



INTERFAITH
Family
Shelter

September 2021

Fall 2021 Newsletter

Uniting in service to families,
with children, facing homelessness

From Our Executive Director:

Dear Friends of Interfaith,

My first thought as the pandemic hit in early 2020 was to circle the wagons, hunker down, and ride it out. But then we realized that the homeless do not have that option. So we could not take that route either. More importantly, even before the onset of the pandemic, we were unable to serve all of the homeless families in Snohomish County.



Recognizing that, we have made several important advances to support our neighbors experiencing homelessness. Since Feb. 2020, we have opened **Miracle House** in Marysville, a second **Cars to Housing** program in Everett, launched our **Homeless Prevention Program**, and begun negotiations to open a second shelter like Miracle House in South Everett.

Eventually, these additions will increase our capacity to serve eight more families, raising the total number to 40 families a year who either overcome homelessness or stay housed.

None of this would be possible without our three wonderful faith group partners: **Marysville United Methodist Church, Cascade View Presbyterian Church, and Hope Church** in Everett. Thank you for joining our mission to help families overcome homelessness! Join us at **Families Together** on October 20, 2021 to learn more. With the Delta Variant still hanging around, it will be an online event—but a fantastic evening, nonetheless!

Sincerely,

Executive Director

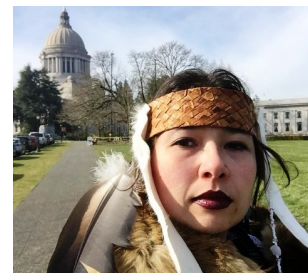
Families Together 2021 is on Wed, 20 October

The **Families Together** fundraiser is online on **Wed, October 20**. This year, we celebrate new partnerships that have enabled us to expand our programs and services, the tremendous resilience of our client families and staff, and your support—that has helped us stay afloat and continue serving families in our community.



Families Together 2021

We are honored to have noted Human Rights & Indigenous Activist, **Jennifer Delia-Bereskin** as our keynote speaker.



Please join us for this special event featuring stories of hope and resilience during these challenging times.

This event is free and open to the public.

Register on our website:

www.interfaithwa.org/

: @InterfaithFamilyShelter

: @FamilyShelterWA

: Interfaith.Family.Shelter

Current program capacity

Number of Families Served per Year

Future program capacity

Shelter: 44

Shelter extension: 12

Cars to Housing: 20

Homeless Prevention: 40

Shelter: 44

Shelter extension: 24

Cars to Housing: 40

Client Spotlight: Jessica's Story

Family homelessness is more common than many realize and it's not always obvious. Mental, emotional, and relationship challenges can occur in any home. Jessica knows this well. "Experiencing homelessness can happen to anyone," she says. "Unless it has happened directly to you, you never know how you might survive it."

A single mom of three young children, Jessica was living in Colorado and working with DoorDash when the COVID-19 pandemic began. She decided to move to Washington to be with her boyfriend. But when the relationship ended, the family moved in with a friend and then later lived in their car. As they struggled to make ends meet, the stress began to take its toll on everyone. Her daughter began having frequent tantrums and her son almost entirely stopped speaking. Jessica had almost given up hope when Interfaith contacted her with an available spot at the Family Shelter.

Despite the recent trauma, battling depression, and struggling to provide for her kids, Jessica is thankful for the help that she received at Interfaith.

"It was a stable and safe environment for us. I was able to catch my breath, assess my priorities, and figure out how to move forward." The supportive staff kept her motivated with gentle reminders, helping her rebuild her confidence and focus on the future. It paid off! After a few months, Jessica moved into permanent housing. In less than a year, she will be eligible for a Section 8 voucher to anywhere in the US, including back in Colorado. Right now, she's focused on making her new two-bedroom apartment as much of a home for her kids as possible. "I want to be self-sufficient all the way: keep building, keep going, and keep working toward something."

We know you can do it, Jessica!



Photo: Benjamin Manley

Thank you!



A heartfelt thank-you to the Board of Trustees and grantmakers at **The Whitehorse Foundation**, a supporting organization of The Seattle Foundation.

In June 2021, Interfaith received **\$61,000** from The Whitehorse Foundation to support our new Homeless Prevention program. The Whitehorse Foundation funds organizations working to improve the overall quality of life for Snohomish County residents.

We are immensely grateful for this faith in our programs and mission! Thank you so much for helping keep families housed, happy, and healthy!

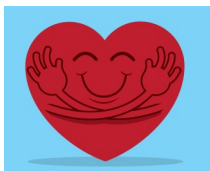


Image: ClipArt

Cars to Housing turns 2... and is now **Twice** as Useful!

We celebrated **Cars to Housing's** (C2H) second birthday by doubling its capacity! A second site opened at Hope Covenant Church in mid-July '21. Since August 2019, this innovative program has partnered with faith groups to convert sections of unused parking lots into safe-parking sites for families who live in their vehicles.

Clients receive 90 days of parking, and customized case management to help them overcome barriers to housing and transition from their cars into permanent homes or shelter units.

Scattered Site Family Support Specialist, **Daniel**

Blizard, who oversees C2H, transitioned from Evening Shelter Monitor into this new role. "I enjoy the fast pace and hands-on work," he says. "Helping families find jobs and permanent housing is a true pleasure. There's no other job like it!"



The new C2H site at Hope Covenant Church

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