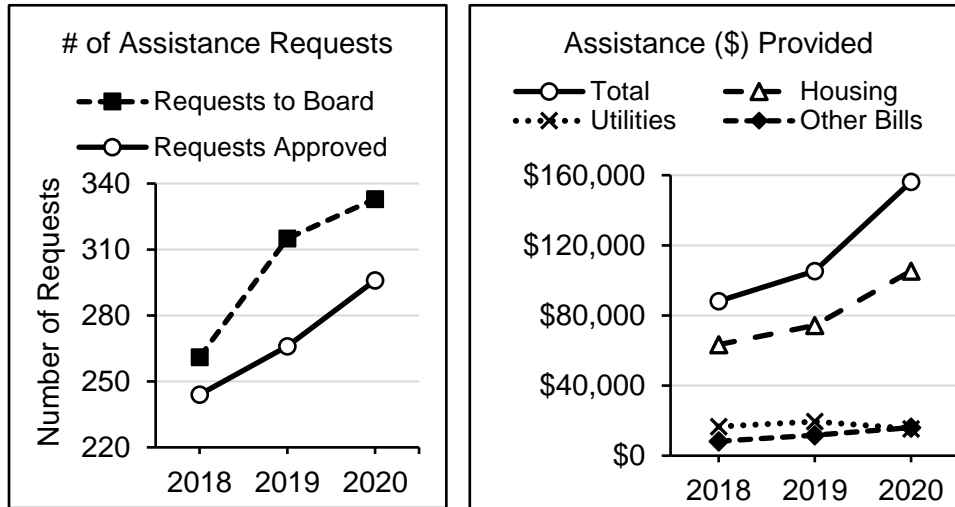




Report to the We Care General Meeting, January 28, 2021
 Emergency Financial Assistance Provided: Jan – Dec 2020
 Submitted by: Rex Cole, We Care Intake Coordinator

In 2020 We Care witnessed an outpouring of compassion and generosity to meet the severe financial challenges faced by many in Benton County during the COVID-19 pandemic. The low-income households We Care serves generally lack the resources to face even a short-term crisis, yet alone a long-term pandemic. And during the pandemic, the types of jobs many low-income families depend on were lost. Even families normally in more stable situations came to We Care after facing a loss of income, an inability to pay bills, and the humiliation of having to ask for financial help, many for the first time in their adult lives.



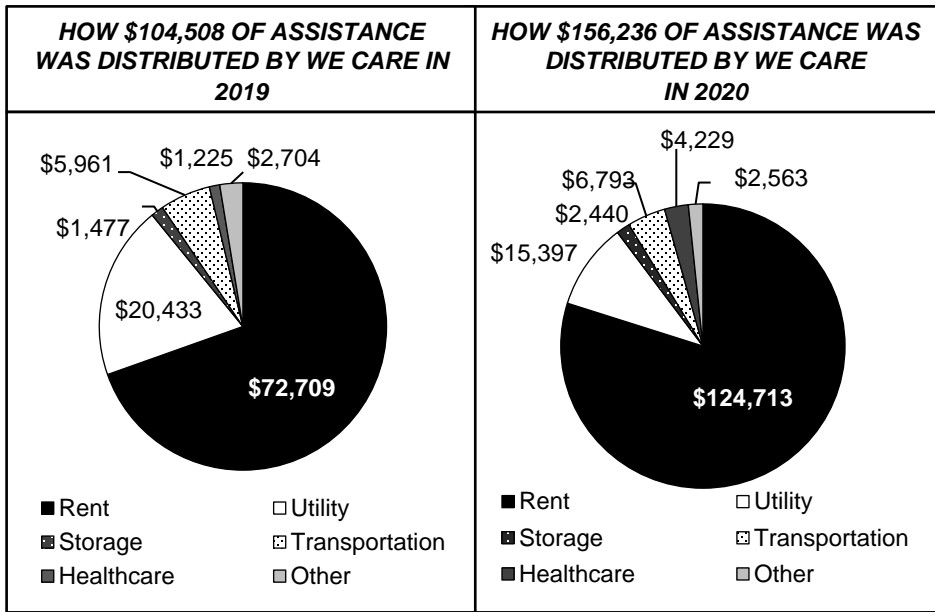
INCREASED ASSISTANCE PROVIDED IN 2020. At the onset of the pandemic, We Care adjusted its process for providing assistance to the demands of social distancing. Supported by an increase in donations from generous individuals, faith communities, and local governments, We Care was able to increase its assistance to Benton County residents who were slipping through the cracks of state and federal government programs. Overall, in 2020 We Care provided \$156,235 of assistance to 296 households, comprised of 759 people. The assisted households included 154 families (52%) with children (a total of 353 children). Fifty-five of the accepted requests involved people transitioning out of substance abuse (20 households), homelessness (25), or domestic violence (10) situations. Those assisted resided in Corvallis (273; 92%), Philomath (17; 6%), North Albany (3; 1%), Alesia (2; 0.7%) and Monroe (1; 0.3%).

WHO WAS HELPED

	2018	2019	2020
Inquiries received	445	521	533
Assistance applications received	327	402	396
Applications reviewed by board	258	315	333
Requests denied by board	13	23	20
Withdrawn or voided	?	26	17
Total households assisted	245	266	296
Households w/disability assisted	50	65	65
Households w/children assisted	123	123	154
Number of children assisted	262	266	353
Number of adults assisted	289	323	406

COVID FINANCIAL VICTIMS HELPED.

During the last week in March, We Care received its first requests for assistance from households suffering loss of jobs or income due to COVID-19. In the course of the year, 111 of the households assisted by We Care were in financial crisis directly because of the pandemic. These 111 COVID-19 affected households included 165 adults and 149 children. They received \$70,167 of assistance in the form of rental assistance (92 households), or help with utility bills (17), auto repairs (4), and other bills (4).



THE NEED FOR RENTAL ASSISTANCE WAS ACCENTUATED IN 2020

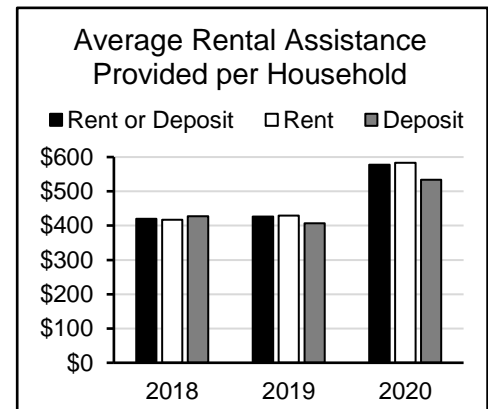
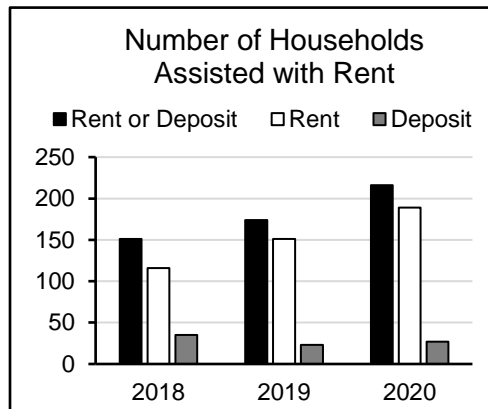
From 2019 to 2020: The fraction of total assistance used for rent increased from 70% to 80%. The total amount of rental assistance provided increased by \$52,004 or 71.5%.

The dramatic increase in rental assistance provided was the result of an increased number of households seeking help with rent, and an increased average amount of rent needed.

PULLING TOGETHER IN A TIME OF CRISIS

As the year progressed, We Care intake volunteers encountered increased levels of frustration, anxiety, stress, fatigue, and hopelessness throughout the community, both among those seeking help, and those providing

services (e.g., property managers, and landlords). By simply being there, listening and trying to help, We Care did its best to foster a sense of community and caring in a time of social isolation, to touch people with a kind word, when handshakes were prohibited. We strove to share the empathy and concern of our donors with kindness towards those who were needing help. We're all in this together.



CHALLENGES AHEAD. The impact of the pandemic on the well-being of poor families in our community is expected to continue into 2021. In fact, the financial impact this past year has been somewhat muted by legislatively enacted moratoriums on evictions for those unable to pay rent. Many households are now many months behind in paying rent, and this rent will ultimately need to be paid when the moratoriums end. The amount of COVID-related rental assistance allocated by state and federal governments to Benton County has been large, but the need has been even larger. We Care is bracing itself for difficult times ahead. Fortunately, through the compassion of its donors, We Care is starting 2021 on good financial ground and will continue to serve folks in need when other resources are not available to them.

THANKS! Notes from those whose lives have been touched by We Care: *“Thank you so much for helping me get through. I am relieved not to be totally stressed all month long.” “There are no words that can explain my feelings toward what you did for my family and me. I’m such a lucky person that Allah put you in my way.” “I wish I can know the unknown individuals (donors) also, but I can help others when I get a good job with a better salary, or I can donate to you, and you help the needy families.” “The assistance comes at a time when it feels especially good to know there is help available for those in need. Thank you!”*