

# Piloting Change

## Preston Holt's Legacy of Housing and Hope

When Preston Holt died on November 18, 2018 at the age of 89, Northwest Pilot Project lost a staunch supporter and a dear friend. Preston worked as a banker for U.S. Bank for 17 years before becoming a self-employed real estate broker for his firm, OWL Investments. It was as a realtor that Preston became aware of the work NWPP was doing in the community. In the late 1970's, Preston purchased the Abbey Hotel with two partners as a real estate investment. The hotel, located at 2250 W. Burnside, served as a residential care facility for 62 very low-income individuals who were either elderly or mentally ill.

Preston became intimately involved with the residents of the building and told us: "Some of them had no one in their lives, and hadn't left the building in years." When the government restructured funding for the residential services at the Abbey in 1982, Preston was forced to sell the building. Preston remembered: "When the residents learned the building was being closed, some of them barricaded themselves in their rooms and would not, or could not, move. Peter Paulson (NWPP founder), staff and volunteers were critically important to the successful relocation of the residents."

Preston became a devoted supporter of NWPP and joined the Board of Directors in 1982. He served as a member of the Finance Committee, and in every leadership position including Treasurer and Chair of the Board. He walked in 35 of NWPP's 39 Walkathons and told



*Preston Holt with Marilee, NWPP Housing Specialist, at the 2015 Walk-a-thon.*

his supporters: "I walk because I believe in the crucial work being done on a daily basis, and the difference the organization is making in people's lives. I know as a member of the Finance Committee that the money I raise will be well spent."

Through the years Preston maintained a keen interest in affordable housing for very low-income seniors. It was his experience and connections as a realtor that made it possible for the City of Portland to preserve the 133 unit St. Francis Hotel in 1993, when it was threatened with closure and conversion to another use. Preston connected city officials to the elderly owner of the St Francis, and assisted the city's realtors in completing the transaction. The housing of 133 very low-income seniors and disabled adults was saved because of Preston.

Over the years, Preston was involved in all major advocacy effort to preserve affordable housing in Portland, and became involved in collaborative efforts to build new housing. These resulted in thousands of units being

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From the  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
 Laura Golino de Lovato

**This holiday season**, Northwest Pilot Project has once again been the recipient of many, many donations from long-time donors and new donors. We received donations large and small, donations of cash, professional services, time, and many, many household and hygiene supplies. Every single donation – every dollar, every item and every hour – means we can help low-income seniors have a life of dignity and hope through stable, affordable housing. **THANK YOU** to all of you for your support of NWPP and our work this past year.

## Let's Grow the Gift

**Thanks** to the generosity of anonymous donor, NWPP has received a gift of \$30,000 to help us increase the number of low and very low-income seniors we serve.

We want to maximize this incredible support by challenging all of you to raise an additional \$30K by **March 15, 2019**. A total of \$60K will allow us to serve an additional 120 older adults in Multnomah County needing assistance with housing (see page 8).

For more information on the grant, contact Laura Golino de Lovato at 503-478-6868 or [laurag@nwpilotproject.org](mailto:laurag@nwpilotproject.org). Contribute online at [nwpilotproject.org/donate](http://nwpilotproject.org/donate)

.....  
*“For seniors we help, their average monthly income is about \$1,020.”*  
 .....

About a month ago, I had a dream that I was homeless and living on the streets. It was a visceral dream and very scary. Needless to say, I was troubled when I woke up. The parts I remember most clearly were the frustration of having no clean clothes, the lack of access to toilets and showers, having only a tarp to live under and the feelings of helplessness from not knowing how I would get out of this situation. But it was just a dream. My reality is that I am lucky to have the security of a roof over my head and a warm place to sleep, thanks to a steady, adequate income. I went to work that day feeling incredibly grateful and incredibly focused on my primary tasks: securing funds and advocating for NWPP's clients.

But as the day went on, my dream stayed with me. I could not escape the thought that I could become homeless because of events beyond my control: a medical crisis, major accident, job loss, wage reduction, family emergency or disaster. The phrase “there but for the grace of God go I” kept going around in my mind.

So many of us are a few steps from losing our housing primarily because we don't have adequate savings to

weather the costs of unexpected events, or to cover rising rents. This is especially true for the older adults served by NWPP.

Nationwide, 25% of those over 60 have no savings for retirement. And for the seniors we help, their average *monthly* income is about \$1,020. So it's easy to see that a rent increase or any unexpected event can leave a senior without funds to pay the rent. This is the story of so many of the people NWPP has been privileged to provide services to, a few of whom we are highlighting below. These are the stories of the people you have helped.

**Larry** came to NWPP after losing his job and then his housing. NWPP helped Larry get off the streets and into a local shelter, and worked with him to get him on the waiting list for subsidized housing. At this point, Larry had zero income because of his job loss. After a long wait, during which NWPP supported Larry by checking in with him, providing hygiene supplies and referrals for other services, and providing him hope that he would find housing, he was approved for a subsidized studio. Larry is now fully independent, with a job and living in affordable housing, meaning he pays 30% of his income for rent and utilities. Larry says: “NWPP has helped me to become stable and secure again in my life.”

**Marcia** was in her mid 50's when she found herself suddenly homeless after losing her job. When her final unemployment extension ran out, Marcia was evicted from her apartment and moved into a homeless shelter. She searched tirelessly for full-time employment, but was stunned at how difficult it was to find a job. Marcia came to NWPP and

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# Holiday Luncheon 2018

A favorite event at NWPP is the Client Holiday Luncheon! Over 100 clients of Northwest Pilot Project and their guests enjoyed a traditional turkey dinner and were entertained by **Without Apology** acapella group. The guests' favorite activity is photos with Santa Claus. Each guest receives a photo card in the mail, commemorating the yearly luncheon. Some clients have seven or eight photos that they proudly display in their homes.



**Special thanks** to the 40 volunteers who made this event a success; Trinity Episcopal Cathedral donated Kempton Hall for the event, St. Mary's Academy students served the lunch, and Judith Heath donated the table centerpieces.

*If you would like information about volunteering or donating to Northwest Pilot Project, please contact Heidi Chimuku, Associate Director at 503-478-6864.*





# Celebrating

## NWPP's wonderful volunteers and donors THE 2018 NWPP APPRECIATION LUNCHEON

Since NWPP's founding in 1969, volunteers, community partners, donors, funders and business partners have been critical to the success of this agency. On September 13, 2018 we held our annual Appreciation Luncheon to celebrate and honor a few extraordinary people and groups whose contributions have been critical to the work of the agency. NWPP is so fortunate to have this multitude of supporters without whom it would not be possible for us to fulfill our mission.

### ♥ Mt. Olivet Baptist Church Life Group

The Mt. Olivet Baptist Church Life Group has been supporting NWPP by volunteering at our annual Walk-a-thon and making comfort and cleaning kits for our clients.

This group has been supporting NWPP in this way since May of 2014. Each year we have been able to count on them to mark laps, and to be the motivation at the start line, cheering our walkers to go one more lap. They yell, clap, and coax everyone to give their all. Their enthusiasm seems to be contagious, especially with their own children. Their kids also attend the Walk-a-thon and are learning the importance of community, giving, and of course the tradition of lap marking from their moms.

But this isn't Mt. Olivet's only contribution to Northwest Pilot Project. For



*Jamila Meeks accepted the award on behalf of her Mt. Olivet group.*

years the group has regularly contributed comfort kits and cleaning supplies for our clients. They get donations from their family, friends and groups they belong to. Their dedication to NWPP is admirable. For these reasons, we were pleased to present the Community Impact Award to Mt. Olivet Baptist Church Life Group.



*Colette Loehr accepted the award on behalf of Class Academy.*

### ♥ Class Academy

In 2013, Northwest Pilot Project was invited to speak at Class Academy. We are always excited to receive a request like this, because it means young people are learning about low-income seniors and the struggles they face with housing insecurity. We talk about senior housing, homelessness and what it's like to live on a tight budget. We explain how NWPP helps find and stabilize housing for low income seniors. We speak each year at Class Academy, and each year the students and teachers participate in the Walk-a-thon.

Class Academy received the Community Impact Award for their steady support of NWPP and their interest in learning about low-income seniors and homelessness. Their attitude toward seniors who are homeless or in need of better housing is one of respect. Their energy to help our agency seems endless and they are extremely enthusiastic about NWPP.

The teachers and students have led several supply drives for us donating hundreds of pounds of client hygiene and cleaning supplies and enough items for hundreds of bedding and kitchen kits.

We are grateful for Class Academy's dedication in helping NWPP by learning and giving.



Executive Director Laura Golino de Lovato with Mark O'Donnell

### **Mark O'Donnell**

The 2018 Agency Impact Award was presented to Mark O'Donnell whose significant (financial) contributions to NWPP have truly been transformational.

Mark likes to say he's in the "hope business." Through quiet giving and a deep and personal understanding of poverty, Mark has indeed made a transformational impact on NWPP.

Mark grew up in poverty in Northwest Portland along with his three brothers and their exceptional mother, Mary, who raised them by herself after their father left when Mark was very young. Mark's experience of poverty is personal and vivid. He knows that nobody climbs out of poverty without a helping hand, admitting he's received more than one. With strong feelings about curing poverty and providing support services for people of all ages, Mark believes it is our responsibility to "bring hope to people our society has shunted aside." He is most concerned about the availability of housing for the

poorest of the poor. On both these points – providing hope and housing to those most vulnerable – NWPP's mission is in perfect alignment with Mark's philanthropic goals.


Over the last four years, Mark's support of NWPP's housing program with a special sponsorship that has allowed NWPP to provide over 400 households—that's over 450 individuals (some households have two members)—with housing stability. People helped by Mark's contributions were moved from homelessness into housing or prevented from losing their housing and becoming homeless.

Mark doesn't forget where he came from, and his generosity in helping those in need is an inspiration to us. We hope he's an inspiration to many others to join him in reducing the ever-escalating demand for assistance in finding and staying in housing from the most vulnerable seniors in our community.



Gwen Ferrell, Resident Services Coordinator at Central City Concern

### **Gwen Ferrell**

 Gwen Ferrell is the Resident Services Coordinator for two buildings owned and managed by Central City Concern— The Biltmore and The Butte Hotels. Both The Biltmore and The Butte provide

subsidized single room occupancy apartments for low-income single adults, many of whom have been referred by NWPP.

You may not be familiar with what a Resident Service Coordinator does; the short answer is everything. Resident Service Coordinators support residents in their homes to live as independently and self-sufficiently as possible by connecting them to services and resources, and providing advocacy and problem-solving help. Resident Service Coordinators are critical partners for the success of NWPP clients.

Gwen started working at The Biltmore and Butte properties in 2017 and NWPP's housing team staff was immediately impressed. Gwen is gifted at developing and strengthening relationships with the residents in her buildings and is able to establish trust with residents and service providers by consistently following through on her commitments. She has helped countless residents resolve issues with housekeeping, food insecurity, health care needs, and social isolation.

Gwen is sensitive to the needs of vulnerable residents, and demonstrates empathy and compassion for everyone at the properties. She makes sure no one slips through the cracks, regardless of their ability to ask for help.

With an exceptional sense of humor and an infectious lightness of being that elevates the mood and work of everyone around her, Gwen is genuine and genuinely good at her job. We were pleased to present Gwen Ferrell with the 2018 Program Impact Award.



## In Memory of Jessie Jones

(Sept. 16, 1944 – June 12, 2018)



Sometimes you get lucky in life to meet an exceptional person, like when NWPP met Jessie Jones. We helped her with

housing years ago, and she has been an inspiration to us ever since. Many of us at NWPP have been influenced by her. She was an active participant in our Walk-A-Thon for years and involved others. She was a regular volunteer at NWPP helping with mailings and events.

Jesse always walked her talk. She was a deeply compassionate person, and advocated for others who needed help to find their own voice. Jesse was always a teacher and a friend. She would share with us what was really happening in some of our affordable buildings, how they were managed, and what could be improved.

Jessie had such an irrepressible spirit that when we wanted to honor her at our annual Appreciation Luncheon it was hard to pick one award.



So we created a new award just for her: “Angel with an Attitude.” Jessie had the biggest heart in the world and we are grateful that she was part of Northwest Pilot Project. We continue to miss her greatly.

## Preston Holt’s Legacy

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*“... I believe in the crucial work being done on a daily basis, and the difference the organization is making in people’s lives.” – PRESTON HOLT*

developed for low-income individuals and families in Portland.

Preston spent countless hours serving on community boards including the Outreach Committee at Trinity Episcopal where he was an active member for 40 years. He was one of the board members who hired former NWPP Executive Director Susan Emmons in 1987.

Susan told us: “Preston was someone I could always count on. He had a terrific sense of humor, but was utterly serious about the work at hand. I admired his ability to get to the heart of the matter, and his quick understanding of the complex issues we faced on a daily basis; his willingness to do whatever it would take to provide housing and food for seniors in need. It was not unusual for me to get a ride home from a Board meeting with Preston in his truck, and find it filled with food or other items

that he was delivering to a low-income building, or to NW Portland Ministries (now Lift Urban Portland). When



I would try to commend him on his service he would say it was no big deal. But to the seniors who benefited, his commitment meant everything.”

Preston Holt was an exceptional person, and a pillar of the NWPP community. He was a man of principle who put his faith into action, and believed that everyone deserved to live a life with dignity and hope. We loved him, and will miss him.

*Preston’s family has asked that contributions in his memory be made to Northwest Pilot Project, Lift Urban Portland, or Trinity Cathedral Outreach.*



**SPECIAL THANKS** to the residents of the **Mirabella Portland**, a retirement community in southwest Portland, who choose NWPP as their non-profit partner this giving season. The residents raised \$12,000 for our services and contributed a number of in-kind donations to help our clients through the winter. We are so grateful for their partnership!

## From NWPP Executive Director

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enrolled in our Pathways Program. This program allows NWPP to subsidize the rent at an inexpensive apartment and provides ongoing case management to help clients plan and achieve their goals. NWPP placed Marcia into a small studio apartment which allowed her to spend more time focusing on her employment training and job search. Marcia obtained full time employment and can cover all the rent and utilities at her apartment and remain there permanently.

Since becoming blind at age 10, Pat's "greatest fear has always been to be homeless living on the streets."



After a job opportunity fell through, Pat, age 58, used his monthly disability payments to stay part of the month in an inexpensive

motel and the rest of the month couch surfing from one person's house to another. NWPP helped him find and move into a studio apartment downtown Portland where Pat paid just over half of his income for rent. He lived there until subsidized housing became available. Since moving into stable permanently affordable housing Pat's health has improved and the daily stress of not knowing whether he might end up outside has been relieved.

Onward!

*Laura*

## The Affordable Housing Gap

The local affordable housing crisis continues to deepen and we see a growing gap between the number of extremely low income individuals and families needing housing and the number of apartments affordable to them. As part of our ongoing advocacy efforts, we share the data below with our community partners to develop innovative system-wide strategies to close the gap and end homelessness in our community. We continue to advocate with local, state and federal government entities, building owners and managers and the media to increase the supply, affordability and accessibility of housing in Multnomah County.

Ending homelessness will depend largely on the community's success in reducing this gap.

2011–2015 (latest data available)		
Total Renter Households in Multnomah County		143,555
<b>Extremely Low Income Households</b> (0–30% MFI) Income <\$1,425 per month for a single person	No. of Renter Households	38,800
	Affordable Units (rent <\$428 for single)	12,815
	<b>Deficit of Affordable Units</b>	<b>-25,985</b>
	Percent of renters with over 50% rent burden	68%
<b>Very Low Income Households</b> (31–50% MFI) Income \$1,426 – \$2,375 per month for a single person	No. of Renter Households	24,710
	Affordable Units (rent \$429 – \$713 for single)	23,575
	<b>Deficit of Affordable Units</b>	<b>-1,135</b>
	Percent of renters with over 50% rent burden	37%
<b>Low Income Households</b> (51–80% MFI) Income \$2,376 – \$3,800 per month for a single person	No. of Renter Households	29,480
	Affordable Units (rent \$714 – \$1140 for single)	74,330
	<b>Surplus of Affordable Units</b>	<b>+44,850</b>
	Percent of renters with over 50% rent burden	9%

Median Family Income (MFI) in 2018 for a household of one was \$56,980 and for a household of four was \$81,400. Data: U.S. Census. 2015.



**NORTHWEST  
PILOT PROJECT**

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## An Incredible Opportunity: **Let's Grow the Gift!**

By doubling the generous \$30,000 anonymous donation by March 15, 2019 (*see story on page 2*), we can increase the number of low-income seniors we serve who are in desperate need of assistance with housing. Help us make a difference!



Let's make  
**twice the  
impact!**

**It's easy!** Just fill out and return this coupon in the enclosed return envelope to NWPP, 1430 SW Broadway, #200, Portland, OR 97201

**It's easy** to give online too! Visit our website at [nwpilotproject.org/donate](http://nwpilotproject.org/donate)

\_\_\_ \$25    \_\_\_ \$50    \_\_\_ \$100    \_\_\_ \$500

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