



***Have you heard of us, but don't know what we do? We want to change that!***

St. Stephen Housing Association is a nonprofit that provides transitional housing for families experiencing homelessness and helps them return to stable housing. We maintain 20 units of transitional housing in Kent and Auburn. While living in one of our units, families receive individualized assistance from a social worker to help them decrease barriers to obtaining housing. This includes help in areas such as budgeting and money management, returning to school, finding stable employment, accessing healthcare and mental health services and finding housing again. We believe housing is a human right and are committed to helping families regain and maintain their own permanent housing.

# Housing and Hope

## Helping families experiencing homelessness find housing and stability

SUMMER 2022

### REMEMBERING A FOUNDER

Marshall Denby, long time St. Stephen the Martyr Deacon and a founding member of St. Stephen Housing Association passed away on November 22, 2021. Marshall was instrumental in the creation of SSHA in 1989 and was a driving force behind the growth of the agency. He managed our financial affairs for over 20 years and helped keep SSHA in a healthy financial condition. He officially retired from the Board of Directors in 2012. Anyone who knew Marshall also knew of his passion for social justice and his commitment to helping families experiencing homelessness. We remember Marshall fondly and miss his dedication and compassion!



*Founding SSHA Member Marshall Denby*

### HOUSING STABILITY: HELPING HOUSEHOLDS STAY HOUSED



As the world turned upside down due to the pandemic, many people experienced economic hardship and were unable to pay their rent. In 2021, St. Stephen Housing Association was selected as one of the organizations to partner with King County's Eviction Prevention and Rental Assistance Program. Partner agencies were tasked with distributing federal Covid relief rental assistance to thousands of households facing eviction due to job or income loss. SSHA was directly responsible for distributing over 9.5 million dollars to 750 households. Our partnership with King County has been extended to help distribute the remaining federal funds. We are honored to have been part of such a successful program helping families at risk of homelessness remain in their homes during these difficult times.

***Find us online at [ststephenhousing.org](http://ststephenhousing.org)***

***Like or follow us on Facebook at [facebook.com/ststephenhousing](https://facebook.com/ststephenhousing)***

***Follow us on Instagram @ststephenhousing***

***Reach us at [office@ststephenhousing.org](mailto:office@ststephenhousing.org) or 253-638-9798***

***EIN #: 94-3125444***

## ***Moving Forward in Faith***

Before coming to the U.S., Steve worked his early teen life in Mexico. At the age of 18, he moved to California and met Jessenia. Steve became a U.S. citizen, but poverty and the threat of gang violence pushed him to travel to Washington with his love and new young family. Here, Steve found work doing maintenance for a local apartment complex in Kent. The family was stably housed as their children grew up. However, Steve's health began to deteriorate, and the family could not keep up with their rent payments. When his medical problems became so serious he could no longer work, they lost their housing and were left without a place to live. Because Jessenia was still working on her legal immigration status, she was unable to work to support the household. Steve was eventually diagnosed with congestive heart failure, kidney failure, and other terminal medical issues. As Steve explained, "It was a scary time for us. After working most of my life, I did not know what we were going to do. I did not know who to reach out to or where to find support; everything I loved and worked for had been taken away from us, including my health and ability to work. Besides our kids, we were at ground zero." They felt heartbroken and hopeless. They found themselves homeless, living in their car with their three children and no heater through the coldest months of the year. The van they called home was parked along Maple Valley Highway, about 10 miles from the closest grocery store. With their oldest son incarcerated in Eastern Washington, Steve very ill and no family in the state to reach out to, the family did what they could to survive. Jessenia, knowing a little bit of English, often walked to the grocery store to ask for help from strangers, for basic items for the kids like bread, peanut butter, and water. They panhandled enough money to buy a used but working car heater and borrowed wi-fi from the grocery store to watch a YouTube video to install the heater core. They relied on their faith to get them through the worst days and prayed that God would see them through the time of uncertainty. This lasted about five months before meeting an outreach



***Steve, Jessenia and their kids***

worker and being offered a place at Sacred Heart shelter in Seattle. A few months later, they were referred to St. Stephen Housing. Often people who are experiencing homelessness struggle to access medical care and medications, which Steve desperately needed. After being housed at SSHA, Steve and Jessenia were persistent in seeking services and support for their family. Jessenia found an advocate to work on her immigration documents. Steve has been blessed with great doctors to support him through his medical challenges and get through his days as best he can, in the least amount of pain. They have been dedicated to maintaining their home, helping out around the neighborhood, and reducing barriers that came with their situation before being housed. Sadly, their heartache has continued. In January of this year, their oldest son turned 18 and moved home after being released from incarceration. The family was ecstatic that their family was finally once again whole. But just weeks after he moved home, he was killed just a few blocks from their home, on his walk back from his first week of work at McDonalds in Auburn. Detectives are still searching for answers and the family is grieving the loss of their first-born son. Despite this searing loss, they are committed to moving forward together and facing the future with faith. Their resiliency and spirit has been an inspiration. We are humbled by their example and honored to have been in a position to help.

## LIVING IN A DIGITAL WORLD

*What would YOU do without internet? These days, it's hard for many of us to imagine. We take for granted routine tasks like paying bills, checking bank accounts, submitting online job applications, and emailing a child's teacher. Access to the internet is an essential utility in today's world. Many families in our program have never owned their own computer or tablet. They have relied on library access or their phones. Library access has been difficult during the various phases of the pandemic and imagine filling out a lengthy job or rental application using just your phone! During the last school year, we discovered many children in our program were using their parents' phones to participate in classroom Zoom calls. When parents needed to go to work, their children had no access*



*to school. Thankfully, we secured several private grants that allowed us to purchase chrome books, headphones and ongoing monthly internet service for our families and children. It has made a huge difference for our families to reliably access the internet and remove the technology barrier as they work toward their goals.*

## Summer Fun!

Thanks to a grant from the **Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness**, we provided fun and playful events for families emerging from a year and a half of pandemic fear and isolation. With this funding, we hosted a series of late summer and fall family activities. These included a Back to School BBQ, making tie-dye t-shirts, and handing out school supplies. We also hosted a Community Movie night with popcorn, hot cocoa, cotton candy, and watched Dr. Dolittle on an outdoor inflatable movie screen. We hosted a dinner for the community and spent time making art together. With the remaining funding, we provided an annual YMCA membership to eight families in the program. We are so grateful for this grant and the events it funded. It felt so good to have fun TOGETHER again!



Learn more about the Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness at [homelessinfo.org](http://homelessinfo.org).





## DO YOU WANT TO HELP CHANGE A FAMILY'S LIFE?

**BE PART OF OUR "SUPPORT A FAMILY" CAMPAIGN AND HELP THEM FIND STABILITY AND REGAIN THEIR FOOTING**

We never guessed that our Hope for Housing annual fundraiser in February of 2020 would be our last event for several years. This year, in the name of caution, we are again forgoing an in-person fundraiser. Instead, we invite you to participate in our **Support a Family Campaign!**

When families enter our program, they often come with very few belongings. Many have lost everything and are starting from scratch. As they settle in to their new home, unexpected expenses often arise. Even small expenses, like a minor car repair or an unexpectedly high utility bill, can be financially devastating. Funds raised during the **Support a Family Campaign** will help families in all stages of their journey. When families enter our program, we help them furnish and set up their households. We help them

establish goals for their stay which often include obtaining work, or increasing their hours, paying off housing debts and improving their budgeting skills.

As families settle into their SSHA housing unit, we may provide grocery or gas cards to help with immediate food and transportation needs.

During their stay, as families work on their goals, we provide additional support to connect them with community resources and help when unbudgeted expenses occur. When a family's time with SSHA is complete, we help cover moving expenses to their new permanent housing, including rental truck costs and deposit.

**We invite you to contribute to the Support a Family Campaign! Your contributions will make a real difference to our families at all stages of their journey.**

**Support a Family by donating through the enclosed envelope, online at [ststephenhousing.org](http://ststephenhousing.org) or scan the code below.**



***P.S. Don't worry! When it is safe to do so, we will once again host the best fundraising wine tasting and auction of the year!***

### **Support a Family Levels**

***\$100 Welcome a Family:*** Support a family as they move into the program with cleaning supplies, linens and bedding: all the things needed for a new home!

***\$250 Nourish a Family:*** Support a family with a well stocked kitchen of fresh and healthy food.

***\$500 Encourage a Family:*** Support a family to get to school, work and job interviews.

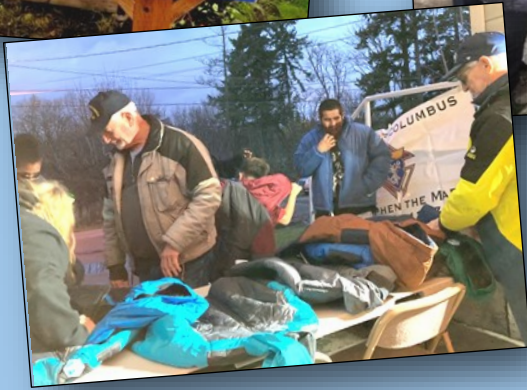
***\$750 Nurture a Family:*** Support a family when the unexpected happens. Help them stay on track with their goals.

***\$1000 Sustain a Family:*** Help a family with deposit and moving expenses when they regain permanent housing!

***Thank you for helping end the trauma of families experiencing homelessness!***

## THANK YOU ST. STEPHEN THE MARTYR KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

Members of the Knights of Columbus from St. Stephen the Martyr have been very supportive of SSHA through the years. Over the past year they built a “Little Library” for our kids at City Park and hosted a winter coat distribution event at Nike Manor. Thank you, Knights for supporting our families and kids!!



### THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!

Thank you to all our supporters! We appreciate you and all the ways you give.

**Your time and talents** – Volunteers who help with office work, clean housing units, organize supplies, perform yard work – THANK YOU!

**Your treasure** – All who donate household goods and furniture, make financial donations, or sign up for recurring payroll deductions – THANK YOU!

Your support makes all the difference to our families on their journey to stability.

Thank you to the PSE Foundation, the Starbucks Foundation, BECU, and UPS for being companies who care about families experiencing homelessness! Each one awarded SSHA with a generous grant to continue our work helping families experiencing homelessness find permanent and stable housing.





13055 SE 192nd St  
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***Would you like to volunteer?  
We would LOVE to have you!***

- \* Cleaning and preparing houses for move in
- \* Serving on our Board of Directors
- \* Assisting with social media and outreach
- \* Landscaping and yard maintenance
- \* Organizing household donations

***To volunteer or learn more,***

***Call us at***

***253-638-9798***

***or drop us a line at***

***office@ststephenhousing.org***

***BY THE NUMBERS:***

July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022

***Families housed:*** 30 (127 individuals)

***Adults:*** 42 ***Children:*** 85

***10 households*** entered the program with a job or found a job during their stay.

***6 households*** started a school program.

***16 households*** took a tenant education course or financial counseling class.

***11 households*** exited to permanent housing!

