

MOUNTAIN RESOURCE CENTER

Community Impact Report

2023
/24

Thank you to all
our volunteers,
clients, and
donors. You
make Mountain
Resource Center
possible!

MOUNTAIN
RESOURCE CENTER





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ABOUT MOUNTAIN RESOURCE CENTER



Mountain Resource Center is a vital resource along the 285 Corridor. We provide a Food Share Market, emergency housing and utility assistance, health and wellness classes, workforce services, veterans' services, case management, and wraparound services to mountain communities across two large counties. This fiscal year, we have also worked toward opening a high-quality half-day preschool program, one of the only half-day programs in the area, fulfilling the promise of universal pre-K in our area. We are proud to announce that our preschool is fully operational and serving children and their families as of August 19th, 2024.

Need in our mountain communities is often masked by high property values. Still, over the past year, 88% (1,165 households) of those we served were at or below the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), which in 2024 is only \$15,060 in annual income for a single person, and \$31,200 for a family of four. Our services are a lifeline for our mountain families, and we are focused not only on helping people make ends meet but also assisting individuals and families to find the tools and resilience to gain independence.

Our Food Share Market and Mobile Food Share programs distributed **310,361 pounds of food** during this fiscal year, and we provided **\$210,128 in urgently needed housing and utility assistance**. We also provided **1,600 case management services to 379 people** and ultimately served **1,308 households, including 736 children**.





A LETTER FROM OUR CEO

Dear Clients, Partners, and Community Supporters,

As we reflect on this past year, we are filled with gratitude for the collective spirit that makes Mountain Resource Center a vital support for our community. From the unwavering dedication of our staff to the selfless contributions of our volunteers, and the generous support of our donors, every aspect of MRC is shaped by people who care deeply about making a difference. Our programs and services have grown and evolved, thanks to each of you who share our commitment to creating a healthier, more resilient community. This report highlights not only what we've accomplished together but also our dreams and plans for the future.

Thank you for walking this journey with us and for being an essential part of MRC's story.

I would like to acknowledge that Mountain Resource Center could not exist without our amazing staff. They come to work every day ready to meet people where they are in life, to take the time to really see them, and to bring some brightness into their lives. They treat our clients with the dignity that they deserve and work hard to decrease the stigma of being someone in need of help. I stand in awe of their efforts.

Additionally, MRC's day-to-day operation would crumble and fall without the amazing generosity of our many volunteers. They work tirelessly both on the front line and behind the scenes to provide the high-quality services MRC is known for. Thank you for being community heroes!

Last, but surely not least, our donors are our secret ingredient for keeping our doors open. Without donors, we wouldn't have the capacity to serve the approximately 2,800 individuals who came to us for help in the last fiscal year, 736 of whom were children.

One of our biggest celebrations this year is the opening of our new preschool program on August 19th, 2024. Our dedicated staff worked long and hard to make this program happen, and we are so excited to have our young students in the building, learning and growing with us! You are invited to look inside to learn more, and to find out about the year's accomplishments for all our programs.

Thank you for joining us in celebrating our amazing year, and for your support in the exciting years to come!





A LETTER FROM OUR BOARD PRESIDENT

Dear Clients, Partners, and Community Supporters,

As I reflect on the past year at Mountain Resource Center, I'm reminded not only of our continued commitment to the many programs we've established over the years to support our clients but also of some important changes. The first significant change was the closure of the Resale Store. While the decision to close the store was a difficult one, it was made easier by the hard work and dedication of MRC staff and volunteers. The ownership of the store has since been transferred to a new agency, Community Nest.

Another significant change was the launch of our fully licensed preschool. After navigating the extensive process of obtaining permits and meeting licensing requirements, we proudly opened the school in August 2024. The response from parents has been overwhelmingly positive, particularly given the free education we offer. Looking ahead, we anticipate that the preschool will have a major impact on the community, especially since there are few alternative options in the Conifer area.

As my term as President of the MRC Board of Directors comes to an end, I am filled with gratitude for the incredible team of staff and volunteers, led by our wonderful CEO, Sarah Kinzer. Being involved with such a meaningful and impactful organization has truly been a privilege.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter A. Switzer". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a small number "2".

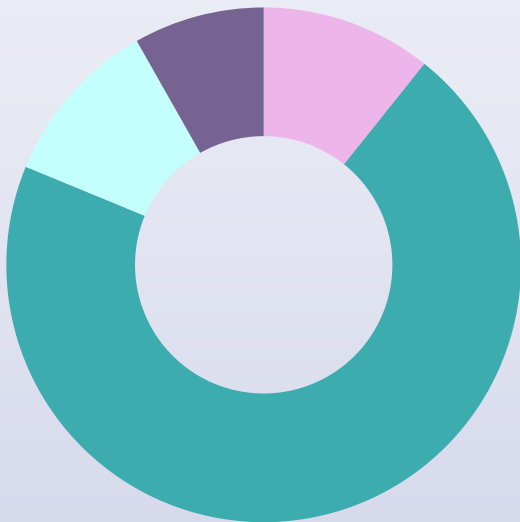




BY THE NUMBERS

Services Provided by Program

- Case Management
- Community Health
- Family Education
- Community Outreach



15,662

Services Provided

1,310

Households Served

2,788

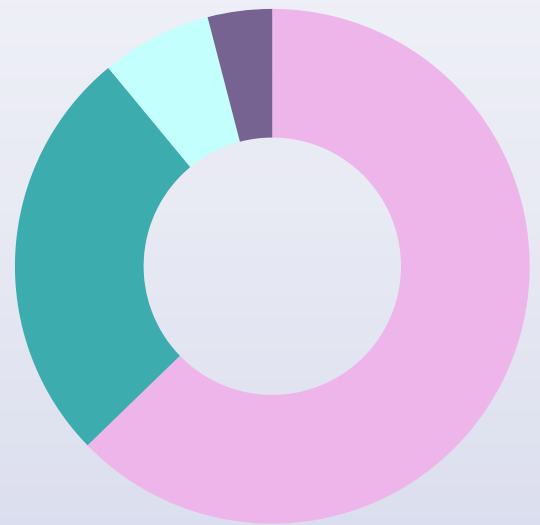
Household Members Served

736

Children Served

Households Served by % of Federal Poverty Level

- >100%
- 100%>200%
- 200%>300%
- >300%



IN THEIR WORDS

477

New Households

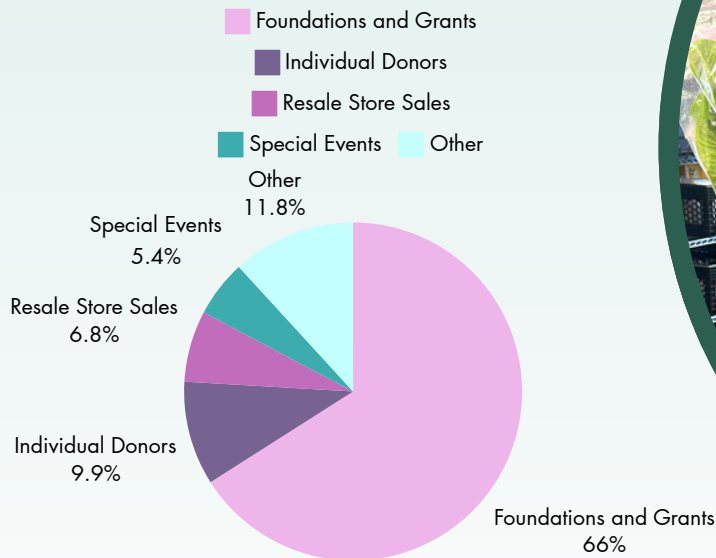
- "[MRC] has given me hope to hang on."
- "We are no longer struggling with food/groceries thanks to MRC. They have been a lifesaver."
- "Great support when life threw us a curveball."
- "Amazing help with health care, child care, and groceries."



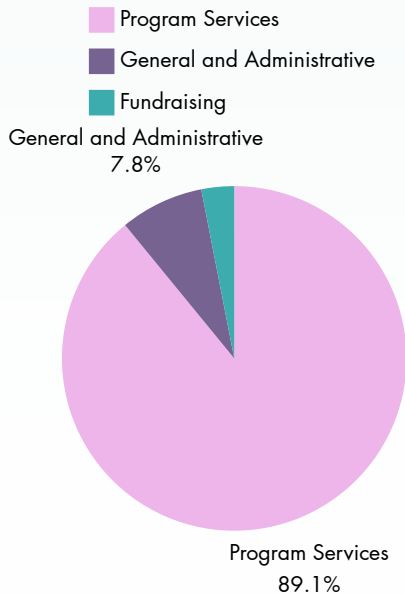


FUNDRAISING & FINACIALS

Income



Expenses



	\$	%
Revenue	\$1,942,309.00	100%
Foundations and Grants	\$1,281,577.00	66%
Individual Donors	\$193,181.00	10%
Resale Store Sales	\$132,554.00	7%
Special Events	\$105,612	5%
Other	\$229,385.00	12%
Expenses	\$1,920,694.00	100%
Program Services	\$1,710,938.00	89%
General and Admin	\$150,764.00	8%
Fundraising	\$58,992.00	3%



FAMILY EDUCATION

As we prepared for preschool, Mountain Resource Center's Family Education program supported **69 households and 129 individuals**, providing impactful services primarily through our Incredible Years and Circle of Parents programs and the second year of our summer camp program.

Incredible Years, a curriculum tailored for parents with young children, was a cornerstone of our offerings. While parents attend sessions, children engage in a specialized, in-house curriculum focused on building essential skills.

One resounding success this year was our summer camp program. We were able to provide local families with a one-week free summer camp opportunity, and served many families who would not otherwise be able to afford this kind of programming.

In just the one week of camp, our students made distinct gains in the areas of persistence, self-control, and social competence. Our feedback from parents and students was excellent, and many families have remained connected to our services.



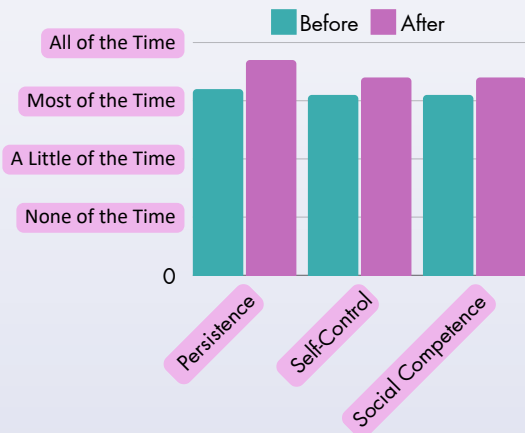
Children who have been read one book a day will hear approximately 290,000 more words by age five than kids who have not been read to.

Incredible Years
Students Enrolled
in Our Preschool
Program:

3 Year Olds: 7/10

4 Year Olds: 6/9

Summer Camp Gains After Just One Week of Programming



Summer Camp Feedback from Parents

"Thank you for the wonderful week!"
 "My son had so much fun he did not want to leave."
 "Thank you to the wonderful and thoughtful teachers at MRC for a truly fun summer week."
 "She woke up early each morning ready to go to camp."
 "He loved meeting new friends, imaginative play (talked about having a café with his friends), and learning about different artists. Thank you for a great experience!"

"We worked hard this year to create a whole new chapter with the start of our licensed preschool, which is free of charge for 3- and 4-year-olds in our mountain community. This has been a labor of love. Rezoning is not for the faint of heart! We have had hundreds of hours of training, hired new staff, made many onsite improvements, created a marketing campaign, and got fingerprinted, just in time for our first day of school on August 19th! We are so grateful to the families who have entrusted their kiddos to us. With our staff having over 50 years of combined Early Education experience, our preschool is the greatest one around!" - CEO Sarah Kinzer





COMMUNITY HEALTH

This year, our Community Health program delivered **11,040 services**, with a large focus on our Food Share Market and Mobile Food Share initiatives, **providing 310,361 pounds of food to 1,023 households**. But at Mountain Resource Center, we go beyond food assistance. Through a comprehensive food systems approach, supported by grant funding, we bolster local farmers and ranchers while building community.

In partnership with the local community garden, we distributed fresh greens and herbs, while our pantry program supported 20-30 local farmers, helping keep economic resources within our community. Local ranchers contributed responsibly sourced meat, providing our clients with essential protein.

Our programs include educational content on nutrition, wellness, and budgeting to support individuals and strengthen the community as a whole.

There have even been two of our Culinary Adventures classes taught completely in Spanish by some of our clients (and translated into English by one of our bilingual staff members), including a class on making handmade tortillas. These classes wear down cultural tension or simple cultural awkwardness, planting seeds of greater understanding and a sense of belonging.



"I love it because it gives me another out... a social thing. I take care of two little grandsons that live with me now, so it's just nice to be able to get out. And plus, I've learned some skills... that's a lot of it, too." - Linda Koch



After our February Culinary Adventures classes, **85%** of participants reported that it increased their sense of belonging in the community.





VOLUNTEER PROGRAM


The vital work of Mountain Resource Center would not be possible without the dedication and generosity of our volunteers! This year, our volunteers contributed an impressive **8,551** hours, valued at **\$287,228**, based on the 2024 estimated value of a volunteer hour, as determined by Maryland's Do Good Institute.

We also took important steps to streamline our volunteer program by implementing an automated training system. Additionally, feedback from a volunteer survey guided us in identifying training needs and enhancing support to ensure the highest quality of service delivery.


Our volunteers' commitment enables us to continue serving our community with excellence —thank you to each and every volunteer!



This year, 149 volunteers donated 8,551.2 hours of their time to MRC.



“It is a support to my community, helps me feel that I am giving back and has provided new social connections.” - Celia Feinstein on why she volunteers



“When my family first moved to the mountains 13+ years ago I was introduced to the summer camp option at Mountain Resource Center for my young daughters. How was I to know that I would meet some of my greatest friends there that I still cherish today?! Now I can pay it forward by volunteering in the food pantry for over 2 years now and serving our community with this amazing resource? Thank you for ALL you do for our mountain community!” - Jaime L. Davis





SERVICES

VETERANS' SERVICES

"We have a newborn daughter and I am a disabled veteran. We are grateful for your services." - Anonymous

In the 2023/24 fiscal year, MRC supported 145 veteran households with essential assistance tailored to their unique needs. Beyond providing rent, mortgage, and utility assistance, our grant from Disabled American Veterans (DAV) enabled us to address a variety of specific and urgent needs, including:

- Covering three months of medication expenses
- Assisting with dental bills
- Funding car repairs and new tires
- Pumping a septic system
- Making electrical repairs
- Supplying firewood and propane
- Handling plumbing repairs and installing a water filter
- Providing access to therapy sessions

Through these comprehensive services, we ensured that veterans and their families received the support they needed for a safe, stable, and healthy life.

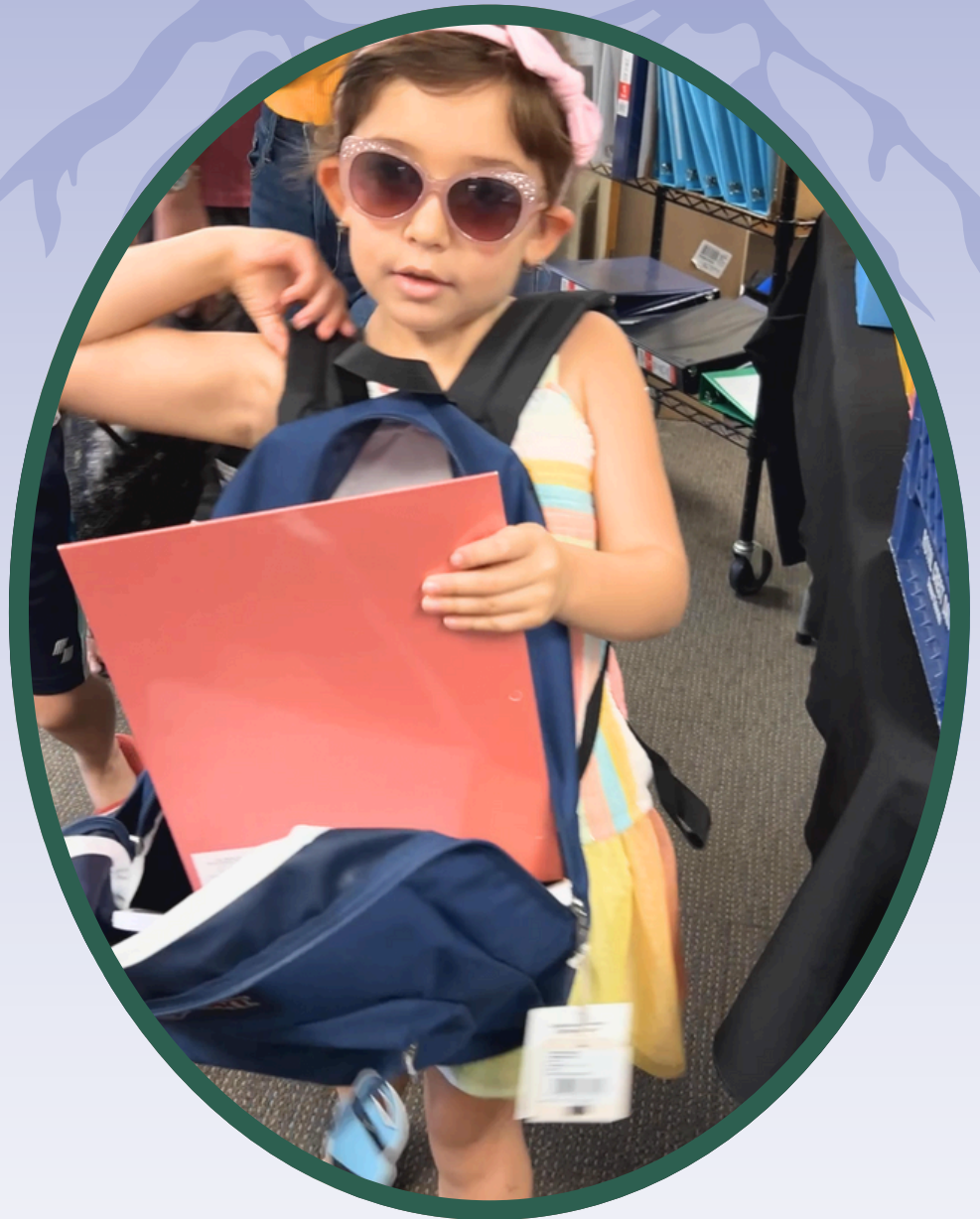


COMMUNITY OUTREACH

In 2023/2024, MRC strengthened its community connections by attending local events, including the Evergreen Rodeo and Conifer's Elevation Celebration, and by hosting a Community Café and a Veterans' Café. Through these efforts and interactions within our facilities, we provided **923 referrals** to connect community members with our services and additional resources.

Our school supply drive helped **124 students** begin the school year equipped with essential supplies. These students' families earned, on average, less than 90% of the federal poverty level, and this support was essential to ensure a positive start to their school year. Additionally, MRC provided **270 households with \$23,487 in gift cards** to support holiday needs and urgent financial assistance.

This year's outreach has been a testament to our commitment to fostering resilience and supporting families across our community.

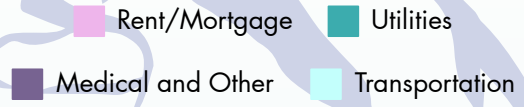
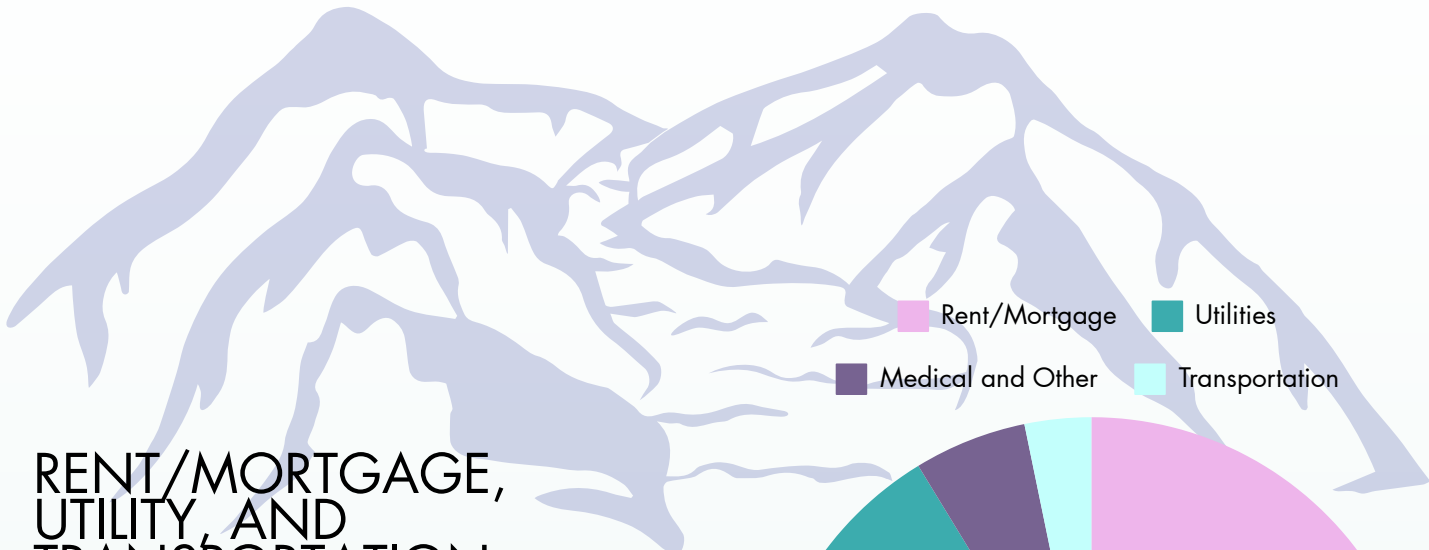




CASE MANAGEMENT

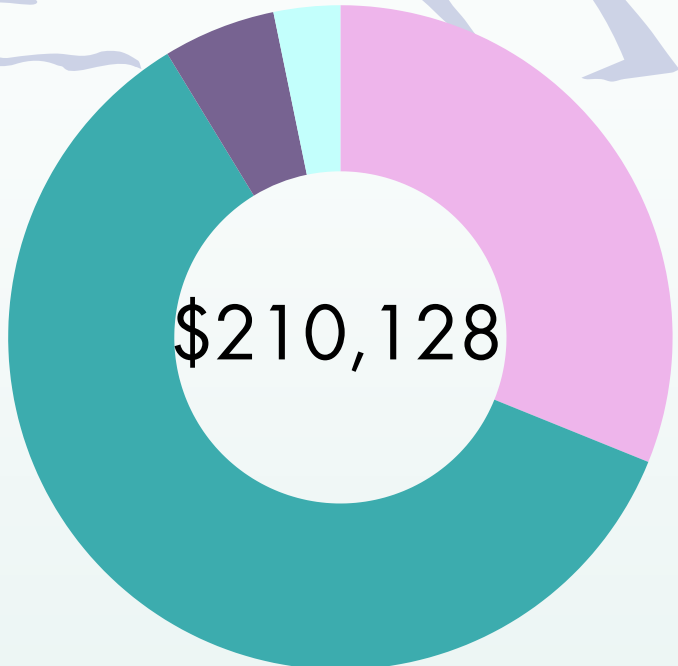
This year, MRC's case management program **served 379 individuals with 1,626 tailored services** aimed at building independence and resilience. By helping clients address housing, healthcare, financial stability, and employment needs, our case managers empower people to overcome obstacles and thrive in our community. This personalized support is central to MRC's mission, fostering lasting change and a pathway to independence and thriving.





RENT/MORTGAGE, UTILITY, AND TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE

This year, MRC provided vital support to help families avoid homelessness, stay warm, and keep their lights on. We assisted with **\$65,386 in rent and mortgage aid** and **\$126,415 for utility expenses**, ensuring stability and security for households in need. In our mountain communities, where public transit is scarce, we invested **\$6,796 in transportation assistance**, enabling residents to reach essential locations, like doctor's offices, grocery stores, and places of employment. Through these efforts, MRC helped hundreds of households build stability and self-sufficiency.



WORKFORCE

The Workforce Program offers crucial support to community members with services like resume development, interview preparation, job search assistance, and more. This year, **the program provided services to 28 individuals, averaging 7 services per person.** This program also includes the Job Training Program (JTP), which provides Associates with a 24-week on-the-job training program designed to build work experience and provide coaching and hands-on instruction. During the 2023/2024 fiscal year, we had **four Job Training Associates** participate in the program, all of whom successfully completed it. Additionally, all JTP Associates reported increased confidence in their computer and communication skills, highlighting the positive impact of this experience. One participant was even successfully hired as a receptionist at Mountain Resource Center.



LORI'S STORY

"A year ago, I was sitting at home feeling sorry for myself. I had lost my husband, had not worked for 30 years and was finding it difficult to keep up with rising prices. My daughter saw the ad for a Job Training Associate on FB and sent me the info. I applied and was delighted to be accepted into the program. I worked in the Resale Store, the Food Pantry, the front desk, and spent time updating my computer skills. I found that the variety of tasks helped me to whittle down the types of jobs that interested me. I felt more self-confident, enjoyed helping people, and was so grateful for the opportunity to get back into the workforce. At the end of the program, I was lucky enough to be able to apply for an open position at MRC. I have been working here since July and loved every minute of it." - Lori Christenson





BOOTS & BOWTIES

The MRC Annual Gala is the hottest ticket on the 285 Corridor every fall, and this year was no exception, with our Boots and Bowties theme. Our guests had a rootin', tootin' great time with exciting games, a chance at the fabulous wine pull, an enormous silent auction with amazing items, and a delicious family style dinner, all at the spectacular Woodlands venue.





THANK YOU!

I came to Mountain Resource Center at a very difficult time indeed; my utility bill had gotten out of control for me and reached the amount of \$300 or more, and I didn't have the money to pay it. I was very fortunate that MRC was able to help me, as I live on a very limited income. I very much appreciate the help they gave me, thank you again MRC. - Jeannie

I came to MRC when I was struggling to find my footing as a new mother. MRC taught me how to use my toolbox and gave me confidence to be a caregiver. I've had some of the lowest moments in my life at MRC, and also shared the rockstar moments. MRC has been there for our family through thick and thin. Now I face the reality of a life altering medical diagnosis, and knowing MRC is there for me and my crew is inspiring me. MRC is my chosen family. - Anonymous

MRC has allowed me to survive. I am a disabled senior veteran, sometimes feeling forgotten by society at scale. Everyone at MRC is kind and very helpful, and the extra appreciation shown for veterans is a blessing. We comprise [about] 6% of the total US population across all wars. While many civilians thank us for our service, there are others who don't understand giving service to a cause larger than self. MRC acknowledges and appreciates our service. Thank you for valuing us and for your lifesaving generosity. - Nancy

