

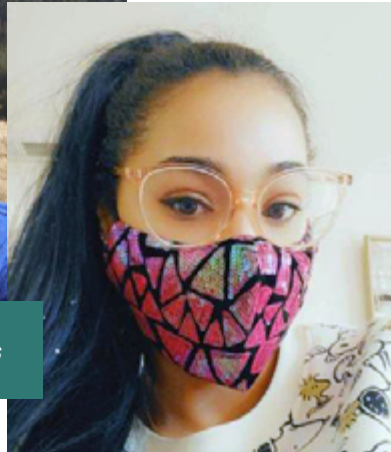
Stories from the Field

Welcome to Stories from the Field – our series highlighting the diverse voices working to end hunger in Washington. Read on for the latest updates and stories from Northwest Harvest’s community partners, volunteers, advocates, staff, and supporters.

August 2021



Equity in Fundraising at Northwest Harvest



(L - R) Patricia Vogel and Kiki Young-Gaines

Community-Centric Fundraising (CCF) is a fundraising model centered on equity and social justice. Veteran fundraiser and Director of Individual Giving Patricia Vogel and newly minted fundraiser and Advancement Specialist Kiki Young-Gaines share what excites them about the CCF principles and how they imagine CCF changing their work in fundraising, Northwest Harvest, and the world of philanthropy.

What’s your favorite part of fundraising work?

PATRICIA – I geek out on fundraising, so am tempted to say all of it! But the moments that hook me are when a donor connects their passion to our mission; that “aha” moment when they understand that this work is so much bigger than just us.

KIKI – I love bridging the gap between our donors and the people we serve. We’re all just people in a situation. Right now, some people’s situations are better than others, but those things can change. I want people to give because they understand how interconnected we all are.

What does Community-Centric Fundraising mean to you?

KIKI – CCF means we need to equitably focus on those experiencing hunger instead of continuously praising those who give. We can be grateful to our donors while also focusing on the people we serve.

PATRICIA: For me, it means entirely re-imagining the fundraising field and rising to the challenge of treating all donors equally.

How do you plan to shift Northwest Harvest to using CCF principles in fundraising? What tools do you plan on using from what you’ve learned?

PATRICIA – A shift in language and how we communicate is a big one. Words have power. Fundraisers are taught to make language “donor-centric.” Instead, we have the opportunity to shift our language and center the voices of our community through first-person storytelling.

Several other actions will bring about more equity in our work, including breaking down donor “tiers” based on financial giving level, sharing the good work of other nonprofits with our donors, investing in communities of color, and valuing time donated as much as money.

KIKI – I’m going to hold us accountable by gently reminding people what we agreed to. We will forget. It’s been 50 years that Northwest Harvest has been doing it one way. It takes time to change and remind people to stay focused.

If all organizations adopted CCF principles in Washington, what would change?

KIKI – The stigma around those with lived experience would change because we would start to center them as people and not as projects.

PATRICIA – Nonprofits would mutually support one-another instead of competing. I want to move away from a scarcity mindset rooted in a charity model and to a world where social and economic justice are realized. Philanthropy would be entirely transformed.

*To gauge perceptions of nonprofit fundraising, CCF distributed a survey in May 2019. **Learn more about their findings by clicking the image below.***



Centering the Voices of Those Experiencing Hunger to Drive Solutions

Northwest Harvest is committed to amplifying first-person stories from people with lived experiences of hunger in an effort to shift away from a filtered definition of what food insecurity looks like, and to develop more effective anti-hunger public policy.

The Community Advisory Network (CAN) is made up of eight people with lived experience of hunger who provide feedback on the Fruits and Vegetables Incentive Program (FVIP) which provides matching dollars, discount coupons, and vouchers to help low-income families buy more fruits and vegetables.

The CAN has been meeting since January of this year, working with Northwest Harvest’s advocacy team, including Community Coordinator Bliss Collins, to ensure that the Washington Department of Health is implementing suggested changes to the FVIP.

“No one understands better the real barriers to accessing nutritious food better than folks

with lived experience of hunger,” said Collins. We listen to the members of our Community Action Network to understand their ideas for solutions that can expand access to resources and nutritious foods.”

“We also partner with our CAN members who advocate for solutions from policymakers. For example, this past year, CAN members dedicated their time and experience to participating in a public comment listening session with USDA on the adequacy of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and the state’s electronic benefits transfer (EBT) integration steering committee.”

We look forward to sharing stories from CAN members in future editions of Stories from the Field!

Community Partner Spotlight:

Helping Hands supporters and volunteers join together to serve Skagit County during the pandemic

As the largest emergency food provider in Skagit County, Helping Hands is ready to respond to a local community disaster. However, when the COVID-19 pandemic took hold and three local food banks were forced to shutter, the nonprofit was pushed to its limits. Despite challenges, Helping Hands innovated its programs to take on the duty of serving 720,000 of their neighbors in 2020, up from 167,000 in 2019.

"It was through the perseverance of volunteers, donors, and staff that we were able to succeed in serving the community, and that continues today," explains Erik Larson, Helping Hands' Operations Director.

Erik even took a class by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to learn how to better respond to the swelling needs of the community during a global crisis.



The launch of multiple drive-thru food distribution centers, mobile home deliveries of food boxes, and an expanded Backpack Program serving 2,400 kids a week were just a few of the shifts made by Helping Hands to keep the community safe and fed. This was all made possible by the generosity of the community to meet the unprecedented need.

Helping Hands understands that food insecurity is complex and multifaceted. So, alongside its food distribution operation, they provide wrap-around services and support to Skagit County families.

"Through our library/media room and referral-based programs for medical and social services, Helping Hands also provides those we serve with the tools and resources to get back on their feet," says Erik.



Looking to the future, Erik's dream for Helping Hands is to create a large mobile food bank that acts as a traveling no-cost market. He imagines a retrofitted bus with a friendly driver to check folks in and food shelves instead of seats so that customers can choose the food that meets their unique needs.

Learn more about Helping Hands by visiting their website!

"It was through the perseverance of volunteers, donors, and staff that we were able to succeed in serving the community, and that continues today."

– Erik Larson, Helping Hands

Volunteers are the heartbeat of the SODO Community Market

SODO Community Market—Northwest Harvest’s no-cost grocery store—could not operate without the dedication of our volunteers. These folks not only lead the restocking, food preparation, sorting, and upkeep of the building, they also act as the face of the market, greeting and serving our customers at the counter week after week.

“When the pandemic struck in 2020, our volunteers willingly put themselves on the front lines to ensure their neighbors had enough to eat. This group of regulars and active standby volunteers are the heartbeat of the SODO market, and some have even taken on leadership positions to help train new volunteers and improve the flow of the operation. This group was especially vital over the past year as interest in volunteering ebbed and flowed—skyrocketing in the early days of the pandemic and then fluctuating as folks found their new ‘normal,’” said Ames Hwang, Volunteer Coordinator Liaison for SODO Community Market.

Between March 2020 and May 2021 we recorded:

- **473** new individual volunteers, family groups, and corporate/service groups
- **99** regular volunteers

- **14,566** total volunteer hours
- **4,905** visits to the market

We are grateful to all those who generously give their time to end hunger. If you’re interested in volunteering at the SODO Community Market or in other operations, visit our [website](#).



Ames Hwang, SODO Outreach Coordinator

“ This group was especially vital over the past year as interest in volunteering ebbed and flowed—skyrocketing in the early days of the pandemic and then fluctuating as folks found their new ‘normal.’

*– Ames Hwang,
SODO Outreach Coordinator*

14,566
hours of
volunteering

4,905
visits to
the market

**Between March
and May SODO
Community
Market recorded:**

99
regular
volunteers

214
new active
volunteers to
SODO
Community
Market

473
new families,
corporate,
and service
groups

Supporting Community has been part of Dunn Lumber's DNA since 1907.

Dunn Lumber and their employees began partnering with Northwest Harvest in 2013 to reduce food insecurity for families experiencing hunger in Washington

Through the years, their nine Western Washington stores have served as steadfast and reliable food drop sites where folks can make critical food donations that are distributed to communities.

Last year, when COVID-19 hit Washington State, public safety required us to halt public food drives. Dunn Lumber recognized Northwest Harvest would need help to recover the lost food supply.

Dunn Lumber reached out to their dedicated staff and customers to help bridge the gap and went above and beyond in their compassion by promising to match each employee and customer donation of up to \$500.

This is the kind of community support that made it possible for Northwest Harvest and our partners all around the state to meet the unprecedented need with an unprecedented response. Thank you, Dunn Lumber, employees and customers, for your determination to help build a better, stronger community.

The Medina Foundations Stands in Solidarity with Northwest Harvest's Commitment to Supporting Historically Excluded Communities in Puget Sound

Since their first grant to Northwest Harvest in 1989, The Medina Foundation has relentlessly supported Northwest Harvest's mission to overcome food insecurity in Washington with their powerful general operating grants.

Medina stands as one of our most steadfast foundation partners – determined to help stamp out the food insecurity that continues to disproportionately plague historically excluded communities. Founded by Norton Clapp in 1947 on the conviction that his family had a responsibility to help make community better, Medina has strategically sought to foster positive change in the Greater Puget Sound area. In solidarity with, and support of, those communities who have suffered in real and enduring ways as a result of historical exclusion, Medina states,

"We stand with the Black community. We know that deep racial inequities exist in every area that Medina funds, and we are



Jennifer Teunon, Aana Lauckhart, Jessica Case, & Alexia Cameron

committed to our own learning and to supporting our nonprofit partners that provide critical services and work tirelessly to dismantle systemic racism."

Celebrating more than three decades together, Northwest Harvest recognizes The Medina Foundation for their dedication to partnering with us to build equity and better communities in the Greater Puget Sound Area.



“Why I Give”

Meet recurring donor and volunteer Ken Newman

Ken Newman is a long-time member of the Northwest Harvest family.

Born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio, Ken made his way out west for law school before starting with Hewlett Packard (HP) in 1979.

Fast forward to 2002, Ken was preparing for retirement and wanted to learn more about organizations doing important work in the area. HP had shared a resource with employees outlining the biggest areas of need, including hunger. This led Ken to Northwest Harvest.

Ken and his wife, Shirley, have supported Northwest Harvest for almost two decades, both regularly volunteering and giving through our recurring giving program.

Before COVID precautions led to a pause in in-person events, Ken would talk to employees about Northwest Harvest and the movement to end hunger in Washington at company tabling events.

When asked why he continues to give to Northwest Harvest after all these years, Ken explains,

“The first thing I bring up when talking to people at events is that Northwest Harvest is the only organization in the fight against hunger that is statewide. Any donation that people make to Northwest Harvest is going to assist people across Washington.”

We are so grateful for Ken and Shirley’s dedication to ending hunger!



“[Giving to NWH] was periodic when my wife and I first started. Now, with giving on a recurring basis, it’s a simpler way to support Northwest Harvest and the great work they do.”

– **Ken Newman**



(TOP) Ken Newman volunteering

(RIGHT) Shirley and Ken Newman

Join the movement!

Share your support of Northwest Harvest with your community.

Find us at **@NWHarvest**
on Facebook and Twitter.



northwestharvest.org | @nwharvest