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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### EXPANDING NEEDED SERVICES TO SENIORS COUNTYWIDE

**[Contra Costa County, CA – May 01, 2023]** – Have you ever gone into a store for a new item and not know where to look? It's like that for many seniors who need services to stay independent but don't know how to find them. It is even more challenging when barriers like language, a lack of access to technology, or other challenges like the stigma of asking for help, are added.

Social service organizations have always recognized that vulnerable seniors sometimes struggle to obtain services that keep them healthy, safe, and independent. In 2021, Meals on Wheels Diablo Region, Choice in Aging, Contra Costa Legal Services, and Empowered Aging, with support from the John Muir Community Health Fund joined together to address this problem in East Contra Costa County and created the East County Senior Resource Initiative.

The success of the Initiative has helped hundreds of older adults, and now the John Muir Community Health Fund has offered a \$20,000 challenge grant to expand the Initiative Countywide. MOW Diablo Region and its partners are celebrating May as "Meet the Match Month". Every dollar donated will be doubled to help provide this service to seniors in both West and Central Contra Costa County.

"I see the relief when a senior who is struggling and doesn't know where to turn finally gets the help they need," says MOW Diablo Region Older Adult Specialist, Lidia Gutierrez. "Sometimes the solution is as simple as helping them fill out and submit a form online. What is easy for many of us is an enormous challenge to our older neighbors, especially if you don't know where to turn."

Every day, 12,000 people turn 60 in the United States, and in Contra Costa County seniors are the fastest-growing segment of the population. "These older neighbors built our communities, and now as they're aging, they deserve to get the services that help them live independently and with dignity," says Caitlin Sly, MOW Diablo Region Executive Director. "That's why making this \$20,000 match is so crucial. The services are out there, but connecting the seniors to them will be critical as the County experiences the aging of our population. We hope everyone helps us meet the match this May by making a donation to expand this important service."

Donations to Meet the Match can be made by going to <https://donate.mowdr.org/match> or sending a donation to Meet the Match, Meals on Wheels Diablo Region, 1300 Civic Dr., Walnut Creek, CA 94596.

**About Meals on Wheels Diablo Region:**

For over 55 years, Meals on Wheels Diablo Region has improved the lives of vulnerable seniors living in Contra Costa County by delivering nutritious meals and supportive services that allow seniors to remain in their homes safely and with dignity. Programs include home-delivered meals, Breakfast Bags, Grocery Bags, Fall Prevention, Cafés, Care Management, Friendly Visitors, Health and Wellness, and more. Last year, the organization delivered 693,815 meals, made 12,674 Friendly Calls, delivered 5,057 Grocery Bags, made 973 Friendly Visits, served 529 Breakfast Bag clients, helped 463 seniors with errands, modified 306 homes, and made 98 elder abuse interventions!