

# HOUSING AND HOPE

Helping families experiencing homelessness or a housing crisis find stability

## Building Hope, Growing Home A Season of Growth for St. Stephen Housing Association

This season marks an exciting chapter for St. Stephen Housing Association. Thanks to the generosity of our community and the commitment of our funding partners, we are expanding our impact in ways that will benefit families for generations to come. From building new permanent housing to expanding our transitional housing program, we are creating more opportunities for families to find stability, hope, and a place to call home.

### Breaking Ground on Steele House

We are thrilled to announce that Steele House, our new six-unit permanent housing community in Renton, is moving forward! Designed for larger families with children, Steele House will provide spacious, affordable homes where parents can focus on achieving long-term stability while children have the security they need to grow and thrive.

This exciting project recently received funding awards from the Washington State Department of Commerce and South King Housing and Homelessness Partners (SKHHP). These investments move us significantly closer to construction and demonstrate the confidence our partners have in our vision.



Steele House's units will have 4 bedrooms for larger families with children.

### Expanding Housing at Nike Manor

Our growth doesn't stop there. This fall, we will expand our transitional housing program by taking over management of 15 additional family units at Nike Manor in Kent. For more than 37 years, St. Stephen Housing Association has successfully operated nine family units at Nike Manor through our partnership with the King County Housing Authority. Expanding to 24 units at the site allows us to provide safe, supportive housing to many more families while building on a program with a long history of success. Every additional house means another family has the opportunity to move from homelessness to stability.

### Stronger Together

These exciting milestones have been made possible in part through our merger with Way Back Inn Foundation. Since joining together in late 2024, the transition has been remarkably smooth, thanks to our shared mission, values, and commitment to helping families find stable housing. We are grateful to everyone at Way Back Inn who helped make the transition so positive, and we're excited about what we can accomplish together in the years ahead.

---

# From a Garage to a Home: Rebecca's Journey of Resilience and Hope

By Rebecca Smith

When Rebecca first came to St. Stephen Housing Association, she was a single mother doing everything she could to provide a safe and stable life for her three children.

Rebecca had been living with extended family while working full time as a cook. Determined to create a better future for her children, she had carefully arranged a garage so that she and her kids would have a place to stay temporarily while she saved money and searched for a home of their own. It wasn't the home she dreamed of, but it was a place where her children could sleep safely while she worked toward something better. Then, unexpectedly, tragedy struck. A fire destroyed the family home, leaving Rebecca and her three children without a place to live. Suddenly, the plans she had worked so hard to build were gone.

Rebecca searched everywhere for housing. She made phone calls, asked questions, and looked for any opportunity that could help her family get back on their feet. During this difficult time, someone at one of her children's schools told her about St. Stephen Housing Association and gave her Marissa's phone number.

Rebecca called, and that phone call became an important turning point for her family.

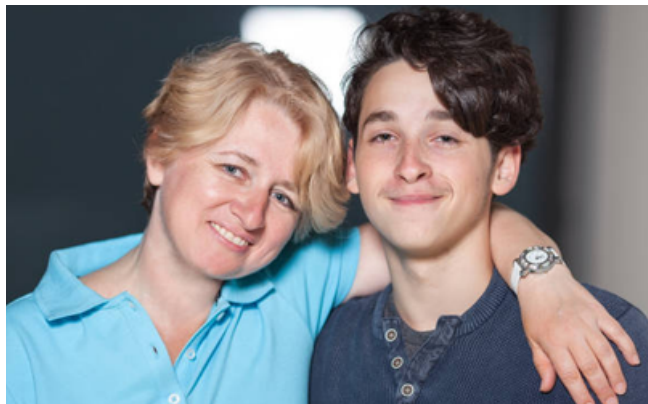
For Rebecca, the move meant more than simply receiving a place to live. It gave her family the stability and security they needed to begin rebuilding their lives.

Over the next year and a half, Rebecca became an important part of the City Park community. She didn't simply live there; she contributed to it.

Rebecca became involved in the community garden, helping grow pumpkins, squash, cucumbers, tomatoes, and other vegetables. She shared her time, skills, and enthusiasm with her neighbors and helped make the community garden a place where families could connect and support each other.

With support from SSHA, Rebecca's daughter was able to stabilize her life and pursue her dreams of attending the Seattle Art Institute.

Her creativity and determination opened the door to an educational future she had worked hard to achieve.



Rebecca's middle son also reached an exciting milestone. He received a scholarship to attend Maritime High School in Des Moines. While there, he began an internship with Vigor, gaining valuable hands-on experience and an opportunity to begin preparing for his future career.

Her youngest son received support to obtain an Individualized Education Program (IEP) through his school and was approved for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) related to his autism. These supports helped ensure that he could receive the services and resources he needed to thrive. And Rebecca was building something of her own. Using her creativity and entrepreneurial spirit, she started a home-based Etsy business. She began creating customized shirts, sweatshirts, mugs, bags, and other personalized items. As her skills and customer base grew, she expanded her work into designing decorations for parties, weddings, birthdays, and other special occasions. Eventually, Rebecca graduated from the transitional housing program and moved into permanent housing through King County Housing Authority.

Recently, Rebecca was hired full time with Catholic Community Services, providing her with another important step toward financial stability and independence. With the stability she had gained, the hard work she had put in, and the opportunities she had pursued, Rebecca was finally able to accomplish something she had dreamed about since the day the fire destroyed her family's home. She bought a home of her own in Columbia City in Seattle, where she now lives with her fiancé and children.

Today, she and her children have a home they can truly call their own.

---

## Did You Know?

*A few things you might not know about  
St. Stephen Housing Association*

 **We have been helping families find housing for more than 37 years.**

SSHA was founded in 1989 by St. Stephen the Martyr Parish. While our name reflects our history, SSHA is a separate nonprofit organization and is not part of the church.

 **Our staff has more than 80 years of combined experience.**

Our small but dedicated team brings decades of experience in housing, social services, property management, and working with families experiencing homelessness.

 **We serve families throughout South King County.**

Our housing is located in Kent, Auburn, Renton, and Tukwila, giving families opportunities to remain connected to their communities.

 **Our Housing Case Managers are professional social workers.**

They work alongside families to set goals, connect with resources, navigate challenges, and take steps toward long-term housing stability.

 **We provide both transitional and permanent housing.**

Some families need time and support to move toward permanent housing, while others need an affordable home with ongoing supportive services. We provide both.

 **We recently joined forces with Way Back Inn Foundation.**

Our 2024 merger brought together two organizations with a shared commitment to helping families. The transition has been remarkably smooth and has strengthened our ability to serve our community.



## We asked, and you gave BIG!

What an incredible response! This year's GiveBIG event raised over \$30,000 for St. Stephen Housing's programs. Thanks to a generous \$10,000 matching gift, every gift was stretched! Thank you for all who donated to provide families experiencing homelessness with a safe place to start their journey to stability.

## A Key is Just the Beginning



When a family moves into one of our homes, they move in with more than a key. They move in with time. For families who have experienced homelessness, a safe and stable home provides the breathing room to focus on what comes next. Our transitional housing gives parents time to find employment, repair credit, save money, find permanent housing, and get their children settled in school.

And families don't have to figure it all out on their own. Our Housing Case Managers work alongside each family, helping them set goals, connect with resources, and navigate the challenges of rebuilding their lives. That might mean connecting a parent with employment or childcare, finding healthcare or other community resources, working with landlords and service providers, or addressing a problem before it becomes a housing crisis.

We believe housing stability is about more than four walls. It's about having the time, support, and resources to stay housed and find your footing again. Your support makes that possible. Your gift helps provide a safe home, case management, and the practical support families need to move forward. It can help a parent save for a permanent home, connect with childcare or employment, or work through a challenge before it becomes a housing crisis.

When you support St. Stephen Housing Association, you are helping give families more than a place to live. You are giving them the time and opportunity to build a stable future.

## Are you or your group interested in volunteering? We'd 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



Contact us at 253-638-9798 or [office@ststephenhousing.org](mailto:office@ststephenhousing.org) to find out more.



13055 SE 192nd St  
Renton, WA 98058

PRSRT STD  
US POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
SEATTLE, WA  
PERMIT NO. 1765

**Return Service Requested**

**Board of Directors**

Barb Brownlow  
Chris Johnson  
Debbie Dullenty  
Eric Miller  
James Jeyaraj  
Jason Dunbar  
Kajal Ram  
Jay Nguyen  
Nate Thompson  
Paul Pasquier  
Rochelle Herteg  
Scott Roberts  
Teri Ambrozic-Santini

**Staff**

Ann Allen  
Marissa Fitzgerald  
Gina Kilgore  
Kristin Fink  
Ramiro Beltran  
Dawn Smith

**Tickets on sale October 1<sup>st</sup>**

*Save the Date*

**You're Invited!**  
**St. Stephen Housing Association's**  
**Hope for Housing Fundraiser**  
**Saturday, November 7th**  
**6pm - 9pm**  
**St. Stephen the Martyr Social Hall**  
**13055 SE 192nd St**  
**Renton, WA 98058**

[givebutter.com/2026sshafundraiser](https://givebutter.com/2026sshafundraiser)