



Lopez Food Share Program



Parent-Tot Group



Youth Outdoor Programs



Open Source Wellness

This has been an extraordinary year in the 23-year history of LIFRC. Never before have we had to respond to such a sudden, sharp increase in community needs. The onset of the pandemic resulted in a new reality for many islanders, including sudden loss of income, fear of food and housing insecurity, greater need for services tailored to homebound seniors and people with health conditions, and an immediate need for more support during social distancing, especially for isolated families engaged in remote learning.

The Coast Salish tribes teach us about obligations—to think about how our actions impact everyone and everything around us. In the midst of a pandemic, we take a shared responsibility for our collective well-being. LIFRC is immensely grateful for the role that each and every person plays in keeping us all safe.

An enormous outpouring of kindness has made LIFRC's COVID-19 response possible. The extraordinary generosity of donors, volunteers and community members has helped our neighbors meet their basic needs, gain access to wellness and mental health services, and receive youth and family support. In this year-end impact report we present the results of our combined efforts. Together, we will perpetuate LIFRC's vision of our community as a family in which each person enjoys a positive, meaningful quality of life, knowing our own and our neighbors' basic needs are met.

In gratitude, LIFRC Staff and Board of Directors

Supporting Neighbors

San Juan County has one of the highest costs of living, and lowest pay rates, in our state. Fully 39 percent of our neighbors had insufficient income before the pandemic hit. With 25 percent unemployment rates during this past summer, more people needed help for the first time in 2020.

In these stressful times, it is more important than ever that everyone feel safe, secure, and stably housed. "LIFRC values our hard workers and seniors," says Contessa Downey, who manages household supports for LIFRC. "All of us thrive when everyone has their basic needs met, including food, shelter, power and water." With your generosity, we are a powerful team taking good care of our neighbors.

HOUSEHOLD SUPPORTS

Housing Stabilization



47	Households assisted
120	Housing assistance payments
122	Adults & children stayed housed (34% BIPOC)
\$956.53	Average monthly assistance requests
2.6	Average number of months covered
\$115,924	Rental assistance provided to Lopezians

Housing funds

\$37,386	State of Washington
\$33,162	San Juan County
\$45,376	Individual donations



Essential Utilities

\$57,873	Total assistance
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Utility funds

\$10,855	OPALCO
\$47,018	LIHEAP



The delivery of food has been hugely appreciated and kept me safe at home due to health issues. For sure the food and meal deliveries are the most amazing thing to happen to me in my forty-some years on this island.
— An island elder



Nourishing Community

Food and healthy eating is a cornerstone of health and well-being, highly valued in the Lopez community—especially during a pandemic. Since the onset of COVID-19, LIFRC has launched two food programs to meet the needs of our clients and local food producers: Stand Up for Lopez, and Lopez Food Share.



Stand Up for Lopez: Farmer–Restaurant Initiative

This past April, Jodi Green and Mike Halperin recognized the need to feed the Lopez community as well as support our local food businesses. In a matter of weeks, they raised funds from numerous donors which enabled us to launch Stand Up for Lopez, a highly successful pandemic food security program. Learn more in a video on our website, titled “Farm to Restaurant to Table.”

- \$330,000 Donated by 30 donors
- 22 Local farmers, restaurants & food businesses supported from March through December
- 75 Volunteers involved in harvesting, packaging and delivering food
- 520+ Recipients of nutritious meals and groceries
- 8,000+ Food and meal deliveries over 7 months

Lopez Food Share Program

Thanks to donors’ support, LIFRC is now operating the Lopez Food Share Program (formerly LIFRC’s Lopez Fresh and Grace Church’s food bank). We have shifted to purchasing produce from local farmers and U.S. Foods, and staple items from Food Lifeline. Community donations allow us to provide better, healthier food and assure that households are getting enough to eat. “Volunteers are the backbone of Lopez Food Share,” Katherine Ingman, manager of our food program, says. “We couldn’t feed this many people without the many talented and dedicated people helping us.”

LIFRC is hiring community members to survey their neighbors to better understand their food needs. We look forward to learning more and sharing the results with you. The study will enable us to strengthen our food programs, and work toward supporting a local, sustainable food system. LIFRC’s numerous partners in this project include farmers, restaurants, Lopez Locavores, Taproot Lopez Community Kitchen, San Juan Ag Guild/Food Hub, and Lopez Animal Protection Society (LAPS). Stay tuned for more updates.

Youth Development

Experts say that just one caring adult in a child's life helps build resilience. LIFRC makes this happen in several ways: through participation in our mentor program, summer and after-school activities, preschool learning opportunities, and other youth activities. Interactions with caring adults builds the six C's: competence, confidence, connection, caring/compassion, character and contribution.

This year we adapted all of our programs to comply with COVID-19 protocols, providing island youth, from preschoolers to teens, with some much-needed time to learn, play and grow. Donor support and grants makes these programs possible, changing the trajectory of the lives of youth—the future leaders of our community.

My children attended LIFRC's Outdoor Summer Day Camp, and I felt really comfortable with their COVID safety protocol. Every day at dropoff, someone took the children's temperatures, and the kids used masks, washed their hands in between every activity, and had their own single work table and box of supplies. My children really enjoyed seeing different faces and playing with the other kids. They asked to go back the next week! — Gaby Velazquez, parent



Youth Mentoring

- 29 volunteer mentors paired one-on-one with youth
- 10 girls in Middle School Empowerment Group
- Coming soon: Middle School Boys Group!



Outdoor Education

No Child Left Inside (NCLI)

- 32 participants
- 160 slots filled
- Free to Lopez kids

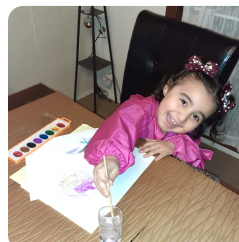
Outdoor Summer Day Camp

- 27 participants
- 97 slots filled
- 79% scholarship



Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

- A Hero's Journey: equine therapy, storytelling & SEL
- Mental health & counseling support



Parents-Tots

- 26 new babies
- 33 toddlers
- 25 parents
- Weekly activity packets in English and Spanish



I love everything about the outdoor program. We've made spears, built fairy houses (which the fairies visited!), started fires, played games, and learned how to survive in the wild. There are enough rules to keep you safe, but enough freedom to have a LOT of fun. The instructors are kind and amazing. Thank you so much for this opportunity. — Sophie, age 11

Community Well-being

To address the complexity of our island's health issues and the unique challenges of a rural location, LIFRC is implementing a number of innovative practices to promote well-being. These initiatives are made possible by the generosity of our donors and foundation grants.



Gaining More Calm and Connection

Over the past year, LIFRC hosted ten community workshops with Teresa Posakony of Emerging Wisdom, a program that teaches participants simple self-care practices to reduce stress and pain and promote relaxation. We are currently working with Teresa to pilot a new Calm & Connection Toolkit for teens and their parents/trusted adults.

Peer Support

LIFRC is one of the first resource centers to hire peer support specialists—people with lived mental health experience—to work with community members struggling with mental health issues.

These specialists guide and inspire clients towards wellness by sharing hope and empowering them to take actions that work for them. We have applied to the State Health Care Authority to become a licensed organization providing ongoing support for the Lopez community.

Open Source Wellness (OSW)

LIFRC is the first in Washington to offer OSW, a lifestyle medicine program with four components: MOVE (physical activity), NOURISH (healthy meals), CONNECT (social support), and BE (stress reduction). Community members were hired and trained as coaches. Sessions are currently being held online; meals and gatherings will resume in post-pandemic 2021.

Shared Power & Leadership

LIFRC is committed to social justice, to sustain a community where all feel a sense of belonging, and all marginalized people are fully and truly valued. The best way to tackle the enduring challenges faced by society is through connection: honest, authentic meetings of minds and hearts. We are engaging in numerous ways: Voices & Vision Community Conversations, Coast Salish Gatherings & New Partnerships, and JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion) discussions. All of us have a role to play, and by standing together we can build a future that is just and equitable.

Permanent Sense of Place

As of November 12th, LIFRC and LopezFIT now officially co-own the McCabe Building. Our shared home was conceived, built, and donated by LIFRC board member Pamela McCabe who also fully funded reserves for long term maintenance of the building, further protecting both agencies. The expanded space has enabled us to adapt and grow, and permanency gives us stability. Thank you, Pamela!



STAFF
**Advocacy &
Administration**

Barbara Schultheiss
David Kester

Erin Lee (Americorps)

Building Resilience

Contessa Downey
Deborah Bonnville
Katherine Ingman
Marjorie Schreurs
Stephanie Fronig

Zoe Gregozek (Americorps)

Creating Opportunities

Brooks

Patsy Haber

Q Williams

Sean Poynter

Susannah Dunlap

Stephanie Stratil

Open Source Wellness

Diano Garcia

Nikki Szostak

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Lopez Island Family Resource Center
PO Box 732
Lopez Island, WA 98261

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