

Transition Projects Willamette Center Shelter

One of the best ways we can help solve the homeless crisis in Portland is to support the **Willamette Center**. It is a 120-bed emergency shelter open 24/7 run by Transition Projects, which was founded over 55 years ago and manages eight shelters in the metro area. This is what the Willamette Center has accomplished since its reopening in December 2024:

- 873 individuals were served with emergency shelter
- Average length of stay was 33.13 days
- 49 individuals moved to permanent housing
- 67 individuals moved to other housing such as living with family/friends or other shelters
- 5 individuals moved to supportive programs such as substance abuse/mental health programs, transitional housing
- Many leave the shelter without disclosing their destination.

Although funded by a combination of local government contracts, federal money, and fundraising, Willamette Center relies on individuals and groups to donate their time and services.

SMILE had blanket drives at Decemberville in 2024, and has contributed about 150 blankets donated by the community. And, SMILE raised \$1,600 for other needs at its 2024 Winter Concert.

Here is how our neighbors have helped, and you can too.

- **Donation Drives** have been held by *SMILE, Moreland Presbyterian Church* and *Sellwood Community House*. *YOU* can drop off donations of clothing, blankets, art supplies at any time.
- **Meals.** As a client of the Oregon Food Bank some food staples are provided for staff to cook meals. But residents enjoy the variety when outside groups provide food.
 - *Moreland Presbyterian Church* prepares sack lunches
 - *The Burrito Team* is a group of women who purchase all the food for burritos on the first Sunday of the month, deliver it to WC and staff cooks it.
 - *Church of the Annunciation* and *Trinity Lutheran* are regular meal providers.
 - *SMILE* funds provided groceries twice when food supplies were running low.
 - *Thanksgiving Dinner Team* annually cooks a holiday dinner on site.
- **On-site Events.** Residents have fun and this builds community by *Moreland Presbyterian*.
 - *The Burrito Team* held an Ice Cream Social in October.
 - *Moreland Presbyterian Church* twice sponsored a Holiday Party with refreshments, bingo and holiday crafts.
- **On-site Amenities**
 - *SMILE* funds purchased journals for residents, a BBQ grill & accessories, a canopy, karaoke machine and other items not in their budget.
 - *A neighbor* made a WELCOME quilt.
 - *Care Oregon* made raised garden beds for flower and vegetables. Residents and staff painted them with paint purchased by SMILE.
 - *Girl Scout Troop 102468* created a Hope Tree
 - *De La Salle High School* students did their service learning by helping out with chores.
 -

You or your group can help!

Contact TPI Volunteer Coordinator Kelsey Stark – kelsey.stark@tprojects.org, 503-951-5542, or Marianne Nelson, SMILE Willamette Center liaison – housing-solutions-info@sellwood.org.