

ATTAIN NEWS

WINTER 2020 NEWSLETTER



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

What a difference a year makes!

Looking back on Attain Housing's growth and impact in 2019

In 2019, we celebrated 30 years of providing assistance to homeless and at-risk families. As we look toward 2020, our region's housing crisis and homelessness issues persist and the need for social services continues to grow. We at Attain Housing insist on helping as many families as we possibly can and we can only do so with the support of our many donors, volunteers, and community partners. We finished the year on a roll and together, we will change even more lives for the better in 2020.

Stable Home

Our eviction prevention program absolutely exploded in 2019 and thanks to our donors, our board's leadership, and the efficient, tireless work of our Stable Home staff, we were able to assist 241 households in 2019, a nearly 140% increase over 2018. That's 630 people, including 318 children, who were spared the trauma of an eviction and the possibility of becoming homeless in 2019. These are truly incredible numbers that all our supporters

should take to heart and be proud of.

7 Hills of Kirkland & Fall Luncheon

Last September, our "Home is Where the Heart is" Luncheon turned in another rousing success thanks to an engaging raise-your-paddle portion of the luncheon led by our energetic emcee Sasha Cousineau, an excellent key note speech from distinguished pediatrician Dr. Ben Davidson, and above all, our incredibly generous donors who pushed past our goal as we raised \$168,000.

Last May, the 2019 7 Hills of Kirkland ride fell on a sunny, picture-perfect Memorial Day and saw a slight increase in ridership, but a notable increase in donations from riders. We hope to keep the fundraising momentum going in 2020 with several upgrades to the ride that you can read all about on page 4.

Holiday Programs

With an added emphasis on cash donations instead of gift cards for the



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2019 holiday season, we were able to make all donations go much further than for just the holidays. Of course, thanks to our generous Adopt-a-Family donors, we were still able to make sure all our client families had their wish lists fulfilled. For previously homeless families, buying Christmas gifts for their kids can seem like an impossible task when they are still recovering from the trauma of homelessness, still trying to find work, and save every penny they can for future. That's why the Adopt-a-Family program was started in the first place. As usual, our tiny office was once again bursting at the seams by mid-December with bikes, clothing, toys, and all sorts of goodies for our client families.

In addition to the Adopt-a-Family program, our 2019 Year-End Appeal set a new record for us as we raised nearly \$30,000. The donation totals at the end of the year were truly unexpected and certainly allowed us to end the year on the highest of notes!



A Message from our Executive Director



As the previous article mentioned, Wow! What a year 2019 was! We were able to help 616 or 140% more people through Stable Home, we added more staff, we held record-breaking fund-raising events and we were able to add four more transitional housing units to our stock through the support of a generous investor.

Should we rest?

Heck no! Let's keep it up. The number of people in our community needing our help is growing and we must continue to rise to the occasion. Stable Home is poised for another record year as we prevent families with minor children from losing their homes. We plan to begin offering case management services to these folks in addition to our existing Transitional Housing clients. We are partnering with ELAP on legal assistance for these clients too. And finally, we aren't content to grow our Transitional Housing program by only four apartments; we now have funding to grow another four units in 2020, increasing our housing stock by almost 25% in one year!

Why do we do this? Let me tell you a few stories about the challenges our clients face and you'll understand:

- Carmen and her three kids just moved into their new Attain apartment home last month after living in their car for the last nine months. Previously the family had stable housing, but after the children's dad suddenly left, the family was on their own and could no longer afford their housing. Carmen did not want to worry about her children continuously needing to change schools based on where they could find housing so she enrolled them in a home-

school program and started to drive for a meal delivery service so that her kids could be with her as she worked. Every night she would find a new place to park that felt safe enough for her and her kids to get some sleep. On lease-signing day, the kids were running through the apartment exclaiming how big it was and how they could play hide-n-seek in it. They were also amazed that it had a refrigerator and that now they could go grocery shopping and fill it. Our case manager's own heart was full when she told this story. This family of four is on their way towards sustainable permanent housing.

- Mary is an elderly woman who is a regular guest at our weekly Community Supper held at Holy Spirit Lutheran Church. She let our staff know that she really appreciated the Holiday gift card to Fred Meyer because she was able to use part of it to buy a Christmas tree, which her grand-kids enjoyed when they visited her. She said she wouldn't have bought a tree without that extra help. Our Holiday Program sometimes helps in ways we couldn't even imagine...spreading that Holiday spirit!

- Denise has a young child who was sick for several weeks in December. She is a childcare provider and could not bring him to work with her when he was ill. Without the income from her job, Denise found herself in the position of not being able to pay her January rent and was facing possible eviction. She called our Stable Home line and in no time at all we were able to help her with January rent, keep her home, and get her to her next paycheck.

These are all folks who live in our community. Our neighbors, friends, co-workers, and acquaintances. How could we not help them?

Enjoy the early peek of Spring and we'll see you on Memorial Day at 7 Hills!

Kathy

Find us on social media!



Facebook.com/AttainHousing



@AttainHousing



IG: @AttainHousing

Totem Lane and beyond!

Attain Housing adds four new units for homeless families, with even more to come in 2020



As you may have heard, Attain Housing is growing! A generous local couple purchased a multi-family property on behalf of Attain, enabling us to begin operating a four-plex apartment building called Totem Lane in the Totem Lake neighborhood of Kirkland as part of our transitional housing program.

Thanks to the hard work of our Facilities Manager and Programs team, as well as upgrades provided by the purchasing donors, we anticipate having our first client family move into a Totem Lane unit by the end of February.

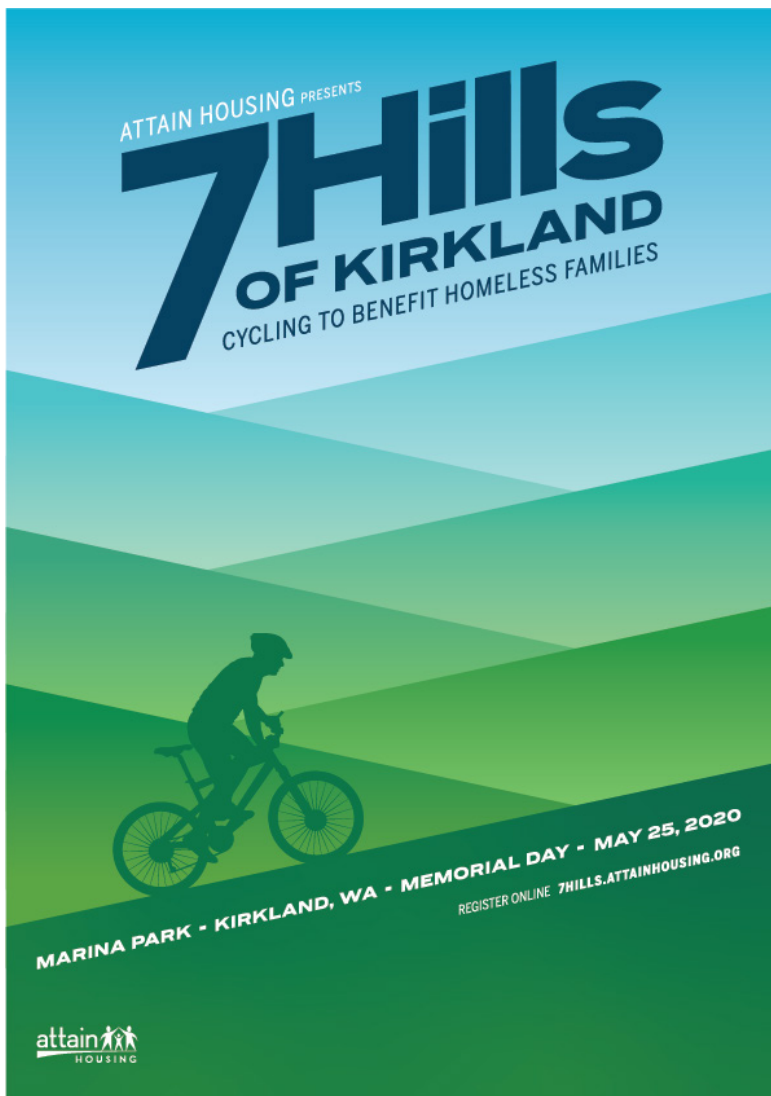
The growth doesn't stop here! Just this month, Attain Housing was awarded another King County Master Lease grant for 2020-2022. This means King County will provide funding for Attain to obtain, lease, and operate what will likely be an additional four units of housing. Is there such a thing as too much good news? We don't think so!

"We're on a roll!" Executive Director Kathy Fleming said. "This is a huge win for us, our supporters, the greater Eastside community," Kathy said, "and all the families we serve."

Attain Housing's staff and Board of Directors have worked for years to expand its housing program, so to finally see major movement in this area is incredibly exciting for everyone involved.

We'd like to give a special thank you to The Thiel Team - Troy and Karen Thiel of Windermere Yarrow Bay, who donated their time and real estate expertise to make Totem Lane a reality for Attain Housing.

Please contact Kathy@attainhousing.org if you are an investor or a multi-family landlord who is interested in learning more about Master Lease opportunities with Attain Housing. The chance to make a massive difference in the lives of homeless families and their children awaits you!



Time to dust off the ol' bike and start training again! The 2020 7 Hills of Kirkland is now open for registration. We have a few changes this year, including a better and safer finish and starting line configuration at Marina Park, as well as an awesome fundraising opportunity to earn your ride jersey!

How to Engage with 7 Hills

- We're recruiting Ride Captains! This is your chance to take the lead, gather your friends and co-workers, and make a huge difference in the lives of homeless and at-risk families by doing some major fundraising! Go to 7Hills.AttainHousing.org for more info.
- You can wear your 2020 Ride Jersey with pride as they will be available for all individuals who raise \$500 or more. To start or join a fundraising page, click on the Classy link on 7Hills.AttainHousing.org.
- Tag **@AttainHousing** in your training ride photos! We want to hear all about your progress and cheer you on!



Donor Spotlight

Higher Leaf-Green Theory



Over the last several years, Higher Leaf-Green Theory has become one of Attain Housing's most engaged and generous community supporters.

As with many folks, it all started with involvement in the Community Supper program.

"Back in 2016, one of our owners, Molly Honig, participated in an Attain Housing Community Supper with a group of other families from her children's school," said Lizzie Maslan, Master Staff Trainer. "Molly later mentioned Attain Housing's mission to me and highlighted the profound impact they have in our community. Together we decided to start our involvement with Attain Housing by volunteering as a company to sponsor Community Suppers throughout the year, about once a season. This spring will be our 14th Community Supper and we are stoked!"

Thanks to Molly's encouragement, Lizzie took it upon herself to increase Higher Leaf's involvement beyond serving meals.

"Our involvement with Attain Housing began a bit like a struck match that ignited a flame which became a bonfire," Lizzie said. "In 2017, we started our Attain Housing Household Goods Drive during the holiday season to raise community awareness about this organization and to collect helpful items for families transitioning into their new housing."

Lizzie and the Higher Leaf-Green Theory crew quickly discovered that their customers were both very willing to help and curious to know more about Attain's mission.

"We simply gave our customers the information, opportunity, and an outlet to contribute and our customers astounded us," Lizzie said. "They brought in literally car loads of donations!"



Lizzie Maslan & Meagen Rochlitzer pose with the bounty of Higher Leaf-Green Theory's 2019 Holiday Donation Drive.



The Higher Leaf-Green Theory crew at their most recent Community Supper

Lizzie pointed out the fact that the cannabis industry is a disposable income market, which means that if someone can spend \$50 at their shop, they often have an additional couple dollars to spare and will gladly donate to a cause they find important.

"This year, Molly matched all cash donations and we were able to donate a total of \$6,500 in addition to hundreds of household items," Lizzie said. "Our community has proven for years to be one of the most generous and kind groups of people out there."

In 2019, Higher Leaf-Green Theory also started hosting a similar donation drive to help raise funds for our annual 7 Hills of Kirkland bike ride on Memorial Day and raised \$1,500 last spring.

Lizzie said that Higher Leaf-Green Theory values positivity, compassion, and genuine care for their customers, which drives their enthusiasm to support community organizations like Attain Housing.

"We could just sell cannabis products but we choose to do more because it matters to us," Lizzie said. "We are all in this together and it's important to be the change you would like to see in this world. Watching the Community Supper

program grow in size over the years has been incredibly

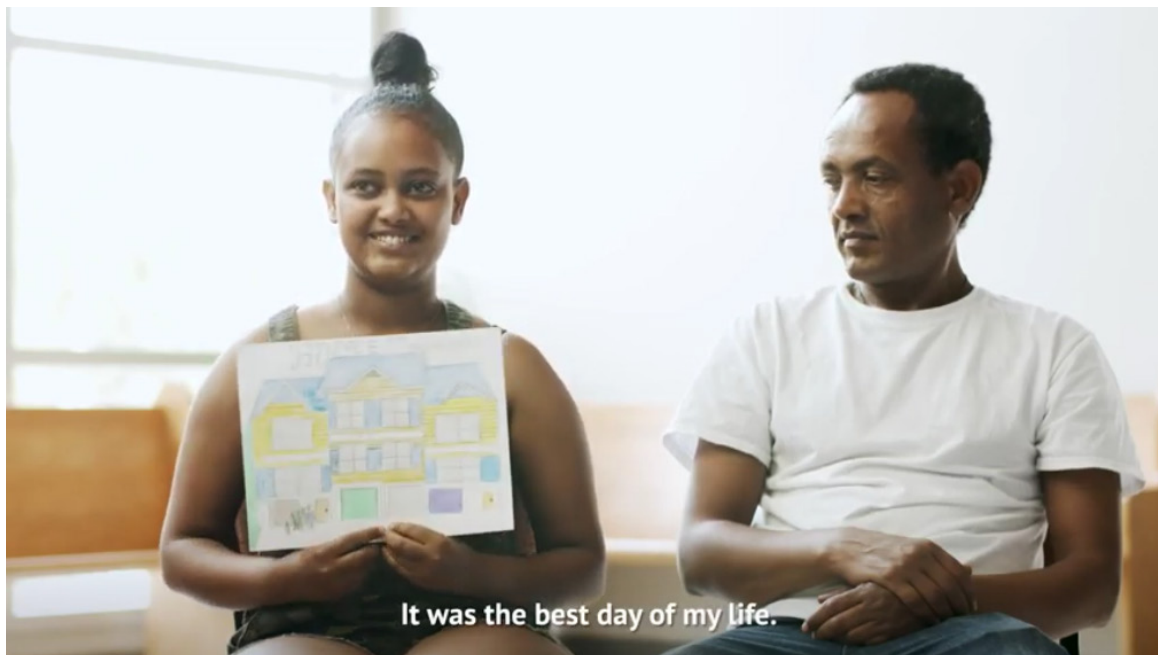
rewarding and inspiring to watch. We are happy to be a part of it and look forward to it every quarter."

Attn: Local businesses with lots of foot traffic!

Want to engage your customers in collecting funds for Attain Housing? Contact Carol@attainhousing.org for an easy to set-up fundraising kit for your business!

A Fully-Realized Future

How Attain Housing helped a family of five stay together and thrive together



Home, sweet home

Dawit and daughter Eleni are featured in our client family video. Watch it on [AttainHousing.org](https://attainhousing.org)!

“That’s fantastic, man,” Greg McLeod, our Programs Services Manager, said with a grin into the phone. “I am so happy for you.” Dawit (pictured above with his daughter Eleni) and his family had just found a permanent home.

We first introduced you to Dawit and his family in our most recent client family video, which you can view on our YouTube account and on [AttainHousing.org](https://attainhousing.org). We wanted to give our donors and supporters an update on the family now that they’ve successfully moved on from our housing program.

To appreciate the full significance of that achievement, you have to go back about 10 years earlier to when Dawit first came to America from Ethiopia with the same hopes as millions of other immigrants before him: a desire to provide a better life for their families.

Dawit planned to work for several years to save up his money, and then have his wife, Abeba, and two daughters join him in America. Dawit found jobs doing industrial cleaning work, but after several years of exposure to harsh chemicals, he started experiencing major respiratory issues and couldn’t work as often as he needed to support himself, let alone save up for his family.

Despite an uncertain future in America, the family reunited with Dawit to help him recover from his health problems. But without steady housing, they ended up living at two different Mary’s Place shelter locations over the course of eight months, sharing large rooms with other families with nothing but canvas curtains as dividers.

This is where Attain Housing came into the picture. After getting onto the King County Coordinated Entry

for All waiting list, Dawit and Abeba’s family came to us as a referral for our transitional housing program. Dawit and Abeba made it very clear with Greg, their Case Manager, how important their daughters’ education was to them. Eleni and her sister settled into the Bellevue School District and over the course of the next two years began to truly thrive, grow, and become comfortable in their new city and home.

Greg worked with the family to help them set their goals. They wanted to improve their English, increase their income, and stabilize all health issues. Greg helped Abeba enroll in an ESL class and her English has improved dramatically. Greg worked with Dawit and Abeba on resume building and Abeba landed a job working in the kitchen at a local restaurant. This allowed Dawit, still dealing with asthma-related respiratory issues, to work in a more part-time capacity as a delivery driver so as to not put his health at further risk. Recently, Abeba was able to finally see a specialist to address some long-running health issues of her own.

As the family approached the end of their two-year stay in Attain’s program, Greg assisted them with successfully applying for a Section 8 voucher with King County Public Housing. The family recently moved out of our housing and into their new apartment that is located within Bellevue School District, ensuring that the kids could stay in their current schools.

Dawit and Abeba’s family are a shining example of the life-changing power that exists in the gifts of our donors as applied through our transitional housing and case management services. Your gifts make all the difference in the world to the families we serve!

2019 Volunteers Appreciation!

We'd like to say **THANK YOU** to all our 2019 volunteers! We couldn't change the lives of homeless families without your help!

Volunteer in 2020!

Contact Eric@attainhousing.org to find out more about volunteer opportunities





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