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FOUNDATION RESEARCH FOCUSES ON INTERSECTING FACTORS

**Tracking Oregon's Progress Report Gives Context for Challenges, Opportunities Facing Oregonians**

PORTLAND, Ore. – A new research report from Oregon Community Foundation shows a state at a crossroads, where communities grapple with social and economic strains while also identifying opportunities to make progress on key measurements. The 2024 Tracking Oregon's Progress Report is part of a research series that explores trends across Oregon. The 100-page report provides data and analysis in seven focus areas that define what makes a thriving and healthy community.

"We do not live single-issue lives," the report declares. "Insights into our progress appear in the complex intersections of health, education, economy, the natural and built environment, housing, social connection and belonging. Our research elevates these intersections so that we can better understand the strains we face and our opportunities to move forward."

"This report is designed to give OCF community partners a baseline context to explore solutions to the challenges we face," said Kimberlee Salmond, Director of Research and Learning at Oregon Community Foundation. "The goal is to link local expertise on how to improve community well-being with the latest research, compiled all in one place."

The 2024 Tracking Oregon's Progress report suggests that many systems and structures that shape the critical conditions for well-being are struggling and not working for Oregonians consistently. The cost of Oregonians' daily lives is increasing faster than their incomes and other sources of wealth. For example, the cost of childcare in Oregon takes up nearly a quarter of household income, on average, which rivals housing and college expenses. More than half of Oregonians reported feeling left behind economically. The report adds that the social divides

facing Oregon communities leave residents feeling disconnected and socially isolated.

Yet, the report also points to promising opportunities that can have positive impacts on community well-being. For example, investing in early childhood education produces an array of benefits that stretch well into adulthood. Meanwhile, research suggests that investments in specific pressure points that can have a big impact, including building workforce and affordable housing and alleviating the cost of higher education.

“This report is a call to attention,” Salmond said. “We see many places where Oregon communities are leading the way for a new path forward.”

The Tracking Oregon’s Progress Report was created by researchers with Oregon Community Foundation. Impartial research, equity-driven analysis of pressing issues and evaluation of grantmaking are key ingredients of thoughtful grantmaking.

### **About Oregon Community Foundation**

Since 1973, **Oregon Community Foundation** has worked to improve the lives of all Oregonians through the power of philanthropy. In partnership with donors and volunteers, OCF strengthens communities in every county in Oregon through grantmaking, scholarships and research. In 2023, OCF distributed \$225 million in grants and scholarships. Individuals, families, businesses and organizations can work with OCF to create charitable funds to support causes important to them. To learn more, please visit [oregoncf.org](https://oregoncf.org).

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