



INTERFAITH
Family
Shelter

Fall 2025 Newsletter

Uniting in service to families,
with children, experiencing homelessness

September 2025

From Our Executive Director:

Greetings, Supporters!

And just like that, we're wrapping up summer and preparing for the new school year! My oldest is entering Kindergarten, and like many of you know, anxiety is high for him... and me! Is he ready? Will he make friends? Does he have everything he needs? Despite being nervous about starting something new, I'm so happy that he's excited about school.



Our Children's Program is busiest at this time of the year, as we eagerly assist each child in our shelters with school enrollment, coordinating transportation, and working with our partners to help children who may be developmentally behind their peers. The educational needs of the children in our shelters is a priority for the Children's Program. When children experience homelessness or housing instability, their attendance more than likely dips, their schoolwork begins to falter, and they are at a greater risk of not graduating high school on time. And we know that, from there, the chances of these children experiencing homelessness again as adults are statistically higher.

At the Interfaith Family Shelter, we hope to be one piece of the journey that helps families change their course, so that their children don't become a part of that statistic. When I enter spaces where we host our Learning Hour program, I not only see children learning something new or doing a productive activity – I see them experiencing joy and having fun in the process. And that is so exciting!

Lynsey Gagnon
Executive Director

Help us raise \$150,000 toward the 2025 Annual Fund

You may have heard about the dire funding forecast that will affect nonprofits like Interfaith.



As we launch the **2025 Annual Fund Campaign**, your support is more important today than ever before. We need your help to meet this campaign goal and raise **\$150,000**.

We rely on the Annual Fund to support ongoing program and operational expenses. Between September 02 and December 31, you may receive mailings and messages from our team related to this campaign.

Please make your gift to help us meet our target - and keep our important programs up and running! With your help, we can make sure that Interfaith continues to serve even more families in need and help them thrive!

Visit interfaithwa.org to learn more and make your gift.

Learn more and support us with a one-time or recurring gift:

www.interfaithwa.org



InterfaithFamilyShelter

interfaith.familyshelter

Our newest program completes its first full year of operation:



Madison Family Shelter
tiny-home community
8 shelter units



22 families
served



80% successful
exits to housing

New Supporter Spotlight: Ashley Starks Fall 2025

Ashley Starks is well aware that family homelessness is a crisis in our community. “Homelessness in this region has reached a critical point,” she observes. “The disparity between rising housing expenses and stagnant local wages has had a detrimental impact on our community. And children facing homelessness are particularly vulnerable,” she adds. “Stable housing, consistent education, necessary healthcare, and sufficient food are all crucial for their physical and cognitive growth.”

As **Senior Executive Director** at **MorningStar Senior Living (Silver Lake)**, Ashley opted to take a stand and support families in need. And longtime Interfaith supporter, **Jim Mallonee**, was the catalyst.



“Our connection to the Interfaith Family Shelter began through Jim, during a discussion about a recent mission trip,” she shares. MorningStar Senior Living’s commitment to philanthropy that serves both the global community and local neighborhoods distinguishes it within the senior living industry. Ashley continues, “Inspired by this shared passion for giving back, he suggested partnering with Interfaith through sponsorship - that is, doing something more meaningful than merely offering a \$500 donation.”

This summer, MorningStar (Silver Lake) hosted an elegant auction fundraiser to support the Interfaith Family Shelter, hosting everything from the venue, to a delicious buffet dinner, A/V setup, and even marketing the event to their partners and residents. It was a huge success and raised well over **\$16,000!** “Interfaith’s essential service fills a crucial gap in the community. At this event, you shared your mission, impactful progress, and personal drive to build a brighter future for families in Everett,” she says.

And Ashley and her team are not stopping there! “I hope to make a difference for those who are often overlooked. One of MorningStar’s core values to invest generously in our team’s ability to serve well. And I cannot think of a more important cause to put my resources and talents behind,” she declares. “I can’t wait to celebrate future successes.” We truly value this budding relationship with Ashley and her amazing team! Her vision and passion for supporting our mission catapulted this event to the next level. Thank you, Ashley and all at MorningStar!



Ashley Starks and Lynsey Gagnon at the Silent Auction fundraiser

Former Client Spotlight: **Ricky Naffziger**



Ricky (C) with his former case manager, Jackie Rasco (L) and ED, Lynsey Gagnon (R)

As we celebrate our 40-year anniversary, we are revisiting former shelter clients, to check in and see how they are doing. In 2019, **Ricky Naffziger** was close to giving up hope. The single dad was battling substance use disorder and also on the verge of losing custody of his baby daughter. Flash forward to 2025, and things look completely different! Today, Ricky is finishing up his college degree while juggling a steady job. And he and his now 8-year old daughter have had their own apartment for five years. He credits the Interfaith Family Shelter for all of it!

Visit our website to read the whole story and celebrate Ricky’s amazing journey: interfaithwa.org/rickys-story



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