

Piloting Change

Long-Term Rent Assistance Pilot a Success!

Over the course of his 30 years as NWPP's Housing Advocate, Bobby Weinstock has seen first-hand the effectiveness of rent subsidies. Rent subsidies enable low income people to pay an affordable rent with the subsidy covering the difference between what the household can afford and the actual market rent. The most common are Housing Choice Vouchers, commonly known as "Section 8" issued by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The federal program has been cut significantly since the 1980s – despite volumes of data that demonstrate the effectiveness of rent subsidies in helping homeless and at-risk people maintain housing stability. With increases in rent and cuts to the program, the demand for federal rent subsidies greatly exceeds the supply.

"Why not", Bobby thought, "create a locally funded rent subsidy program to both lessen dependence on the underfunded federal Section 8 program and increase rent subsidies available for extremely low-income seniors?" Bobby had a vision for a locally funded rent subsidy program that would also include local administration and control. This would mean the potential for quicker placements, more flexible policies and rules, less paperwork and fewer barriers for applicants when compared to the federal program.

As we shared with you in a previous newsletter, this concept came to fruition in 2017 in the form of an 18-month pilot demonstrating that a locally funded and controlled rent subsidy program could work both for homeless and at-risk seniors, and the chronically homeless. We are happy to report that the pilot – the **Long-Term Rent Assistance Program (LRA)** has concluded and was a huge SUCCESS!

THE POWER OF RENT SUBSIDIES

Why are rent subsidies so powerful? The simple answer is that it's a guaranteed and predictable stream of income for rent. When you are low-income and disabled, or an older adult, this critical financial resource really does



Sharon Newell at home after receiving a Long-term Rental Assistance subsidy. Photo: Motoya Nakamura/Multnomah County

make the difference between housing and homelessness.

Rent subsidies are also becoming one of the only ways to provide rental housing rents that are affordable for people with incomes below 30% of the Area Median Income (AMI). For a single very low-income senior, such as those assisted by NWPP, their income is typically less than \$18,480 annually. That means they should only be paying \$462 per month for rent. See page 3 for more information about incomes and rents.

Rent subsidies are an important tool for long-term housing stability, and are also a critical anti-displacement mechanism. In 2015, NWPP partnered with Urban League of Portland (ULP) to show the effectiveness of pairing housing choice vouchers with low-income seniors at risk of homelessness and displacement in the north and northeast area of Portland. Thanks to funding from Meyer Memorial Trust and 60 federal Section 8 vouchers from Home Forward (Multnomah County's housing authority), NWPP and ULP identified 60 vulnerable older

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adults with limited incomes who were facing homelessness due to rising rents. The learning from this project reinforced other data from across the country: rent subsidies are an effective method of providing housing stability to our poorest neighbors.

In addition to NWPP's experience, extensive data has been collected and analyzed that demonstrates how time and cost effective rent subsidies are. A rent subsidy strategy does not require waiting for the construction of housing but rather leverages existing housing, typically in the private market. While the long term cost of permanent rent subsidies is substantial, it is significantly less than the cost of someone remaining or becoming homeless.

LAUNCH

In building out Bobby's idea, one of NWPP's first steps was to reach out to our partners at Home Forward, the housing authority for Multnomah County and administrators of the federal Section 8 program and other important housing programs and services. Home Forward's expertise in this program management area meant the opportunity to call on experts to craft the most streamlined process for the new program. NWPP believed the most efficient way to manage a locally-funded program like LRA was to have Home Forward manage it.

LRA began its 18-month pilot in January 2018 with funds for 45 households thanks to an allocation of funding from Multnomah County. The targeted households would be either at-risk of displacement due to high rent burdens or currently homeless. The estimated monthly subsidy was \$700. Because of NWPP's leadership role in the program, the major-

ity of subsidies would be for NWPP clients: adults age 55 and over with annual incomes below \$16K, and disabled or highly vulnerable. However, the idea was always that this program would serve very low-income adults of any age as well as families. With the broader audience in mind, the project expanded to include households who were members of CareOregon. being served by JOIN.

NWPP identified 40 senior households: 34 at risk of displacement, and six homeless seniors. Within six months, all of these clients were stably housed with an LRA subsidy. JOIN identified five chronically homeless individuals who received subsidies and housing in the second six month period. Multnomah County then added subsidies to assist an additional 10 chronically homeless individuals served by JOIN

OUTCOMES

Part of the LRA pilot was a third-party evaluation of the outcomes of the program. The LRA team engaged the services of CORE – the Center for Outcomes Research and Education – to conduct a qualitative evaluation. After interviewing 20 LRA participants at the six-month and twelve-month mark, CORE cited improvements among participants in housing stability, financial stability, health stability, and social stability.

- LRA enables participants to remain in homes despite rent increases or events that change ability to pay rent.
- Almost all LRA participants reported that not worrying about making rent has given them peace of mind and drastically improved mental health and stress.
- LRA participants with physical health problems – chronic or acute –

shared an improved ability to care for themselves and heal.

- Most participants expressed that if they had not received the LRA support, they would have had to either move in with someone or become homeless.

Other key take-aways:

- A locally funded rent subsidy program can be cost-effectively run by the local housing authority.
- The application process for a local voucher program can be significantly simplified and can reduce barriers for applicants when compared to a federal voucher program.
- Rent subsidies in private apartments are more cost effective in catalyzing long-term housing stability than shelters, hospitals, jails, and other institutional living arrangements.

WHAT'S NEXT?

We want to thank Multnomah County Commissioner Susheela Jayapal for her interest in the program and her quick action to add 10 additional subsidies to the program for the coming fiscal year with a new partner, the Multnomah Stability Initiative. These subsidies will serve families. The total number of subsidies is now at 65, a 45% increase since the program's start.

The next step for this program is to make a commitment to bring it to scale. NWPP is ready to lead the charge and continue the work with our current partners, and bring new partners into the program. We look forward to the work ahead and to more success. We hope to grow this local rent subsidy program with community support from the current 65 subsidies, to 650, and then to 6,500 subsidies. Low income seniors and disabled adults and homeless families struggling in this housing market are counting on us.



From the
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Laura Golino de Lovato

NWPP is so grateful to our funders and partners who supported the LRA (Long-term Rent Assistance) pilot, making both an investment and a commitment to NWPP's work but primarily to the low-income individuals served through the program. Multnomah County Chair Deborah Kafoury, Meyer Memorial Trust, The Joint Office of Homeless Services, and Home Forward staff made this pilot a success. THANK YOU. We honestly couldn't have done it without you.

But we are only at the beginning of this work.

Rent subsidies work. Developers cannot build and maintain enough multi-family housing at the low rents which are affordable for the lowest income in our communities. The chart below shows, at a glance, incomes vs. rent costs.

We must follow Commissioner Jayapal's lead and insist that additional funds be put toward the LRA program to serve more members of our community.

We know that permanent rent subsidies are effective, immediate and less expensive than shelter and hospital stays, and far cheaper than the personal and societal costs of homelessness. We also know that we can fund and manage such a program on a local level with local funds. We need to commit as a community to grow this program through increased funding.

Please visit our website for more details about the LRA program including the final evaluation report. Or contact Laura Golino de Lovato at 503-478-6868 or laurag@nwpilotproject.org.

Laura

Income Levels vs Rent Cost (for a single person in Multnomah County 2019)

Percent of Annual MFI	Annual Income	Monthly Income	Affordable Rent* (30% of income)
100%	\$61,530	\$5,128	\$1,538
50% – very low income	\$30,800	\$2,567	\$770
30% – extremely low income	\$18,480	\$1,540	\$462

Monthly Fair Market Rent (FMR)

SRO (Single Room Occupancy)	\$775
Efficiency/Studio	\$1,040
One-bedroom Apartment	\$1,134

* Affordable Rent is defined as paying no more than 30% of total household income for housing.



SUBLEASE OFFICE SPACE AT NWPP

Location: 1430 SW Broadway

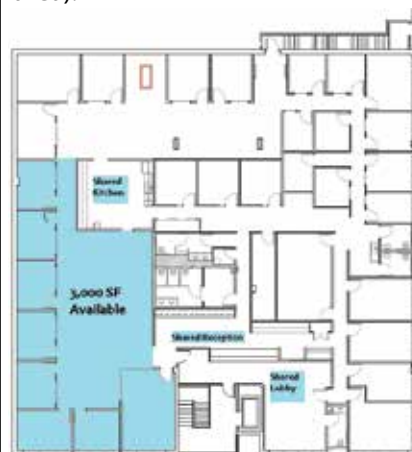
Total Available: Approx. 3,000 SF

Rent: Base rent is \$20.00/RSF

Parking: 3 stalls at \$210/month/stall

Transit: One block from bus mall/
commuter rail

We have recently increased the size of our office and remodeled our space. We plan to grow slowly over the next ten years to try and meet more of the demand in the community. We would like to sublease a portion of our space (blue highlighted area).



Contact: Heidi Chimuku,
Associate Director, for a tour or
to learn more at: 503.478.6864
or heidic@nwpilotproject.org

Won't you be our neighbor?



Many feet make a successful Walk-A-Thon

Our Thanks to:

140 walkers

10 teams

1000+ pledgers

28 businesses

This year's Walk-A-Thon raised **\$148,000** for the programs and services of Northwest Pilot Project.

Thanks to everyone – from our wonderful walkers, the people who supported the walkers, our volunteers and all the businesses that gave their support!



With the help of our 28 corporate sponsors and business supporters we are able to use all the money we raise to meet specific needs in our community rather than pay overhead. This year's corporate sponsors include:

Presenting Sponsor:

DAVID J. GUILD
INVESTMENT PROPERTIES

Gold Sponsors:

Bristol Equities, Inc.
Commercial & Residential Properties



GUARDIAN
REAL ESTATE SERVICES LLC

IMS Capital Management, Inc.
Building Wealth Wisely®

Silver Sponsors: Cantel Sweeping, Classic Pianos and AtoZ Moving, Income Property Management (IPM), Geffen Mesher, Northwest Housing Alternatives, Perkins & Co., REACH Community Development

Bronze Sponsor: Eastside Lodge, Escape from New York Pizza, Kristin Hammond, Huber's, J. D. Fulwiler Insurance, Silvernest, Susan Utterback CPA, Willamette Dental

Business supporters: Bowery Bagels, Hot Lips Pizza, HollowDog, The Sound Doctor, Noho's Hawaiian Café, Portland General Electric, Pacific Office Automation



Grand Prize Winner Ann Middleton Raises \$10,910! (Wow)

Ann has been participating in our Walk-A-Thon since 1990, and has been a superstar supporter ever since. After nearly 20 years of service on NWPP's board of directors, Ann left the board but kept on fundraising. Because she was now eligible to win prizes, she set her sights on the grand prize. Ann raised \$10,910 and won! She is one of the most enthusiastic fundraisers we have ever known. Thank you for all you do for NWPP and the seniors we serve!

2019 Walk-A-Thon Super Stars

Amazing Individual Prize Winners

The following walkers won first prize in their age group raising the most money of anyone their age:

0-10 Years: Kai Jones-Childs \$1,224

11-25 Years: Karly Weinstock \$1,070

26-54 Years: Tom Fresh \$110

55+ Years: Ruth Schuld \$6,424

Incredible Team Prize Winners

All Ages Teams

1st Place: Terwilliger Plaza \$13,118

2nd Place: Kairos United Church of Christ \$7,507

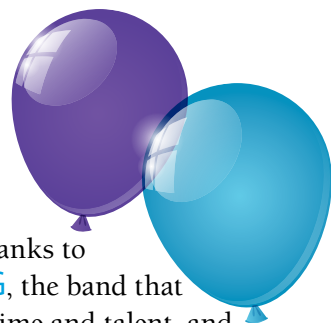
Children's Teams

1st Place: Class Academy \$3,738

2nd Place: The Marathoners \$525



Our special thanks to **HOLLOWDOG**, the band that donates their time and talent, and provided us with terrific music again this year.
www.hollowdogmusic.com





Thank you to everyone who walked for NWPP!

You came as individuals, teams, families, church groups, schools, business groups and as groups of friends united by passion for the services NWPP provides. On behalf of our Board of Directors and the clients served through NWPP, THANK YOU!

All of you have made a positive impact on the lives of low-income seniors in Multnomah County!

Our profound thanks to all 2019 walkers for making the 40th Annual Walk-A-Thon a huge success! We truly could not do the work we do without each and every one of you.



Erik Anderson
Luke Anderson
Cooper Badcock
David Barringer
Sue Beardwood
Louise Beauchamp
Jason Beene
Geovaney Burks
Lee Burleson
Donna Childs
Julia Clark
Steve Cox
Brenna Crocker
Mary Crocker
Samuel Dabbs
Karen Day
Beatrice Dean
Kristen Dulacki
Susan Emmons
Cindy Everett
Ava Evett
Tom Fresh
Alice Frost

Jeanne Galick
Tom Gavin
Loni Geiger
Todd Gergen
Linda Goodman
Jane Gott
Marva Guenther
Isabella Hawley
Mary Ellen Higgins
Bob Hines
Sabine Hines
Dov Hirschfield
Elisha Hirschfield
Shirley Holland
Alexis Hultine
Jacquelyn Hultine
Al Irwin
Lorraine Irwin
Eric Jamison
Lauren Jamison
David Johnson
Kathy Jones
Toi Jones





Kai Jones-Childs
Joan Jozwiak
Natalie Kenton
Amelia "Mia" Kim
Ella Kim
John Knapp
Nicholas Kohlmetz
Gloria Kovach
Rosemary Lafferty
Mary Layman
Ed Lichtenstein
Riley Loughran
Burnetta Lunsford
Chris Magana
Russ Martin
Marian Martinez
Katharine McDuffie
Kayla McMenamin
Ann Middleton
Benjamin Misumi
Mattea Misumi
Kay Moran
Charlie Mount
Howard Neal
Jim Ogden
Margie Ogden
Jan Okuhara
Johnette Orpinela
Cynthia Parker
David Parker
Kathy Peabody
Richard Peabody
Linn Pedersen
Lynn Perkin
Barbara Peschiera
Eian Petry
Evander Pierznik
Carolyn Potts

David Potts
Ramzi Quisi
Jeanne Randall-Bodman
Fraser Rasmussen
Kingston Rathburn
Liliana Ray
Freya Read
Ronan Repasky
Kate Robinson
Kathleen Rogovoy
Aleta Ross
Carolyn Rux
Pete Rux
Sumara Sayaraman
Amy Schaffer
Tyler Schaffer
Nancy Scheele
Jack Schroeder
Ruth Schuld
Kavin Senthilkumar
Holly Silver
Len Stoffer
Mary Anna Stoffer
Sahir Talukdar
Soraya Talukdar
Lynn Taylor
Patricia Tesch
Dan Valliere
Joanna Valliere
Arwen Vanderfield
Larken Vanderfield
Joe Walsh
Karly Weinstock
Hilda Welch
Margarette Weller
Isaac Wheatley
Casey
Namann





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Save the
Date

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2019, 5:30 pm

Come and Celebrate!

Join us for this once-in-a-lifetime historic event to celebrate **50 years** of keeping seniors housed. We wouldn't be here without you and we don't want to celebrate without you. More details coming to your mailbox soon!

