

# ATTAIN NEWS

SUMMER 2019 NEWSLETTER



Photo credit: Ashish Keshwani

*Bringing our community together to partner with homeless families by providing affordable housing and empowering them with practical case management and hope.*

## Cheers to 30 Years!

Join us for our “Home is Where the Heart is” Luncheon on September 26 at Bellevue Presbyterian Church

We'll be toasting to 30 years of serving homeless families at the Attain Housing “Home is Where the Heart is” Luncheon on Thursday, September 26. We hope you can join us in celebrating all the donors, board members, staff, and volunteers who made it their business to pitch in and help those in need in their greater Eastside community.

We have a fantastic keynote speaker lined up in Dr. Benjamin Danielson, distinguished pediatrician and Senior Medical Director of the Odessa Brown Clinic in South Seattle. Dr. Danielson is also a clinical professor of pediatrics at the University of Washington. He did his residency at Seattle Children's Hospital and continues to see patients there.

Drawing on his extensive training,

research, and deep wells of personal experience, Dr. Danielson seeks to improve the health and circumstances of low-income children and families throughout Washington. As a provider of transitional housing for families for 30 years on the Eastside, we at Attain Housing are excited for Dr. Danielson to provide his expertise and perspectives on the positive impacts that stable housing has on children.

Our luncheon will be hosted by Sasha Cousineau and she will facilitate a new and exciting “Raise the Paddle” portion of our event. We hope you'll join in by helping us raise funds to serve even more families in 2020!

Register today at [AttainHousing.org](http://AttainHousing.org) and we'll see you on September 26!



### Inside this issue

“Home is Where the Heart is”	p1
Message from the Director	p2
Stable Home Update	p3
ECA Thrift Shop	p4
Welcome aboard, Toby Nixon	p4
Volunteer Spotlight	p4
The Year So Far!	p5
Growth Through Stability	p6





The Simple Joys of Home

No one benefits more from a safe and stable home than children. Photo credit: Ashish Keshwani

## A Message from our Executive Director



**1989...**The Berlin Wall fell...  
The Tiananmen Square massacre occurred...The earth narrowly avoided being hit by two asteroids...Taylor Swift was born. What else occurred in 1989?

### Attain Housing was born!

30 years ago, two organizations were formed separately and independently, and probably without awareness of the other. One was in Bellevue and one was in Kirkland. Their origins were

similar; faith-based community members coming together because the thought of children without homes was too much to bear. Housing at the Crossroads was formed in Bellevue and Kirkland Interfaith Transitions in Housing (KITH) was born in Kirkland. Over the years, multiple congregations and donors came together to help purchase property, donate dollars to pay off loans, and spend untold volunteer

hours preparing apartments to be lived in by families leaving homelessness. An original portfolio of one single family house had grown to 5 properties with 32 apartment homes!

By 2008 Housing at the Crossroads had completed a beautiful new 6-unit complex called Kensington Square on NE 8th in Bellevue and was contracting with KITH for case management services. In 2013 the two organizations decided to merge and in 2014 adopted the new name of Attain Housing. While the number of housing units we own hasn't grown over the last 11 years, the number of people and families served has grown significantly through our Stable Home program and our master lease program, New Lease on Life.

The history of Attain is long and varied and yet the consistent theme through it all has been the dedication of thousands of volunteers, staff, and supporters. We all feel that no child should be without a home. That's what brings us together and that's what will propel us into the next 30 years.

*Kathy*

Find us on social media!



Facebook.com/AttainHousing



@AttainHousing



IG: @AttainHousing



# Stable Home Update: 120 households served in 2019 ...and counting!

As of mid-August, Attain Housing has provided 120 households with Stable Home funding to help prevent Eastside residents from facing eviction or with funds to help them move into a new home. For a frame of reference, we served 101 households total in 2018. Thanks to our donors and the stewardship of our board of directors, we have been able to keep pace with the growing demand for rental assistance, but this is where we need your help the most currently.

For an average of \$546 per household, Stable Home keeps people housed through a short-term crisis.

The cascade of negative consequences caused by a single eviction can often prove insurmountable to an individual without help. It hurts your chances of getting accepted into public/low-income housing and can tarnish your credit rating, which leads to evicted families and individuals having to accept substandard housing in disadvantaged areas.

Is prevention the best strategy in reducing homeless-

ness numbers in our region? It may not address the full, systemic picture of what causes homelessness, but eviction prevention and rental assistance is a proven cost-effective and efficient method of preventing people from ending up on the street, in their cars, or in shelters.

As evidenced by the increasing numbers of Stable Home applicants, it's plain to see that the need for these services is not going away. As donors, this program provides nearly instant proof of the impact of each donation as our number of individuals and families served increases each month.

The need for this program clearly isn't going away and fortunately we haven't had to impose cut-offs as of yet, but we do need help from our donors to help us continue to meet this need. If you've been holding off on making a donation, there is no better time than now. Your contribution would be extremely appreciated by the families and individuals who need just a little help to avoid the trauma of becoming homeless.



*Photo credit: Ashish Keshwani*

**Donate Today!**



## Large Donation Partner: Eastside Community Aid

If you have donations of furniture items, clothes, toys, or other large items, please direct them to our partners at:

Eastside Community Aid  
Thrift Store  
12451 116th Ave NE,  
Kirkland, WA 98034.

Call the store to check the hours they receive donations at 425-825-1877.

Attain Housing is grateful to Eastside Community Aid for the recent \$5,000 grant we received from these wonderful partners.



# Kirkland City Council Member Toby Nixon joins the Attain Housing Board of Directors

We are very pleased to announce that Kirkland City Council Member Toby Nixon is the newest member of the Attain Housing Board of Directors.

In addition to the City Council, Toby is a senior program manager in the Windows group at Microsoft, as well as the chair of the board of directors of Bluetooth Special Interest Group. He's previously served as State Representative for the 45th district and as a fire commissioner, and on the boards of Youth Eastside Services, Nourishing Networks, and other local nonprofits. He's active in interfaith activities including



Kirkland Interfaith Network (KIN) and Fostering Interfaith Relationships on the Eastside (FIRE).

An outspoken advocate for ethics and transparency in government, Toby has been president of Washington Coalition for Open Government since 2007. He graduated from Leadership Eastside in 2013.

A longtime Kirkland resident, he and his wife of 37 years, Irene, raised five children together and

live in Kingsgate.

We are excited for the experience and knowledge that Toby will bring to our board. Welcome!

## Volunteer Spotlight!

### Kim Convertino

When we put out the call for volunteer shifts at our office's front desk, Kim Convertino was one of the first to respond. Kim worked as an accountant for many years and had recently retired, so she was looking to give some time to local organizations she had supported over the years such as the Kirkland Chamber of Commerce, and us, Attain Housing!



Since July, Kim has stepped right in and helped us out immensely with handling calls, doing resource referrals, and doing initial screenings for our Stable Home program. She's been a huge help to our staff and we just want to

say thank you, Kim!

Does volunteering at the front desk sound fulfilling to you? Join Kim and the Attain Housing team today!

We are looking for folks who can commit 4 to 8 hours per week for at least 6 months. We see this as an ideal opportunity for an

individual working or going to school part-time, a retiree, or anyone with a flexible schedule.

Front desk or administrative experience preferred, but not required.

Please contact [Eric@attainhousing.org](mailto:Eric@attainhousing.org) if you are interested or give us a call with any questions at 425-576-9531 ext. 109.



# The Year So Far!

## Been out of the loop? Here's what Attain Housing has been up to lately

It's been a busy 2019 for Attain Housing. Here are the highlights!

**7 Hills of Kirkland:** We want to give a huge thank you to the nearly 900 riders who courageously took on the 7 Hills course this year and helped support our mission of serving homeless and at-risk families! Extra special thanks to 100 or so volunteers who make this event run smoothly and successfully every year! From the people working the aid stations keeping the riders hydrated and fed, to the support riders and drivers on the course, and all the helpers at the finish line at Marina Park. We couldn't do it without you.

Additional gratitude goes to our awesome sponsors: Windermere Real Estate Kirkland and Bellevue, Columbia Bank, Kirkland Kiwanis, Flatstick Pub, Kirkland Rotary, Merit Homes, Inc., Minuteman Press of Kirkland, and #ExploreKirkland.

We hope everyone had an excellent ride and we'll see you on Memorial Day 2020!

**Donor Appreciation Social:** On June 13, Peggy and John Walton hosted our annual Donor Appreciation Social at their home in the West of Market neighborhood. It was a lovely evening of gratitude, idea-sharing, and just good getting-to-know-you conversation with many of our longtime supporters.

**Staff Updates:** Carmelita Parraz, longtime case manager and manager of facilities, resigned her post in early August in advance of giving birth to her and her husband's daughter, Dylan. We wish Carmelita all the best!



*Photo credit: Ali Ford*

Case Manager Greg McLeod was recently promoted to Program Services Manager. Congratulations, Greg!

Darlene Jones recently joined our team as our part-time Stable Home Advocate. With Darlene's help, our staff is able to process Stable Home applications more efficiently and help even more people in need.

Our Case Management team will have a new member in late September as we welcome Jessica Billington to the fold. Jessica previously worked as a Site Director for Mary's Place and brings a wealth of social work experience with her to Attain Housing.

### **In Memoriam:**

*Bill Fores*

As a former board member, Bill chaired the 7 Hills of Kirkland planning committee back when it was a totally volunteer-run event, logging many hours to make sure the event was a fun, safe event and a successful fundraiser for KITH/Attain Housing. Bill brought a ton of positive energy to the board and we can't thank him enough for all the work he did for our organization.

*Doreen Marchione*

Doreen spent a lifetime working for the greater civic good on the Eastside, including many years as a board member and advisory board member for Attain Housing. She served as the Mayor of Redmond from 1984 - 1991, managed as the CEO of Hopelink for 15 years, and then served on the Kirkland City Council until 2017.



*Photo credit: Marie Detty*

# Growth Through Stability

## A Survivor's Story

A large majority of the families that enter our housing program are single mothers who are fleeing domestic violence, sexual assault, and other traumatic events. Sadie came to us through a community partner called Special Delivery. They operate a shelter for young mothers in Woodinville.

With her two small children in tow, a toddler and an infant, Sadie has found the stability and safety in her own home, and the support from her case manager to begin to work through her trauma and find her way back to feeling healthy and happy again. She is seeing a therapist weekly and making great progress there. She was recently hired into a job in retail where she's already helping train new employees.

Sadie is also very passionate about learning how to help others who are dealing with domestic violence and sexual assault. One of her long term goals is to become a trained advocate for those who were in similar situations as her. In her relatively short time in our housing program, Sadie has already made huge strides and we're extremely proud of her progress and resolve.



125 State Street South  
Kirkland, WA 98033  
(425) 576-9531  
[AttainHousing.org](http://AttainHousing.org)