

# Piloting Change

## Paying NWPP's Mission Forward

*Cristina Palacios joined the NWPP Board of Directors in January 2020. She is an advocate for housing and economic justice in the Portland metro area and brings a wealth of expertise and experience to our agency. But above all of her professional experience, Cristina brings personal experience as a daughter looking for help to find stable affordable housing for her father. Cristina participated in her first Walk-A-Thon this year, virtually, and was surprised by all her success. She wrote the following letter to her supporters so they would understand why supporting NWPP was so important to her. She has graciously allowed us to share it with you.*

When I was just three years old, my parents separated and my father became a single parent, going back and forth between the United States and Mexico. He always worked very low-paying jobs, from fields to factories. His hourly rate was usually around \$1.25 or less when he worked in the fields. He tried to go to school to learn English to improve his prospects at one point but he was too exhausted most days, so he only ever learned a little bit. My father stopped going to school in Mexico in 3rd grade, so he barely knows how to read and write in Spanish; this was another barrier he had in both countries. All those things really affected him when it was time for retirement, despite working in the United States and paying taxes for most of his life, his retirement amount was not sufficient to cover the cost of an apartment on his own.

When he could no longer work due to his age, he started living in California permanently moving from one house to another with my brother and sisters. After a few years, this arrangement was no longer working. I decided to move him to Oregon where all I could offer him was a couch in our living room.

After staying in my living room for three years, my landlord started giving me a hard time and threatened to evict me and my family for having too many people in



*Cristina Palacios and her father, Ramon Palacios*

our two-bedroom apartment. I was given several warnings to move him out. As much as I wanted to obey the rules I could not afford to rent a three-bedroom unit. My only option was to try and find a place where my Dad could live on his own.

I was very lucky that one of the volunteers I knew through work told me about Northwest Pilot Project. As soon as I learned about this organization, I gave them a call and they quickly set us up with an assessment appointment. A case manager learned all about us and our situation and began to help my father to find housing. Though we were relieved to finally have a plan for permanently affordable housing, we were also very worried, because waitlists were several years long, but I encouraged him to apply anyway.

Several months later, the case manager called us to say that my father was eligible for a long-term rent assistance voucher: he could use this at a building of his choice, and pay 30% of his retirement income towards rent and utilities on a permanent basis. The relief I felt was incredible. Suddenly, years of waiting

*Continued on page 2*



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

Greetings NWPP friends, supporters and partners!

Every July, I take a deep breath and reflect on the completion of NWPP's most recent fiscal year (July 1 through June 30) before taking another deep breath as I get ready to dig into the year ahead.

When I think back on the last year I am at once struck by all that has happened and by the fact that all 12 months were contextualized by COVID-19. I'm also struck by the one thing that didn't change: NWPP never stopped serving our clients. We continued to place older adults into housing, prevented evictions, built partnerships, launched a new program (see page 6 about The Senior Collaborative), engaged in strong advocacy, and secured critical resources. I want to call out NWPP's staff and board for their incredible commitment to the people we work with, to our community, and to doing good while working remotely and online, and to ensuring NWPP can do good for years to come. Thank you, team!!

And thank you, too, to our donors, volunteers, event sponsors and partners. Without all of you we couldn't make our mission come to life. Special kudos to all of our Walk-A-Thon supporters! Don't forget to mark your calendars for the 43rd Walk-A-Thon on Sunday, May 1. We'll be back live and in-person in the beautiful South Park Blocks!

What is ahead for NWPP? As we start this next 12-month cycle we face some other changes: Housing Advocate Bobby Weinstock has retired. (see page 4); We'll be building on the incredible foundation of senior housing advocacy he created as we launch into a new era of this work; we'll be expanding our capacity serve to more low-income seniors, especially those who are homeless and highly vulnerable; online fundraising for the Walk-A-Thon is here to stay; and we'll be venturing forth into the world of the hybrid workplace. We also start this year full of hope and a "re-upped" commitment to our mission: to provide a life of dignity and hope to very low income seniors in Multnomah County.

Onward!

*Laura*

**Paying NWPP's Mission Forward** continued

and worrying about where he might end up seemed to disappear. I was literally crying knowing that finally, my father could have a place where he could be and live without the fear of being evicted or causing me and my family to be evicted. His dignity and peace of mind was restored.

He has successfully been in his own apartment for about four years and is now 76 years old. He says, "I love having my own place and having my only child in Oregon so close to me. She helps me with so many things and always makes sure I am doing okay."

I want all seniors to have the same opportunity that my Dad has which is why I have joined the NWPP Board of Directors and work so hard to support the wonderful work that NWPP is doing to make sure people like my dad can have a roof over their head.



*Ramon Palacios outside his apartment*

*"I love having my own place and having my only child in Oregon so close to me."*

*- Ramon Palacios*





## Our Virtual 42nd Annual Walk-A-Thon a Success Thanks to YOU!

Thanks to you this year's Walk-A-Thon raised **\$166,000** for the programs and services of Northwest Pilot Project. We are delighted with this result! Our thanks to all of our wonderful virtual walkers and all the people and businesses that gave their support.

### Walk-A-Thon Super Stars:



**Top Individual Fundraiser:** **Ruth Schuld** raised an incredible \$21,072.60!!! Ruth recently celebrated her 100th birthday. She is one of the most dedicated and enthusiastic fundraisers we have ever known.



**Top Team Fundraiser:** **Terwilliger Plaza** raised an outstanding \$23,046!!!

### Our Virtual Walkers:

Kathy Anderson  
Brie Baumert  
Sue Beardwood  
Kate Begonia  
Jeanne Randall-Bodman  
A.C. Caldwell  
Brenda Carpenter  
Donna Childs  
Heidi Chimuku  
Karen Day  
Susan Emmons  
Jeanne Galick  
Joe Gillock  
Laura Golino de Lovato

Linda Goodman  
Robert & Sabine Hines  
Alexis Hultine  
Candace Jamison  
David Johnson  
Kai Jones-Childs  
Joan Jozwiak  
Ann Middleton  
Barb Gorman  
Dale Latham  
Lindsey Leason  
Gwen Luhta  
Carol Maresh  
Kellie Martin  
Fran Ousley

Cristina Palacios  
Linn Pedersen  
Eian Petry  
Alecia Pollard  
Fraser Rasmussen  
Stephanie Roberts  
Alice Ronald  
Nancy Scheele  
Ruth Schuld  
Jean Shepherd  
Pat Tesch  
Bobby Weinstock  
Karly Weinstock  
Mike Wells



**Raffle winners:** \$500+ Raffle winners **Sabine and Bob Hines** pictured with their new TV

### Event Sponsors:

With the help of our sponsors, we were able to cover all event expenses. This year's sponsors include:

**Presenting Sponsor:** DJ Guild Property Investments

**Benefactors:** Care Oregon; Health Share of Oregon; Kaiser Permanente NW

**Partners:** Guardian Real Estate Services; IMS Capital Management, Inc.- Doug Kintzinger; Northwest Housing Alternatives

**Sustainers:** Classic Pianos; Income Property Management (IPM); Mattress Lot; Office of Multnomah County Commissioner Sharon Meieran; Office of Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler; REACH Community Development; Willamette Dental Group

**Supporters:** Devine Chiropractic; Escape from New York Pizza; Home Forward; McDonald Jacobs, CPA; Morel Ink; Office of Multnomah County Chair Deborah Kafoury; Office of Multnomah County Commissioner Susheela Jayapal; Portland Housing Bureau; Susan Utterback, CPA

**Friends:** A to Z Moving; J.D. Fulwiler Insurance; Office of Multnomah County Commissioner Lori Stegmann; Portland Computer Guys, LLC

# Bobby Weinstock

## Housing and Advocacy Champion, Retires after 32 Years

Retirements are bittersweet: great for the retiree, not so great for those of us left behind. As NWPP readies for life without Bobby Weinstock we celebrate his successes, reminisce about the challenges, good times, the wins and losses. And we congratulate Bobby on a stellar career at NWPP and the positive impact he's made on policies, programs and people throughout Multnomah County.

Many of you may know Bobby, or have heard or read of his work, but you might not know how he came to NWPP 32 years ago.

After seven years working with Portland's homeless, disabled, elderly and low-income neighbors and focusing on survival services at Burnside Projects, Bobby was ready for a new environment and a bigger way to make a difference. An intriguing job announcement by NWPP piqued his interest.

At NWPP, Susan Emmons, NWPP's Executive Director, was hoping the recently posted "Housing Placement Specialist" position would garner good applicants. Susan had some new ideas about how NWPP could approach



*Bobby Weinstock volunteering at our annual Walk-A-Thon.*

the work of housing low-income and homeless seniors. When Bobby applied, she knew he was the right person for the job. Susan tasked Bobby with an approach no other agencies were using: concentrate on establishing relationships with building owners and managers; create an inventory of housing affordable to NWPP clients; ensure seniors had housing that would be permanent and affordable; and create a process to follow those clients' housing stability for at least a year.

Under his leadership, Bobby built NWPP's new housing program and laid the foundation of NWPP's core service which became a model of how to effectively provide permanent housing to vulnerable seniors in Portland. Relationship building was key to the program's success. From affordable building managers to the people NWPP housed, Bobby not only stayed in touch but became a resource when problems arose. This unique approach is still a hallmark of NWPP's service delivery.

For the first 10 years of his NWPP career, Bobby was assisted by NWPP staff members Cindy Mosney, Rebecca Jones-Childs, and AC Caldwell, who helped Bobby build not just a new approach to senior housing but a new, pioneering computerized data collection system with a focus on outcome reporting.

In 2000, Bobby handed off the housing program reins to Rebecca Jones-Childs, and took on the role of Housing Advocate. Advocacy for senior housing was not new to NWPP nor to Bobby. Susan Emmons and Bobby had been actively involved in a variety of advocacy efforts primarily around preserving apartment units occupied by low-income older adults.

In his new role, though, Bobby would have the opportunity to focus on advocating for issues and items no one else was working on – the shortage of affordable housing units - and focusing on permanent solutions to benefit NWPP's clients. Several of Bobby's projects became "go to" resources for government and social service agencies alike: *The Downtown Housing Inventory Report* which tracked the number of residential buildings and affordable rental units that existed, and the number that had been lost over time; and *The GAP Report* identifying the number of units needed to house the lowest income residents in Portland, documenting the worsening shortage of affordable rental housing. Bobby knew that tracking the numbers was critical. "A problem is how we're counting the number of housing units that we're creating," he told *Street Roots*. "Until we address this, we can't end homelessness."



*Susan Emmons and Bobby accepting an award from St Andrew Catholic Church.*





*Bobby pictured with former client, friend and fierce affordable housing advocate Jessie Jones.*

Both projects led to NWPP's advocacy efforts to secure the City of Portland's creation of the No Net Loss Policy in 2001. While that policy didn't hold up over time, it did lead to major building preservation and construction efforts. The preservation of existing buildings and the development and construction of new units became NWPP's next advocacy focus, with Bobby leading the way. As he and Susan Emmons saved buildings like the Taft Hotel, The Oak, The Rose Schnitzer Tower, and worked closely with the city to develop other downtown subsidized housing buildings, Bobby also saw changes in the city's economy. The cost of living in Portland increased and the city was starting to grow. Bobby saw that other work needed to be done to address barriers to housing for low-income seniors: reform screening criteria used by property owners and managers; lessen minimum income requirements; eliminate minimum rents required for even the lowest cost apartments. All these had to be addressed through policy changes.

Through it all, Bobby saw that strong, positive relationships within the rental housing eco-system would benefit social service agency workers and the landlord and property manage-

ment community. Perhaps meeting and talking about housing opportunities and making personal connections would amplify success? Thus the Housing Partnership Workgroup was born. For almost 20 years this meeting, facilitated by Bobby, has focused on building strong relationships and channels of communication between housing advocates, social service staff, housing providers and housing developers. The group has grown to more than 700 individuals and organizations.

It's clear, though, that Bobby's most significant legacy is what is now a metro area program set to launch in July: the Regional Long-Term Rent Assistance Program (RLRA), a locally funded and managed rent subsidy program that will make thousands of rental units affordable for those with the lowest incomes. Funded through the Supportive Housing Services Measure, the RLRA Program was built on Bobby's vision that rent subsidies - similar to those from the federal Housing and Urban Development Department - could be funded and managed locally, giving more control to program administrators, and eliminating multiple barriers for renters. Building on a project funded by Meyer Memorial Trust that awarded HUD rent vouchers to seniors

at imminent risk of losing their homes due to rising rents, Bobby's vision and advocacy culminated with the successful creation of the Long-Term Rent Assistance program in January 2019. This also led to efforts currently underway to create a statewide rent voucher program.

Over his three decades plus at NWPP Bobby has developed strong and long-lasting relationships with other housing advocates, from those in city and county government to colleagues in social service agencies. A friend and colleague of Bobby's who now works at the state level wrote to him recently to say "how impactful your work has been over the years in teaching social workers / housing case managers the ropes of the work." But his compassion and true commitment to those needing housing meant he became a friend to many who were helped by his work at NWPP. As Susan Emmons said, "Bobby is one of the most highly respected, resourceful, effective, committed, and compassionate people I have ever known. For Bobby, the impossible is just hard work."

It's not "goodbye," Bobby. It's thank you. It's good luck and best wishes for a well-deserved retirement. We'll miss you, but we know you'll be around.

**To honor Bobby,** help us raise \$32,000 which will be matched dollar for dollar by a generous donor. All funds will be used to support NWPP's advocacy work.

Please use the enclosed return envelope to make your donation or visit **[www.nwpilotproject.org/donate](http://www.nwpilotproject.org/donate)**

**Note:** In lieu of a retirement party, Bobby has requested donations be made to this matching grant (always thinking of NWPP!)

# The Senior Collaborative: An In-depth Look at Senior Needs and Challenges

**The Senior Collaborative is a joint effort by Northwest Pilot Project, Hollywood Senior Center and AGE+ to examine the natural helping networks, existing formal services and unfulfilled needs that exist for people 55 years old and older living on \$2,700/month or less in Multnomah County.**

The goal of the project is to improve the wellbeing of elders in our communities through strategic recommendations for policy and program improvements. The project will prioritize input from older people who may not be receiving services from traditional senior focused agencies while also centering BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) older adults, who are disproportionately impacted by poverty and homelessness. The Senior Collaborative final report will be issued in Fall 2021.



## DID YOU KNOW?

One in four older adults has no retirement savings and no children to help support them as they age. This means that as the region's senior population grows, the number of seniors in poverty will continue to increase.

Sources: NWPP; "Aging and Equity in the Greater Portland Metropolitan Region", Connections: Journal of the Coalition for a Livable Future, 2014

Part of the Senior Collaborative project's focus is on hearing from older adults throughout Multnomah County about what service they need and want, and the challenges with getting those needs met. We were able to secure the input of over 1,000 seniors throughout the county because of some brilliant community leaders who engaged people 55 and older who are living with financial hardship in their communities. Project Manager Molly Hogan interviewed just a few of the people who did this important work. Highlights of the interviews are below, shortened because of space limitations. The full interviews will be available on our website in the fall.

### BONNIE JOHNSON

#### *Black/African American Community*

I am Bonnie Johnson – a 62-year old Portland native, homeowner and proud mother of five adult children and grandmother of 9 grandchildren. I have worked for many Portland area nonprofits in the social service field for 29 years, including services in: housing, HIV/AIDS, drug and alcohol counseling, gambling addiction, reentry programs, and family and children safety. My first job in social services was with Legacy Emmanuel's Project Network in the era of the crack epidemic advocating for mothers and babies. I was one of the first African American Community Health Outreach Workers and Gambling Addiction Counselors in



Oregon in the 1990s. I will soon be celebrating 31 years of recovery and I am still heavily involved with the Black Recovery community and a longtime volunteer at the Miracles Club.

#### **Q: Why did you choose to participate in the Senior Collaborative project?**

I have been volunteering with the Black Resilience Fund (BRF) to deliver checks to participants and a lot of the folks I delivered to were older people. From this experience I realized what a great need there is to reach our elderly community. So many elderly people were so isolated and it hurt my heart. One woman I met had glaucoma and needed glasses but didn't know how to go about getting some. Another woman was using her toilet as a chair because she didn't have a proper chair to sit in. Luckily, BRF was able help both these elderly women get what they needed but I felt we need to do more for our seniors. When I was asked to work on the Senior Collaborative I said yes because I feel it is important we interview seniors to find out what they need.

#### **Q: What have been your observations of the most pressing issues for Black/African American seniors living on lower incomes?**

Because getting mental health services has had such a stigma in the Black community, I noticed a lot of older Black people do not seek out mental health services. Even though many seniors I interviewed talked about their need for such kind of services for themselves, they haven't been able to seek them out because mental health services wasn't something addressed within our culture historically. But this is starting to change with the creation

of culturally specific mental health services like at the Avel Gordly Center and other organizations. The other most pressing issue is the high cost of housing that renders many African Americans in Portland homeless. At least 1/3 of the seniors I interviewed were homeless!

## NAAMA

### Disability Community



Growing up as a multi-cultural woman, and later, learning English as a second language as well as immersing myself in new cultures

has taught me to expand my views of reality. One area of my life that I relate with is being a low income senior with disability. As part of my inquiring mind, I like to venture and ask myself, as well as ask my fellow humans- in this case, low-income elderly- what is it like for each of us to be living the life we lead, and how do we perceive it?

#### **Q: Why did you choose to participate in the Senior Collaborative Project?**

When I first heard about the Senior Collaborative Project, I felt an immediate connection to the project's mission and was intrigued by the open-mindedness embedded in the approach. I especially resonated with and trusted the foundation of the project which is based in a non-judgmental, open invitation for low income seniors to make their voices heard.

#### **Q: What have been your observations of the most pressing issues for seniors, especially those experiencing disabilities in Multnomah County?**

I observed that many of us feel a disconnect between our pressing necessities and the services that fall short to fully address them. Our population struggles to keep up with the hoops that we need to jump through just to be able to navigate the system. In our chase for survival, we lose track of what matters to us most. Our basic needs are being discounted or made cumbersome, both by ourselves and by services providers. Often, we fear losing our few and far between rights and so we don't speak up. In turn, we enter into a cycle of self-oppression which leaves us feeling silenced, uncertain and worried. Feeling alone, we're more prone to encounter instability around income, housing, food to eat, health care to rely on, amongst other unmet fundamental human rights.

## REID VANDERBURGH

### LGBTQ+ Community

I am a 65 year old transman, retired therapist, published author and avid choir member. I have lived in Portland since 1976



and became a therapist in 2001. I focused on serving transgender individuals and their family and friends as well as professional and educational peers when needed. I wrote my first book, *Transition and Beyond: Observations on Gender* in 2006. I now focus on writing and conducting trainings. Choirs have also become center in my life and I joined the Portland Gay Men's Chorus in 2008.

#### **Q: Why did you choose to participate in the Senior Collaborative project?**

I started a position with SAGE (advocacy and services for LGBT Elders through Friendly House) to assist in making aging services spaces more LGBT welcoming just a couple months before the pandemic hit. A few months into the pandemic lockdown I lost this position. Further, like for many, personal experiences with my own health issues while also caregiving my partner, centered the intersection of aging and medical care in my life. As an extrovert, the forced isolation that COVID-19 required was hard to deal with. And so, when this opportunity presented itself for me to talk with other elders in my community and the potential to create positive change, I was excited to participate!

#### **Q: What have been your observations of the most pressing issues for LGBTQ+ seniors living on lower incomes?**

What most people talked about were challenges with personal care issues, such as foot care, physical therapy, massage, things that help keep them mobile. Some were unable to put on shoes because they can't cut their own toenails and others reported their ability to walk was greatly impacted due to being so immobile. Medicaid and Medicare also do not cover many personal care services that would be very helpful in improving quality of life for seniors. I also think that the elder LGBT community specifically has a tendency to not seek out services outside of LGBT focused programs due to their life-time experiences of institutional discrimination based on their LGBT identity. I think that the LGBT community is very resilient and takes care of each other. However, there is definitely a level of trauma and PTSD and room for services and resources from outside of the LGBT community.

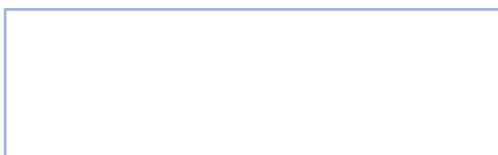


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Mark your  
calendars for the  
**43rd Walk-A-Thon**  
**SUNDAY,**  
**MAY 1, 2022**  
South Park Blocks

**LIVE AND  
IN-PERSON!!**

**THANK YOU** to our event sponsors  
of the 2021 Walk-A-Thon!

**DAVID J. GUILD**  
INVESTMENT PROPERTIES

