



# NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS

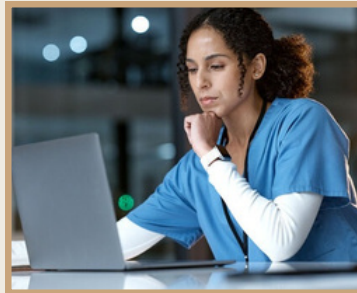


## Our Annual Campaign

November 2025 Newsletter

### WHEN THE CAREGIVER NEEDS CARE

Amanda spends her nights in the ER as a patient coordinator, guiding people through moments of fear and crisis, offering practical help and compassion. At home, as a single mom of three children ages 4, 8, and 11, she sometimes feels she is falling short of providing that same safety net for her own family. Thankfully, their father--though separated from Amanda—watches the children on the nights she works. Without that support, the cost of childcare would make it impossible for her to keep her job.



“People assume that working in health care means good pay and great health insurance,” Amanda told us. “That’s not necessarily true.” Bills piled up, and then a utility shut-off notice arrived in her mailbox with a balance of over \$1,000. No matter how hard she worked, she felt like she could never get ahead.

Then came a one-two blow. First, Amanda injured her knee and needed surgery, forcing her to miss work, lose income and incur medical bills. Then her landlord announced their condo was going on the market—they would have to move. Amanda was determined to stay nearby so her kids wouldn’t lose their schools or friends, but the weight of it all was crushing.

That’s when she turned to Issaquah Community Services (ICS). We helped keep the lights on while she searched for a new home, offering immediate relief and a moment to breathe. In a happy turn,

See **The Caregiver** on page 5

#### Dear Issaquah Community Services,

I just want to say thank you — truly, deeply, thank you.

When I came to you, I was in a very difficult place. I didn’t know how I was going to keep a roof over my head, and the stress was overwhelming. Your help with my rent didn’t just ease a financial burden — it gave me peace, stability, and the strength to keep going.

I will never forget your kindness. What you did for me was more than support — it was hope. And that hope carried me through.

With heartfelt gratitude -



*We recently received this note from a client who asked to remain anonymous. Messages like this are powerful reminders of why our work matters.*

Issaquah Community Services is an **all-volunteer** non-profit that relies on donations from our community to help struggling neighbors pay rent and utilities.

Learn more and donate at: [www.IssaquahCommunityServices.org](http://www.IssaquahCommunityServices.org)

# Financial Security Can Slip Away: A Grandmother's Unexpected Struggle

Asking for help was the last thing Loretta expected to do at 75. A successful real estate broker in Chicago for more than 20 years, she moved to Issaquah nine years ago to be closer to two of her five children. Confident she could rebuild her career here, she earned her Washington real estate license—only to discover the market was too unfamiliar and challenging. She shifted gears and became a nanny, a natural fit given her love of children and years of experience. In this new role, she was able to build a stable life for herself, her daughter Leann, and her two-year-old granddaughter, who share her home.



But when the child she cared for as a nanny began full-time preschool, Loretta suddenly found herself out of work. Around the same time, her daughter lost her own job in the service industry. Together, they are bringing in just \$2,045 per month—far short of the nearly \$3,000 rent they must pay. To make matters worse, breaking their lease to move somewhere more affordable would cost them \$7,000, an impossible sum.

For Loretta, who had always prided herself on her independence, reaching out to ICS was

humbling. “I’ve never had to ask for rent assistance before,” she told us. But she did—and we were able to help cover her September rent. Our staff also connected Loretta and her daughter to resources for food, gas, and ongoing housing support while they both search for work.

Loretta’s story is just one example of how your support changes lives. With your help, ICS can be there for neighbors like Loretta in their times of need.

## Join Us in Giving

ICS relies entirely on our community’s generosity to support neighbors in need. Please join us in our mission of giving hope and help. You can choose the gift that is right for you.

- Annual donation
- Monthly gift
- IRA-Direct Gift
- Donor Advised Fund
- Business sponsorship
- Employer match
- Charitable bequest
- Volunteer with us



Learn more on our website:

[www.issaquahcommunityservices.org/donate](http://www.issaquahcommunityservices.org/donate)

## King County SNAPSHOT

- **46%** of all renter households are cost-burdened—meaning they spend over 30% of their income on housing.
- Among low-income households, **76%** are cost-burdened.

# THE POWER OF COMMUNITY

by Carol Schneider, ICS Board President

Community. One of the strongest forces in any family's life. Why? Because in a community, people care about and support each other. Everyone faces tough times now and then. That is when your community can step in and help get you through. Later, you help when your neighbors need you. This cycle of compassion is the force that has sustained Issaquah Community Services for 52 years—and continues to keep neighbors strong and supported.



Through the years, our collective commitment has provided resilience in the face of need and stress. We saw this in the Covid years as well as in current times of widespread layoffs, rising rents, and stagnant wages. The greater the stress, the more important is the power of community.

This force has kept 378 families in their homes this year: 523 children, 142 single parents, 31 elderly, of many races, ethnicities, ages, beliefs, abilities, and backgrounds. Children were able to stay in their schools and keep moving towards success; parents, despite illness, managed to keep a stable home for these children; seniors maintained dignity in their later years.

Our community is made up of donors who give funds for rents and utilities, volunteers who give hours helping with applications, and clients with their families who need help. Together, we create the force of community -- because our neighbors matter.

Thank you for rounding the circle of need and generosity, for making our community a good place to live.

## How We've Helped in 2025

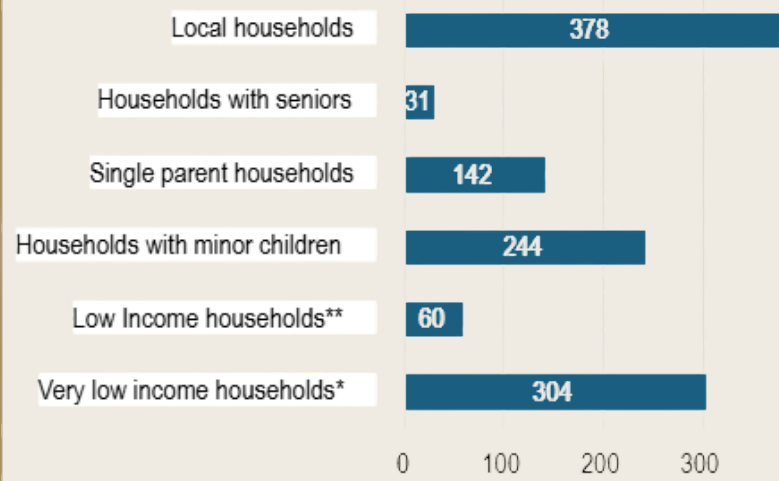
**Already this year  
(1/1/25 thru 9/30/25)**

Assisted 554 adults and 523 children in 378 households with rent and/or utility payments using our donated dollars

Disbursed \$225,200 in assistance

ICS assisted an additional 166 households with utility and rent payments using PSE and Salvation Army Funds

## Who We've Helped in 2025



- A **low** income household of 3 in King County makes between \$42,456 and \$70,704 per year.
- A **very low** income household of 3 makes less than \$42,456 per year.

# So Many Ways to Give: A Decade of Community Support

## Spotlight on Every Way Fitness

For more than ten years, *Every Way Fitness* owner Kristina Gravette has inspired both health and generosity in our community. Through her energy, creativity, and commitment, she has been a steadfast supporter of Issaquah Community Services (ICS) and our annual *Neighbors Helping Neighbors* campaign.

Kristina leads dynamic fitness classes—combining aerobics, and an ever-changing variety of exercises including yoga and resistance training. Her classes, conducted three days a week via Zoom, are designed for accessibility, making it easy for participants to work out from home while staying connected to a friendly, supportive group.



Want to know more about *Every Way Fitness*?  
Email Kristina at [ktgravette@msn.com](mailto:ktgravette@msn.com).

Each year, Kristina organizes a special raffle for her students in support of ICS. The prizes? Free punch cards for 10 classes—a fun and healthy reward that keeps the momentum going. Over the years, this tradition has raised thousands of dollars, helping many neighbors in crisis.

We are deeply grateful to Kristina and the *Every Way Fitness* family for their ongoing partnership, which shows how a small business can make a big impact. Her example is a reminder that local businesses have unique power to strengthen our community, and we invite others to support ICS in creative ways that fit their own mission and values.

## The Gift of Music- *Sing and Play Along at St. Michael and All Angels*



Each December, St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church in Issaquah fills with music and community during the annual ***Handel's Messiah Sing and Play Along***. This beloved tradition has supported ICS for over a decade, raising vital funds while bringing people together through the power of music.

This year's event takes place on **Sunday, December 14, at 2:30 p.m.** Whether you bring your instrument, lend your voice, or simply listen, you'll be part of a moving and joyous celebration of music and generosity.

All proceeds benefit Issaquah Community Services. Our heartfelt gratitude goes to St. Michael and All Angels for years of turning beautiful music into hope for neighbors in need.

Saint Michael & All Angels  
Episcopal Church  
325 SE Darst St, Issaquah, Washington  
[www.stmichaels-issaquah.org](http://www.stmichaels-issaquah.org)  
425-392-3215

## ICS Runs on Volunteer Power

*“After many years of volunteering at ICS, I sometimes think it’s time to step back. But then I hear someone’s story—a family facing eviction or struggling to keep the lights on—and my heart says STAY. The gratitude in their voices and the sense of community connection remind me why I keep showing up.”* —Elaine Davis, An ICS Volunteer



Volunteers Elaine, Rebeca and Michelle

At Issaquah Community Services (ICS), we’re more than just an all-volunteer organization. We’re a family of caring people, each bringing unique skills and experiences to a shared mission. Our volunteers have a wide range of experience—education, health care, finance, aviation, law enforcement, and more—but we share the common goal of helping neighbors in crisis.

Some of us help behind the scenes--writing newsletters and grants, managing technology systems and finances, or screening applications. Most also work in the office, where, when each day begins, the work is waiting-- blinking phone messages, new applications, and emails from clients and landlords with documents needed to complete the applications.

The heart of our work is listening. Each applicant receives a personal call and is asked to share their story. We may hear about medical bills, mental health crises, reduced work hours, or the stressful gap between jobs. Every story is unique, yet all have a common thread: people doing their best but still on the edge of losing their homes or utilities. We confirm the need, ask about their plan for moving forward, then act to stabilize the situation. Sometimes our own funds are enough; other times, fellow agencies provide additional help. Either way, the goal is to ensure families can remain in their homes.

There is deep satisfaction in sending that check to a landlord, knowing a child will sleep in their own bed and a parent will have one less crisis to face tomorrow. We’re honored to do this work, but it’s only possible because of you. Your gifts bring stability, and your time makes it personal.

If these stories move you, we invite you to join us—volunteer, give, and be part of the solution. Learn more about the many ways you can get involved at [www.issaquahcommunityservices.org/volunteer](http://www.issaquahcommunityservices.org/volunteer).

### The Caregiver

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her landlord decided not to sell, so Amanda and her children didn’t have to move after all. The relief of knowing her children wouldn’t sit in the dark—or face eviction on top of everything else—was immense.

With support from ICS, Amanda not only avoided the terrifying prospect of losing electricity—she preserved her family’s stability. She was deeply grateful, not just for the financial help, but for the kindness and understanding that reminded her she wasn’t alone.

Stories like Amanda’s remind us that even caregivers can find themselves in crisis. Thanks to donors like you, ICS can respond quickly—with compassion and practical support—so families in our community don’t have to choose between light and shelter. Together we are keeping homes stable—and giving hope.



Issaquah Community Services  
PO Box 669  
Issaquah, WA 98027

"I thought I had nowhere to turn. ICS was there for us when no one else was."



💡 Two in three ICS clients are families with children — your gift keeps them safe and housed.

## Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Donate by credit card, PayPal, or Venmo at our website:

[www.issaquahcommunityservices.org/donate](http://www.issaquahcommunityservices.org/donate)

or mail your check, payable to Issaquah Community Services, along with this form to:

Issaquah Community Services, PO Box 669, Issaquah, WA 98027



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

My gift is in memory of \_\_\_\_\_

May we acknowledge your giving on our website? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

**Please visit our website to learn about volunteering, recurring payments, employer match and other ways you can support our mission.**

**100% of your donations go to neighbors in need.**

*Thank you*

**ICS is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit**