbors and the most vulnerable among us in need of assistance. It is a way to give back to this wonderful place I live in and love!”

– Lee Giammona, Board Member

Thank You, Generous Supporters

Bolinas Community Center
Bolinas Community Land Trust
Bolinas Stinson School District
Canal Alliance
Coastal Health Alliance
Commonweal
Community Action Marin (CAM)
Community Land Trust Association of West Marin
Dance Palace Community & Cultural Center
KWMR
Marin Community Foundation
Marin Fire Department
Marin Health & Human Services
Marin VOAD
Multicultural Center of Marin
Natura Institute for Ecology and Medicine
Papermill Creek Children’s Corner
Point Reyes National Seashore Association
Pt. Reyes Presbyterian Church
Rotary Club of West Marin
Saint Columba’s Episcopal Church
Salvation Army
San Geronimo Valley Affordable Housing Association
San Geronimo Valley Community Center
Satori Sciences
Shoreline Unified School District
Tomales Bay Youth Center
Tomales Town Hall
West Marin Fund
West Marin Lions Club
West Marin Senior Services

And many individual donors like you!

¡West Marin - Si Se Puede!
Someday soon we will gather all together again!