

HOUSING AND HOPE

Helping families experiencing homelessness or a housing crisis find stability

St. Stephen Housing Association + Way Back Inn We have merged!

We are thrilled to share an important and exciting announcement! After thoughtful consideration and extensive planning, Way Back Inn merged with St. Stephen Housing Association on December 1, 2024, to form a united organization that will better serve our shared mission of providing essential housing support to those in need.

Why Did We Merge?

Like St. Stephen Housing, Way Back Inn has a long history of serving families with children experiencing homelessness with transitional housing in South King County. Founded in 1991 by Boeing employees with a passion for helping others, Way Back Inn has a proven track record of positively impacting the lives of countless families. This merger has allowed us to strengthen our impact and expand our services. By combining our Board, expertise, resources, and passion, we will be able to do even more to meet the growing demand for safe, stable, and supportive housing. By joining forces, we have: **Broadened Our Reach:** Together, we can serve more families and children in need of supportive housing and recovery services across our communities. *Combined we now have 27 housing units for families with children.*



Way Back Inn



We also have the opportunity to expand by an additional 4 units through future development. **Enhanced Efficiency:** Streamlined operations will allow us to make better use of resources, ensuring more of your donations and our efforts go directly toward improving lives. **Increased Sustainability:** The merger strengthens our financial footing, allowing us to grow and adapt to the evolving needs of the communities we serve.

What Does This Mean To Our Supporters?

The work and community impact that you have supported will continue without interruption. The same dedicated staff and Board members will be here to assist the families in our programs, and all current programs from both organizations will remain in place, with plans to expand over time. Your ongoing support will be more important than ever as we transition into this exciting new chapter. Thank you for being part of our work and our story!



ONE FAMILY'S STORY OF PERSEVERANCE

Claude,
Bellitia and
Rionna

Claude had always dreamed of a better life in the U.S. Born in a small African village, he had grown up hearing about opportunity and freedom. To chase that dream, he made the painful decision to leave his wife, Bellitia, behind, promising to send for her soon.

Arriving in Bellevue, Washington, he was full of hope but quickly faced harsh realities—no job, no credit history, no family. He spent his days searching for permanent work and housing, each rejection weighing on him. With little money, he lived in a cheap motel, often going without food. Each night, he called Bellitia, assuring her that things would soon improve. He took whatever jobs he could find—driving a taxi, delivering food, working long hours for low wages. He refused to give up, knowing he was one step closer to reuniting with Bellitia.

After months of paperwork and waiting, he finally got the call—his wife was coming to America. When Bellitia arrived, she was filled with hope but also fear.

Life in the U.S. was harder than expected. Facing exploitative landlords and low-paying jobs, their struggles intensified when Bellitia became pregnant. At times, they questioned whether they had made the right choice, but they held on to each other and pressed forward. Claude continued working tirelessly while Bellitia found strength in faith and the support of their church. They were referred to St. Stephen Housing, where they found much needed support. They knew that with stable housing and a community behind them, they could build the life they had dreamed of.

Soon Claude received a call from Amazon. A supervisor position had opened, and he was offered the job. It was the opportunity they had been waiting for. With a stable income, they could finally step out of uncertainty and into a more secure future.

Inspired by their progress, Bellitia decided to return to school and pursue her dream of becoming a nurse. With Claude's job providing stability, she enrolled in classes. Meanwhile, their daughter, Rionna, started preschool.

Claude's new job allowed them to build their credit and start saving for a home. Their dream was no longer distant—it was within reach. Through hardship, Claude and Bellitia had learned that perseverance was key. They had arrived in America with nothing but hope, and now, they have built a life of love, stability, and opportunity.



To make a one-time donation or to sign up for monthly giving, scan the code above, use the enclosed envelope, or visit our website at ststephenhousing.org. Thank you for considering a gift!



THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

Our programs rely on donors and supporters like you to continue the critical work of helping families experiencing or at risk of homelessness find stability and a safe place to live.

Please consider a monthly contribution to our housing programs.

Your ongoing support enables us to continue offering vital resources, assistance, and a safe haven for families in need. By signing up for monthly giving, you ensure that families are stably supported by our program for this month and many months to come.

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT BENEFITS FAMILIES AT CITY PARK

Achieving the rank of Eagle Scout is no small feat, and for Luke Allen, it became an opportunity to leave a lasting impact on his community. For his Eagle Scout project, Luke built and installed a small food pantry at our City Park location, creating a resource that will provide both nourishment and a sense of solidarity for families experiencing housing instability.

The pantry is a welcoming fixture in the housing community. Stocked with non-perishable foods, it offers residents easy access to essential items. But beyond that, it serves a second purpose – it's also a place where families can share surplus food with their neighbors. Whether a family has extra canned goods, snacks, or staple items, the pantry provides a space for generosity to flourish.

"I wanted to create something that would help people in a practical way, but also foster a sense of community," Luke explained. "When people are going through tough times, knowing their

neighbors are looking out for them can mean a lot."

Luke's project embodies the principles of Scouting – service, leadership, and compassion. For the families in our housing program, the pantry is more than a wooden structure filled with cans and boxes. It is a symbol of kindness and the belief that no one should go without. *Do you know a Scout or a Troop looking for a service project? Reach out to us and we might be able to help!*

Congratulations to Luke on his remarkable achievement! We hope his project inspires others to find meaningful ways to serve their communities.



THANK YOU TO OUR MANY FUNDING PARTNERS, CORPORATE SUPPORTERS AND INDIVIDUAL DONORS IN 2024. THIS WORK COULD NOT BE DONE WITHOUT YOU!

St. Stephen the Martyr Parish



The BEIM Foundation



Catherine Holmes Wilkins Foundation



HOPE FOR HOUSING 2024

What an incredible evening! The 2024 Hope for Housing event was an outstanding success, thanks to the generosity and enthusiasm of our amazing community. From our dedicated sponsors and generous donors to our hardworking volunteers and generous attendees—you all made this night truly unforgettable. Together we raised **over \$35,000** to provide vital resources and housing assistance to those in need. Thank you for making hope a reality!

Mark your calendar now for the 2025 event on November 1!





PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
SEATTLE, WA
PERMIT NO. 1765

13055 SE 192nd St
Renton, WA 98058

Return Service Requested

Board of Directors

*Barb Brownlow
Boe Singh
Chris Johnson
Debbie Dullenty
Enjoli Harris
Eric Miller
James Jeyaraj
Jason Dunbar
Kajal Ram
Nate Thompson
Paul Pasquier
Rochelle Herteg
Scott Roberts
Sirichanh Sisavatdy
Teri Ambrozic-Santini*

Get that GIVING feeling: When you give, good things happen.

GIVE 
BIG
POWERED BY
501 COMMONS
2025



**Early giving
starts April 22!**

HELP US REACH OUR \$20,000 GOAL!

Please consider making a donation to SSHA during the GiveBIG event on May 6 & 7. Thanks to a generous \$10,000 matching gift, every donation will go twice as far—helping us reach our \$20,000 goal even faster! That means your gift will be doubled—\$25 becomes \$50, \$100 becomes \$200—until we hit the full match. This is an incredible opportunity to make an even bigger impact and help us reach our goal faster. Don't miss the chance to turn your support into something even greater!

Make your donation at
www.wagives.org/organization/ststephenhousing
or scan the code below. Thank you!

