

When in Crisis: Orion Helps Stabilize

When Brian reached out to Orion, he was living on the street and unable to find shelter. We assessed his situation. We helped him get his phone set up, a vital part of coordinating resources, starting with calling 911. Orion helped him get to the ER waiting room and then to an emergency shelter. Brian is now connected to resources, and awaiting social security. He has started to feel part of the community again.

Our community continues to see cost burdened households experiencing economic instability where any one issue can catapult an individual or entire family into a crisis: no heat, loss of housing, pending eviction, loss of transportation to get to work, loss of childcare, etc. The heart of Orion's work is to help those like Brian who seek help in critical moment to overcome a crisis. Orion seeks to determine individual needs, assess available resources, coordinate assistance, and navigate complex systems on behalf of clients.

When there are no other available resource to cover basic short-term expenses, Orion provides financial assistance for rent, heat, and transportation. Orion partners with other nonprofits – pooling resources to enable clients to overcome a financial crisis and help them to stabilize their situation and through the heat program Orion can supply households with heating oil and propane. So far this winter, Orion has helped 92 families and 125 children with heat assistance.



Getting Ahead: Building on Stability

Last fall, 10 adults made a commitment to themselves and their future, enrolling in Getting Ahead, Orion's free, 12-week interactive workshop designed for individuals who are no longer in crisis and ready to create their own action plan for long-term financial and social stability.

Through guided discussions, reflection, and practical tools, participants examine the hidden rules of economic systems, identify ways to build on the resources they possess, and develop personalized plans to move forward. In 2025, Orion served 18 individuals through Getting Ahead, provided childcare, and was supported by 5 dedicated volunteers.

Our next session starts March 2nd at First Presbyterian Church in Phoenixville.



Books as a Lifeline to Literacy

The decline in literacy rates is a national crisis. According to a recent New York Times article, fewer than one-third of U.S. fourth graders read proficiently, with even lower rates among children living in poverty.

Research shows that early access to high-quality books can be life changing. The availability of free books helps ensure children in low-income communities can take books home—often the first they have ever owned. At Orion, our Giving Library introduces school age children and their families to a variety of books that they can take home and keep, encouraging reading outside of the classroom. And these children and families can always come back for more.

In 2025, Orion delivered more than 7,000 books through our Giving Library to local nonprofits, preschools and the English Language Development classrooms in the Phoenixville and Spring-Ford school districts. And, this year, on January 16th, Orion participated in the Phoenixville Head Start's Winter Wonderland celebration where 236 books were given to children and teachers. An additional 175 books were given to Spring City Elementary School as a part of Kindness Week.

Orion also partners with 5 other non-profits (Road to Reading and Mother Goose Read to Me in Pottstown, En Familia and Kate's Casa in Phoenixville, and the Norristown Library) to distribute books to an even wider geography. In 2025, Orion and our partner organizations, distributed 26,650 books into the hands of children who need them most.

Our hope is simple and powerful: that over time, these books will help spark curiosity, strengthen reading skills, and lead to higher literacy scores—and brighter futures—for the children and families we serve.

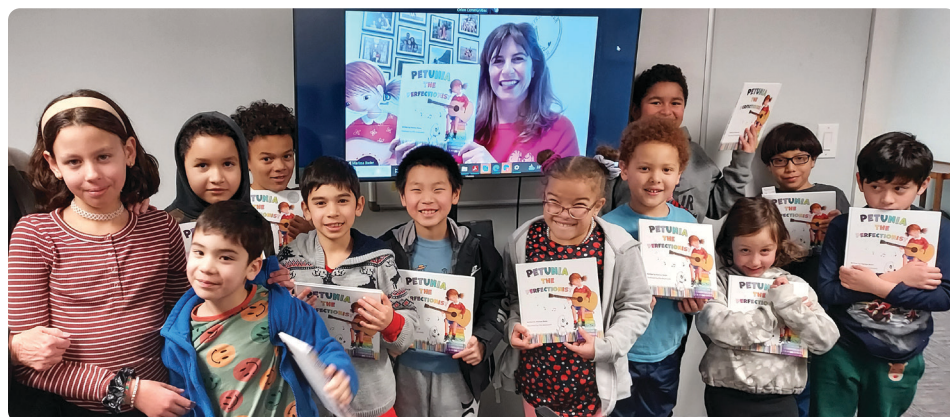


Book Club: Where Stories Build Friendship

Orion's Winter Book Club has had an extra spark of excitement: the kids met real authors! For the first time ever, an author joined us virtually all the way from Minnesota, proving that stories truly connect us across miles. Seeing the faces behind the books made reading feel magical and personal.

We are incredibly grateful to local authors Erin Murphy, Gina Gallagher, and Marissa Bader, who volunteered to spend time with our readers and helped to turn the Book Club into a space filled with curiosity, confidence, and community—one story at a time.

The Winter Book Club is one of two free sessions that Orion offers each year to children and families. It is made possible by the generous support of donors and volunteers.



Congratulations Maria!

Join Orion in congratulating Maria Manogue who has been promoted to Director of Programs at Orion. Since joining Orion, Maria has shown great empathy and care for clients, excellent leadership skills, and as the head of Bridge Case Management, has built a strong team focused on delivering on our mission. In her role as Director of Programs, Maria will be responsible for the delivery of all services to clients at Orion Communities.



Warmth for All: A Community Success Story

Orion is incredibly grateful to everyone who made our “Warmth for All” initiative a resounding success! Thanks to the generosity of donors, partners, volunteers, and staff, we were able to provide critical winter gear to those in need.

A huge thank you to *Main Line Health, Coldstream Crossing, Safeguard*, and the many local businesses, organizations, and individuals who donated directly. Special thanks to Mayor Alex Metricarti and Mayor Adam Alberico of Royersford and Spring City for encouraging four drop off locations in their area, as well as the community members who dropped off items at the Phoenixville YMCA.

The impact was overwhelming: nearly 1,000 coats and hundreds of winter items were collected. On November 15th, nearly 20 volunteers transformed our basement into the “Warmth Boutique.” Over the next week, another 17 volunteers helped over 300 families select the items they needed to stay warm this winter. This was more than a coat drive—it was our community coming together to care for one another.

Joe Giron: A Gift to Our Community

Joe never forgot the help he received from Orion during the time that he struggled. He represented the values that are so dear to Orion and lived them day in and day out – compassion, creativity and connection.



Joe was full of joy and a community connector. Anytime he met up with someone who was struggling with life’s essentials specifically housing, food, or just someone to talk to, Joe would connect folks to Orion and other resources to help them on their journey and to feel less alone. He often shared his story as a reminder that hardship does not define a person and that compassion can change lives. His advocacy was lived, personal, and unwavering.

Joe was an incredible gift to our community: he helped so many people move forward in their lives. He will be very much missed by many people and all his Orion family.

“We can’t believe people care this much—we never expected this!”

A client at Warmth Boutique





237 Bridge Street
Phoenixville, PA 19460

A Special Thanks!

Orion Surpasses Annual Appeal Goal

A huge thank you to everyone who donated to Orion's Annual Appeal. Your support for the work we do is invaluable, and we could not do what we do without it.

Books for Orion's Giving Library

This year Orion asked for your support with a book drive to help supply our Giving Library. Thank you to Kimberton Wholefoods, Kimberton Waldorf School, Spring City Elementary School, RiverCrest Golf Club and Preserve, and the Phoenixville YMCA for participating with drop-off boxes. With your help and the generosity of our community we received over 1500 books to help stock our Giving Library.

Education Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) donations in 2025

Orion is grateful to all those businesses that have supported Orion through the Pennsylvania EITC program. Orion is a designated Educational Improvement Organization and qualifies for EITC directed tax dollar donations because of the innovative and specialized programs we offer to local students. In this capacity, Orion receives tax directed donations from businesses approved for the EITC program. Our after-school STEM Club, book club and summer programs are funded in part through these donations.



www.OrionCommunities.org