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SeniorServ Becomes Meals on Wheels Orange County to Raise Awareness about Hunger among At-Risk Older Adults

ANAHEIM, Calif. (Oct. 21, 2019) – SeniorServ formally announced that it has become [Meals on Wheels Orange County](#) to raise much-needed awareness around the need to address hunger among at-risk older adults in the County. The announcement was made at its 9th Annual Senior Care Hero Awards Gala and Fundraiser on Saturday night to more than 600 caring supporters and advocates for older adults.

Meals on Wheels Orange County is the largest nonprofit provider of nutrition and supportive services for the County’s at-risk older adults. For more than 50 years, the organization has been committed to erasing hunger and loneliness for at-risk older adults through nutritious meals, friendly visits and safety checks, and keeping families together through day services.

“Becoming Meals on Wheels Orange County is a natural extension of the core part of our work in the community: serving nearly 1 million meals to more than 10,000 older adults each year,” said Holly Hagler, President and CEO, Meals on Wheels Orange County. “We wanted to increase the public’s awareness of our cause – nourishing at-risk older adults – by more closely aligning ourselves with the highly recognized brand of our national association, Meals on Wheels America.” As part of this alignment, Hagler also serves as a board member of the association and the affiliated state association, Meals on Wheels California.

Studies show that one in four low-income older adults (aged 60+) in Orange County struggles with hunger, and half of all diseases in older Americans is due to lack of nutrition. “As an organization, we work to reduce the number of people who are affected by malnutrition by providing nutritious meals each year to homebound older adults and through senior centers,” added Hagler. “Industry research indicates that malnutrition in older adults costs the U.S. more than \$51 billion each year, and that drain on the healthcare system certainly affects Orange County.”

According to Hagler, Meals on Wheels Orange County addresses another health crisis for older adults: loneliness. Research indicates that more than a quarter of them are at greater risk of death due to loneliness. “The impact on older adults can be devastating; being lonely can have as much effect on the health of an older adult as smoking 15 cigarettes a day,” continued Hagler. “The friendly volunteers who deliver our meals to our clients in their homes may be the only personal connection with another human being they have all day.”

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Meals on Wheels Orange County will continue to provide all of its current services, including Care Coordination, Adult Day Services, Senior Center Lunch Cafés and Friendly Visitors. The organization's headquarters in Anaheim and other locations in the County as well as its fleet of delivery trucks and vans will be branded as Meals on Wheels Orange County.

“Our sincere hope is that the new Meals on Wheels Orange County brand will bring much-needed attention to the issues of hunger and isolation among at-risk older adults, and increase community interest and support for our cause,” said Stuart Moss, the organization’s board chair. “Our goal is to serve 15,000 older adults annually by 2025, and – to accomplish that – we will need the continued generous help of our current supporters as well as new ones.”

Meals on Wheels Orange County’s major funders include some of the most respected or largest companies in Southern California, such as Archstone Foundation, Bank of America, Hoag Community Benefits, Kaiser Permanente, Pacific Life Foundation, SCAN Foundation, Sisters of St. Joseph Healthcare Foundation, and Wells Fargo.

“Meals on Wheels Orange County is recognized at state and national levels as a leader and innovator,” said Ellie Hollander, President and CEO of Meals on Wheels America, “We’re delighted that they have adopted our national branding and that its CEO Holly Hagler serves on our national board of directors as we pursue opportunities and create solutions that assure the health and wellbeing of America’s most vulnerable seniors.”

For more information about Meals on Wheels Orange County’s services, visit www.mealsonwheelsoc.org.

About Meals on Wheels Orange County

Meals on Wheels Orange County (formerly SeniorServ) is the largest nonprofit provider of nutrition and supportive services for at-risk older adults. It is committed to erasing hunger and loneliness for at-risk older adults through nutritious meals, friendly visits and safety checks, and keeping families together through day services. Through its critical services, the organization delivers nearly 1 million meals to more than 10,000 at-risk older adults each year throughout 20 Orange County cities. Meals on Wheels Orange County is a dba of Community SeniorServ, Inc. For more information on programs and services, or to request Meals on Wheels, visit www.mealsonwheelsoc.org.

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