

# BEYOND OUR WALLS



“During the pandemic, ECCO never closed.  
We never stopped serving anyone. I’m proud of that.”

**DANNY ROWLAND**  
President, ECCO Board of Directors



## ANY ONE OF US AT ANY TIME: **SHARON'S STORY**

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Sharon first came to know ECCO as a donor. A single mom to three children in elementary school, she passed ECCO each day on her drive to and from her job as a marketing executive. From time to time, she'd stop and donate clothing her kids had outgrown.

### **EVERYTHING CHANGED FOR SHARON AND HER FAMILY DURING THE PANDEMIC.**

Because her employer refused to allow her to work at home, both during the initial shutdown and later when her children were at home due to mandatory quarantines, Sharon ultimately applied for leave through the CARES Act. This meant dipping into her savings to supplement her diminished income.

Then she got laid off. When her ex-husband was laid off too, she also lost child support. "I was going through my savings really quickly," Sharon explains. She had to find a new job, but applying for and getting a job required childcare that she couldn't afford any more. "It got to the point where I knew I might not be able to pay my mortgage, that we might lose our home. I've never felt stress like that," Sharon remembers.

A quick search on how to get mortgage help brought Sharon back to ECCO. "It took me about a week to send that first email to Lyndsi," she says. "I was so embarrassed and nervous." Lyndsi, one of ECCO's Client Navigators immediately picked up the phone and called Sharon.

### **"Right away, I felt a great sense of relief,"**

says Sharon. "I couldn't believe how amazing Lyndsi was, how helpful she was. She never made me feel less than." ECCO provided the financial assistance Sharon needed to make her mortgage payments for the next couple of months—a couple of months that gave her time to find a new job. "I don't know where I would have been without them," says Sharon. "We probably would have lost our house."

To Sharon, ECCO's support is about more than financial assistance. "They truly care for their neighbors. Everyone at ECCO goes above and beyond," says Sharon. "Even after I got my job, they were still there to check in on me," says Sharon. "They cared about our journey. They wanted to see us through to the other side."

### **TODAY SHARON IS EXCITED TO SUPPORT ECCO'S CAPITAL CAMPAIGN.**

"Before the pandemic, I'd always been the giver. I had never been on the other side," she says. "Now we get to be givers again. What ECCO did for us, it makes me want to return what they've done a thousand times over. What they do for our community is simply amazing."



## DEAR FRIENDS,

As I look back over East Cooper Community Outreach's 30+ year history, from our founding days providing emergency relief after Hurricane Hugo to the 3,500 neighbors who received financial, nutritional, medical, and educational assistance in 2020, one word comes to mind again and again.

## Compassion.

Compassion has always been and will always be at the heart of everything we do. We believe in the worth and dignity of every person. We believe that when we wrap our arms around our clients and bolster them on every front, they can cross the bridge from acute distress to long-term recovery and opportunity.

We do what we do because we believe that when we work alongside our neighbors, we improve the community we all live in.

Today ECCO is at a crossroads. The population of the East Cooper communities is exploding—Mount Pleasant alone has grown more than 200% since 1989—but we are still operating out of the same office we moved to 20 years ago. The simple truth is that as our community grows, so will the need for ECCO.



That's why I am proud to announce **BEYOND OUR WALLS: THE CAMPAIGN TO EXPAND OUR REACH**. Through this capital campaign, you can partner with us to ensure our current facility meets our needs for the next decade, reunite our services under one roof, develop transportation solutions, and significantly expand our reach in the community to serve more of our neighbors as they navigate life's challenges, and improve the way we deliver the comprehensive, holistic assistance that puts our neighbors back on a path to financial stability.

I invite you to join us as we embark upon this campaign and ensure ECCO's impact expands beyond our walls in Mount Pleasant. You are the key to ECCO's impact—to our community's ability to grow even stronger in the years ahead.

Sincerely,

**Stephanie M. Kelley**  
Executive Director



**MISSION**

TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE, GUIDANCE, AND RESOURCES TO HELP OUR NEIGHBORS NAVIGATE THROUGH LIFE'S CHALLENGES.

# HELP & HOPE

ECCO has been a life preserver for thousands of households facing financial hardship in our community.

Whether it's one single service provided like food or financial assistance or years of walking through hardship, our team encourages, advocates, and develops a system of support focused on helping our neighbors navigate through life's challenges.

## WE ARE neighbors helping neighbors



“We always say nobody wants to walk through our doors. We know that is a struggle, so we try to make it as easy as possible. Giving people the opportunity to voice their concerns and their stresses—that alleviates a lot of pressure. **We are here to instill confidence** in people so they can get back on their feet and realize their goals are attainable.”

**KATHLEEN FORBES**  
Director of Programs & Services

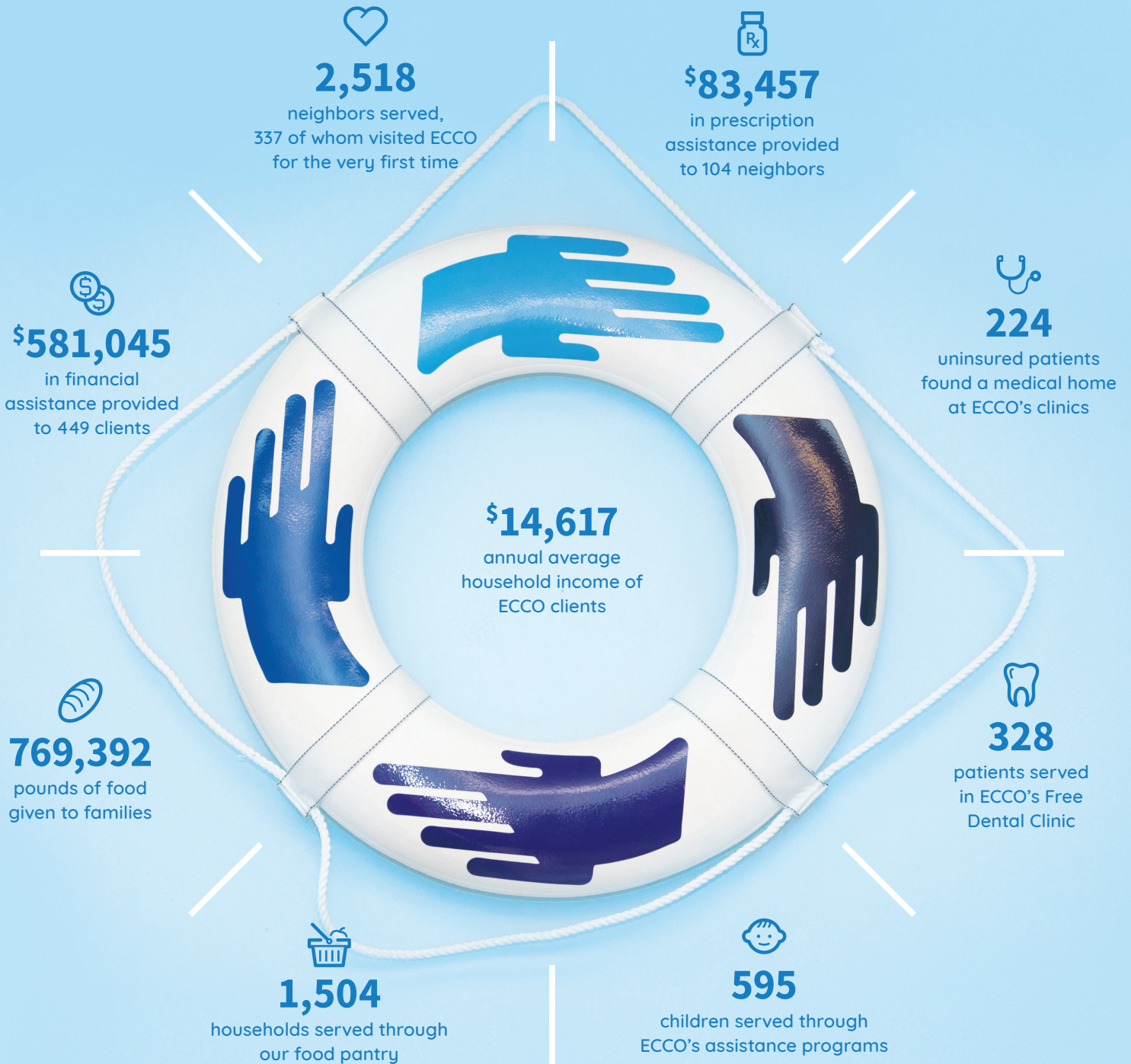


“I became a client ten years ago after undergoing a divorce. I was left with nothing. I heard about ECCO in a grocery store line. ECCO’s programs helped me tremendously. There were people of all ages and backgrounds telling their stories, which inspired and encouraged others. That ripple effect feeds the soul. **The impact of ECCO is far greater than the little building it’s in.**”

**SHARI CHAVEZ ERGLE**  
Former client and  
current community volunteer

FY 2020-2021

# ECCO'S IMPACT



## IMPACT DURING THE PANDEMIC (MARCH 2020-JUNE 2021)





THE DAUGHTRIDGE FAMILY — ANDY, GIFF, LISA, AND GIFFIN



GIFF & LISA

# DAUGHTRIDGE

## **MOUNT PLEASANT RESIDENTS GIFF AND LISA DAUGHTRIDGE ARE LONG-TIME SUPPORTERS AND VOLUNTEERS FOR ECCO.**

Giff served on the board of directors from 2013-2019 and Lisa volunteers in ECCO's Wellness Food Pantry, where she spends time each week assembling clients' monthly food orders. What first drew them to ECCO was ECCO's approach—giving a hand up to neighbors in their time of need instead of a hand-out.

**“We believe in charitable giving that helps people become independent.”**

Giff likens ECCO's approach to the difference between running into a burning building to save someone and fireproofing a building—bringing it up to code, installing sprinklers, ensuring all the building materials are fire resistant—so that the building never catches fire in the first place. “ECCO provides their clients with the tools that enable them to avoid crises—to keep moving confidently forward,” he explains.

To the Daughtrides, ECCO's mission-driven staff, cadre of volunteers, and wrap-around services are key to the organization's success. Together they break down so many of the barriers that keep people from moving forward financially. “Imagine if you have a toothache or you're hungry. It's hard to get out and get a job,” says Giff. ECCO can provide for those most essential and urgent needs so that their clients can take the next steps forward on their path to financial stability. ECCO is there to walk with them on that journey, on every front, explains the Daughtrides. “As wealthy as the Lowcountry is, there are still so many people who face barrier after barrier to success. These barriers are like headwinds. The more ECCO can move those headwinds out of the way through this campaign, the more we can lift our neighbors up and improve the quality of life throughout our community,” says Giff.

**“If we do a good enough job, we can be the rising tide that lifts all ships.”**

# GROWING, GROWING, OUTGROWN

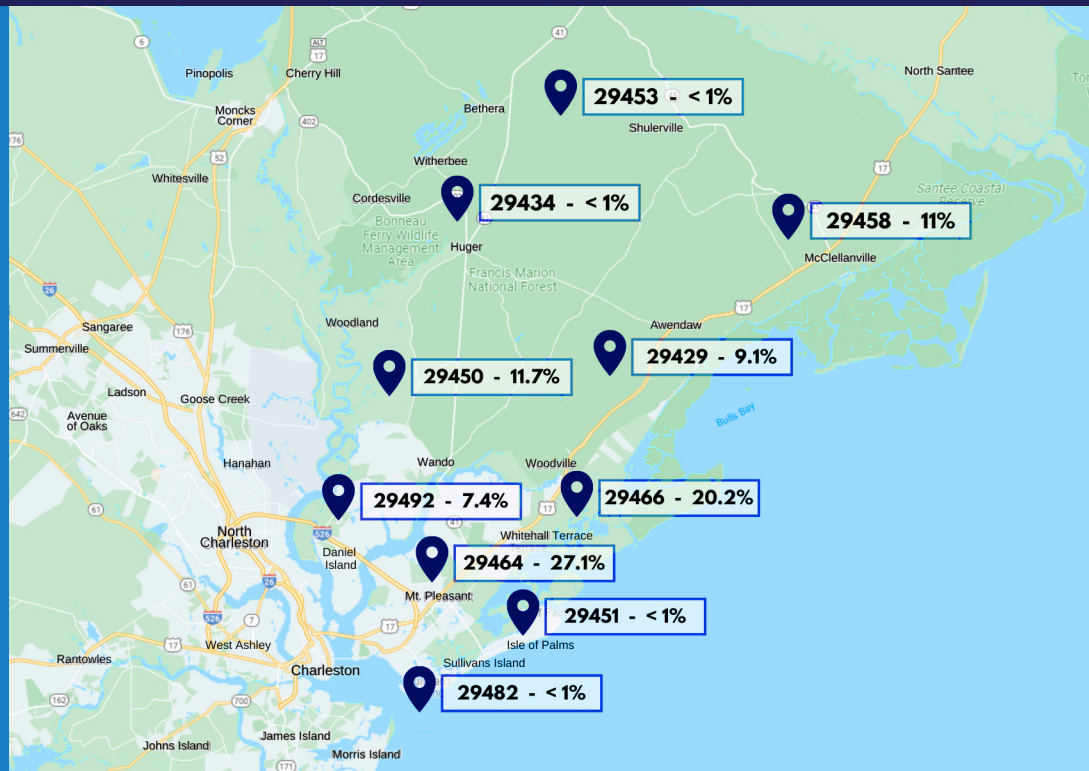
ECCO moved to our current location twenty years ago, to what was then a relatively undeveloped part of Mount Pleasant.

Today we are in the middle of a bustling shopping center, surrounded by Harris Teeter, Home Depot, and Hobby Lobby.

## WHO WE SERVE BY ZIP CODE

Another 12% of our clients consist of those working in our service area, through our partners, and those experiencing homelessness in our community.

*\*Data based on 2020-2021 assessments*



## WHAT DOES THAT MEAN FOR ECCO TODAY?

# THE PEOPLE WE SERVE ARE NO LONGER RIGHT OUTSIDE OUR DOOR.

ECCO's service area stretches from the base of the Ravenel Bridge north to the Georgetown County line and west to Highway 52 in Berkeley County. It includes larger communities such as Mount Pleasant, Awendaw, and Daniel Island, along with smaller communities such as McClellanville, Cordesville, Jamestown, Huger, and Schulerville. Today, due to gentrification in the Mount Pleasant area, a growing number of ECCO's clients are moving and now living in East Cooper's outlying communities. We know there are people in these areas who cannot get to us or believe ECCO is just a Mount Pleasant thing. We want to reach these communities.



“What people think is the face of poverty is not what they imagine. It’s not what you see on TV. **Many of the people we serve have multiple jobs.** They’re the people you see at Harris Teeter and at the convenience store where you stop to get your gas. Any one of us could need to come to a place like ECCO at any time in our lives.”

**STEPHANIE M. KELLEY**  
Executive Director



## Our clients can no longer get all the services they need under one roof.

**In our current layout, we have no room to evolve—one of ECCO's greatest strengths—and keep pace with the community's needs as they grow and change.**

A growing service population means that each of our programs requires more space to meet the needs of all our clients. Partners who once provided services on site have had to move out. Two of ECCO's most requested services have been displaced. Our temporary solution—renting space on Bowman Road for the Clothing Closet and furniture ministry—means that our clients must travel to multiple sites to access all of ECCO's available services.

To meet the current needs of the community, our vision is to reunite all of ECCO's services under one roof—while also looking forward and creating flexible space to meet any future needs that may arise.

## A lack of personal and public transportation keeps people from accessing our services.

Many of our clients lack reliable transportation or the financial resources to pay for gas or public transportation to come to ECCO. Even if they can make the trip to our main campus on Six Mile Road, extra trips to our Clothing Closet or to pharmacies to pick up prescriptions whose cost ECCO can cover are “a bridge too far.” As a result, our neighbors often go without the services they desperately need, even though they are available to them.



# BEYOND OUR WALLS

*The campaign to expand our reach*

We believe the ECCO's impact extends far beyond our walls, and far beyond the individual clients we serve. Because when we offer our neighbors a hand up, their families, schools, businesses, and neighborhoods all benefit. [Our work has ripple effects throughout the East Cooper communities.](#)

ECCO has the heart, the compassion, and the expertise to reach so many more people than we are serving today. We are proud to launch **BEYOND OUR WALLS: THE CAMPAIGN TO EXPAND OUR REACH** so that we can make that happen. This campaign will provide ECCO with the resources we need to ensure our current facility meets our needs for the next decade, reunite our services under one roof, develop transportation solutions, and significantly

expand our reach in the community to serve more of our neighbors as they navigate life's challenges, and improve the way we deliver and connect people to the comprehensive, holistic assistance, guidance, and resources that puts them back on the path to financial stability.

Your gift to this campaign has the potential to spark transformational change right in your backyard. ECCO's impact is real.

Together we can serve our neighbors and make our community a better place for everyone to live.



# RENOVATE & REUNITE

OUR CURRENT FACILITY      OUR SERVICES UNDER ONE ROOF

ECCO literally wants to break down the walls of our current facility to bring our services and programs back under one roof in a safe environment.

Our goal is to encourage collaboration, increase efficiency, and make it easier for our clients to access the help they need.

Renovating our current facility and reuniting our programs under one roof will not only make it easier for our clients to access our services, it will also enable our staff and volunteers, who often shuffle between sites on a daily basis, to work more efficiently and collaborate more often. Moreover, working side by side will allow ECCO to continually nurture and develop our compassionate team culture.

## THROUGH THIS RENOVATION, WE CAN:

1

### PUT ALL ECCO CLIENT-FACING STAFF AND SERVICES TOGETHER.

This new arrangement will enable client navigators to meet with clients and connect them to services quickly and easily, often in a single visit.

2

### CONVERT A PORTION OF OUR FACILITY INTO A COMBINED MEDICAL AND DENTAL WING WITH A SHARED RECEPTIONIST.

This will allow our health services to work together more easily and provide whole-person care that simultaneously supports our clients' mental, physical, and dental health.

3

### ENABLE CLIENTS TO MEET CRITICAL DAY-TO-DAY NEEDS IN A SINGLE TRIP.

Most clients who need food to feed their families also need clothing, and many lack the time and access to transportation to make separate trips to get food at our facility on Highway 17 and clothing on Bowman Road.

4

### EXPAND THE AMOUNT OF PARKING AVAILABLE AT ECCO'S MAIN CAMPUS.

Not only will this bring our 20 year-old facility up to current city standards, but will provide a safer campus for our clients, volunteers, and staff alike.

EXPAND

# OUR OUTREACH

It's time to focus on the "O" in ECCO—outreach—and bring ECCO to more of the people who need our services most.

ECCO's primary service area covers over 1,970 square miles. When you take into account our medical service area, ECCO's services cover nearly 3,200 square miles in the Tri-County area. We can't serve all the people who need our help if they don't know who we are, what we offer, and how to access our services. We also understand that even when people are familiar with ECCO, they cannot always come to us—whether they lack reliable transportation or because they live too far away from our main campus.

Through this campaign, we're investigating specific ways for ECCO to expand our presence beyond our walls in Mount Pleasant, especially in East Cooper's more isolated, outlying communities such as:



A mobile office and staff who make regular visits to these rural communities, bringing ECCO's life-changing services to those who cannot get to us.



Increased visibility through participation in farmers markets, health screenings, and community events.



Partnerships with churches and community centers to provide regularly scheduled opportunities for residents to access many of our services, including food assistance through on-site pantry space and refrigerated food storage.



## EAST COOPER COMMUNITY OUTREACH

## DEVELOP

# TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS

While our efforts to expand outreach will make it possible for ECCO to bring many of our resources directly into East Cooper neighborhoods,

there are some services we offer, including medical and dental care, that we cannot make mobile.

Moreover, expanding our outreach efforts will require ECCO to transport clients and staff, along with food and other essential supplies, throughout the East Cooper region.

**BEYOND OUR WALLS** will ease challenges that result from a lack of reliable transportation, both personal and public. It will reduce the sheer distance between our clients and our facility by allowing us to purchase vehicles and develop transportation programs to get clients to ECCO and to get our assistance to our clients.



Develop transportation programs to bring patients to their medical and dental appointments at ECCO by purchasing a fleet of vehicles.



Purchase a second refrigerated van to assist with food deliveries to clients unable to get to ECCO.



“What gets me excited is reaching out to work hand and hand with communities—meeting people where they are. By bringing our people and resources out into these communities, we can spread the word about the services ECCO can provide, individuals and families will get the help they need, the communities will get stronger and last longer.”

**JORDAN JOHNSON**  
Board of Directors



“If we are going to walk with our neighbors, provide guidance as they develop their strengths and pursue a path to opportunity, then we have got to go to them.”

**DON SQUIRES**  
Director of Development and Marketing





# PAM GREENE

## POSITIVE PROOF OF ECCO'S IMPACT

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### **CATCH PAM GREENE TODAY, AND YOU'LL LIKELY FIND HER IN HER CAR, USUALLY WITH A NEIGHBOR OR TWO AT HER SIDE.**

"I am that go-to person in my community for young, old, and in-between people who are struggling," says Pam. And her go-to resource? ECCO. The truth is Pam does more than connect people to ECCO. "I advocate for them because I know ECCO can make a difference in their lives. They made a difference in mine," she says.

Raised in New York, she and her children had moved to Mount Pleasant to be closer to her family. "There was a time in my life when I was really down, depressed, but I didn't know it," says Pam. "The people at ECCO saw potential in me. They lifted me up, encouraged me to pursue my educational and career goals, and I see them doing that today with other people and new generations," says Pam.

### **"They see a need in the community, and they fill it."**

For Pam, how ECCO goes about fulfilling its mission is just as important as what they do. "They never made me feel like I wasn't worthy," she says. "You can see their heart strings. You can see that they love to see people growing and getting better." The support ECCO provides extends beyond any individual's immediate crisis. "Their programs aren't just about giving you food, giving you clothing, getting you medical and dental care. It's not just a client relationship to them. I'm thankful that ECCO was there to help, when I didn't think anyone would."

Pam is thrilled for the opportunities **BEYOND OUR WALLS** will make possible for ECCO. "Not everyone knows how to get started, how to find the path. They need someone to learn their story and ask the right questions," she says. This campaign will make sure more people know they can turn to ECCO to find their path. Once they find ECCO, Pam says, "ECCO will work to help find them the right stool to step on to get to the next level. Some people need one step. Some people need a staircase. ECCO's there to help people on a case by case, personal basis so they can get to the place where they can flourish."

### **"They are the reason our community keeps getting stronger."**

# ECCO'S RIPPLE EFFECTS

ECCO has a long, proud history of serving our neighbors in their time of need.

And our approach works. Our assistance, guidance, and resources enable clients to emerge from their present-day crises with the skills to become self-sufficient long into the future.

One of ECCO's greatest strengths has always been our ability to adapt and respond to the needs of our community as they arise. Just like we did when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, it's time to be nimble again, to flex and grow beyond our walls, because our community needs us.

Your gift to this campaign will ensure we lend even more of our neighbors a hand up in the years ahead. Through **BEYOND OUR WALLS: THE CAMPAIGN TO EXPAND OUR REACH**, we will be able to expand our reach by bringing many of ECCO's services directly into East Cooper communities, ease transportation challenges that keep people from accessing us, and literally break down our walls to expand our facility so that East Cooper residents will be able to meet all of their needs—medical, nutritional, financial, and educational—at a single site with the assistance of staff members who are there to walk beside them on their path to financial stability.

You are key to our ability to increase ECCO's impact in this community. Every additional person we serve contributes to a continuous cycle that makes the East Cooper community healthier, stronger, and more resilient.

Your gift today will have ripple effects in our community for years to come.



“Coming from a place where I was making good money to a point where I was going to be evicted—that was hard. I had to swallow my pride and reach out for help, but ECCO made the process so very easy. They did not make me feel bad about having to ask. I never felt judged. ECCO was like a neighbor lending a helping hand. They made it possible for me to stay in Mount Pleasant. Now I can help others in the community. **I want to give back to ECCO.** I want to pay it forward to my other neighbors.”

**JULIA**  
Former client who arrived at ECCO due to the COVID-19 pandemic

## BEYOND OUR WALLS

*The campaign to expand our reach*



“COVID-19 has proved to be a defining moment in ECCO’s 32-year history. Just as the winds of Hurricane Hugo blew off the blinders allowing the community to see the level of poverty that existed in 1989; the shock created by the pandemic has jolted many of us into seeing how truly vulnerable we all are to circumstances and challenges beyond our control. In sacred scripture, we are reminded that those in poverty will always be among us and we are commissioned to respond to their needs.

“What you did for the least of my brothers and sisters, you did for me.”

**MONSIGNOR JAMES A. CARTER**

Founder of ECCO



# BEYOND OUR WALLS

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