

Helping Neighbors

NEWS FROM YOUR HOUSE, YOUR COMMUNITY | SPRING 2019



www.nhpdx.org

Leading the Way on Preschool for All

Today, almost 60% of Neighborhood House's programs focus on early childhood education.

Research has proven that investing in quality early childhood learning yields remarkable dividends in terms of children's personal, social, and intellectual growth, as well as economic returns later in life. Despite these facts, only four out of 10 children from low-income families in Multnomah County attend a no-cost Head Start program. Given that Oregon's tuition-based preschools are the fourth most expensive in the nation, it is little wonder that just 41% of our state's three- to five-year-olds are enrolled in preschool. But Multnomah County's Preschool for All Initiative is seeking to change that.

In fall 2018, Commissioner Jessica Vega Pederson assembled the Preschool for All Task Force, a coalition of leaders across the public, private, and social sectors to recommend steps to expand preschool access for thousands of children across Multnomah County. Three Work Groups are focusing on funding options, infrastructure/workforce needs, and policy guidance.

As a long-time champion of the importance of equitable early childhood education and the primary Head Start provider on Portland's west side for two decades, Neighborhood House is thrilled to have Meera Batra, manager for the Parenting Program and Child Care Improvement Project (CCIP), representing our agency by serving on the Policy and Program Work Group. An expert on culturally responsive early learning, Meera is part of a team working on program eligibility criteria, implementation, requirements, and assessment.

"I'm so grateful for the opportunity to participate in this visionary project," says Meera. "It is extremely energizing to connect with so many early learning experts, especially around equity, access, and inclusion for preschool experiences."

In addition to utilizing Meera's expertise, the Task Force's Infrastructure Work Group toured our pioneering Children's Center at Stephens Creek Crossing in early January. The

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(L-R) Dawn Barberis, Margaret Mahoney, Tia Williams, Sarah Zahn, and Afton Walsh, members of the Preschool for All Infrastructure Work Group, tour our pioneering Children's Center at Stephens Creek Crossing.



FROM THE DIRECTOR



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Spring is always a busy season here at Neighborhood House. With the holidays behind us, we look to the future, stocking our Food Pantry through our annual SW HOPE campaign and celebrating our community at Fête Locale, our annual dinner auction.

Amidst all of this activity, I was thrilled to see our state's plans for increased funding for early childhood education. Governor Kate Brown's proposed 2019-2021 budget aims to invest \$368 million in early care and education, while Commissioner Jessica Vega Pederson's Preschool for All Task Force, a coalition of leaders across the public, private, and social sectors, is recommending steps to expand preschool access for thousands of children across Portland. Given the proven, lasting health, social, and economic benefits (including increasing revenue and reducing the need for future social spending) of quality early learning, this is fantastic news for future generations of Portlanders.

That's why Neighborhood House is committed to providing comprehensive senior services that mitigate loneliness and promote healthful choices.

While I am gratified to see the state recognizing the economic and social advantages of investing in early childhood education, I do not want our seniors, another vulnerable population, to get left behind. As we seek to maximize the opportunities for—and contributions of—people of every age, it is vital that we provide this quickly growing population with the essential services they need to thrive.

In Portland and across the country, the median age is increasing every year. For the elderly, isolation is the greatest threat, impacting both emotional and physical health. That's why Neighborhood House is committed to providing comprehensive senior services that mitigate loneliness and promote healthful choices, from transportation to case management and from exercise classes to social outings.

Moving forward, we will continue to advocate for every age, from infants to seniors. **I hope you'll join us, whether it's attending this year's Fête Locale, contributing to SW HOPE, or giving your time at one of our programs.** Your support makes our work possible and ensures an equitable, prosperous, and inclusive Portland in the years to come.

Chris Chiacchierini
Executive Director

New Careers and New Opportunities for Neighborhood House Families

At Neighborhood House's 19th Avenue Apartments, homeless families find a safe place to stay, while a case worker helps them access the services they need to get back on their feet. But even with a roof over their heads, struggling parents encounter numerous cultural and systemic barriers to achieving self-sufficiency. Despite seeking steady, well-paying employment, many lack GEDs, have histories of trauma, or face various biases, causing them to become entrenched in low-paying jobs, with wages that will never be adequate to support a family. Once they leave the program, these low-wage positions force them to spend half their earnings on rent, leaving little for other necessities—let alone opportunities.

However, thanks to a recent capacity-building grant from Multnomah County's Joint Office of Homeless Services, 19th Avenue families will soon have a much-improved path toward enhanced employment prospects. Neighborhood House is developing a series of partnerships with local businesses that will educate residents about careers in construction, medicine, manufacturing, and other fields. After learning about their options, participants will be connected with training opportunities through our business partners or WorkSource Oregon, which responds to workforce challenges by providing individuals and businesses with appropriate resources.

R&H Construction has agreed to educate participants about construction jobs, while New

Seasons has signed on as a partner as well. Additionally, David Gutzler, Neighborhood House board emeritus member and a 30-year veteran of the Portland manufacturing community, will lead the effort to create a network of manufacturing work opportunities.

By early April, Neighborhood House looks forward to welcoming the first cohort of 10 parents to the program. We aim to match 100% of participants with a permanent, well-paid, and supportive employment opportunity by program's end on July 1st. Afterwards, Neighborhood House family case managers will keep the program operating, ensuring a consistent pipeline of job opportunities to put these hard-working parents on the path to self-reliance. ■

Preschool for All

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Children's Center, built in 2014, is located within walking distance of affordable housing, allowing staff and parents to be in frequent contact. In addition to three state-of-the-art early learning classrooms, the Center includes a Family Workshop, designed to host family-strengthening programs, including parenting, family literacy, and English as a Second Language classes.

With cities including San Francisco and Seattle already investing heavily in universal preschool, we hope Portland will be next in line. By preparing all of our children for kindergarten, we set them—and us—up for success in the years ahead, ensuring a more equitable, successful future for all. ■



On February 7th, Head Start providers, Policy Council members, and parents headed to Salem to advocate for early learning, asking our senators and representatives to support Governor Kate Brown's increased early learning budget. Right, Saalim Saalim with Governor Kate Brown.

DATES TO REMEMBER

SW HOPE

March 6–April 21

See SW HOPE article for details and featured events



SW HOPE 5K

Saturday, April 6,

check in at 8:30 am

For more information, go to www.swhope5k.com



Fête Locale:

There's No Place Like Home

Saturday, May 11

Door open 6:00 pm;
dinner at 7:15 pm

WAYS YOU CAN HELP

- ✦ Feed hungry neighbors through our **SW HOPE** campaign. Maximize your impact by donating cash; \$1 = 4 lbs of nutritious food.
- ✦ Invite friends and family to join you at this year's **Fête Locale**—our last one before switching to a luncheon in 2020!
- ✦ Gift a vacation home or unique experience to our **Fête Locale** auction.
- ✦ **Volunteer** your time in one of our programs or to support our fundraising efforts.

For more information, call Development Director Mari Yerger at 503-246-1663 x2119.



(L-R) Riders Molly Mathew, Odielle Parent, Mahin Nilli, Alan Tholen, Mazal Anaki, Anna Radakovich (front), and Barbara Warner (back) enjoy the fare-free ride to Chin's Kitchen, a cornerstone of NE Portland's Hollywood District, for lunch.

Fare-Free Fun with the Senior Center's Shuttle Service

Seniors need to get to the doctor's office when they're ill, run errands when their to-do list is a mile long, and go food shopping when their pantry is empty. But beyond these daily tasks is the need to get outside, have new experiences, and connect with others—and that's where the Senior Center's improved shuttle system comes into play.

"We're making the program more accessible and easier to use," explains Marie Haviland, Senior Transportation Coordinator. Every Wednesday, the Center organizes recreational outings for seniors and people with disabilities, transporting them to a variety of local sites, ranging from popular restaurants to tourist hot-spots to Portland's best-kept secrets.

While the shuttle service used to request a donation for recreational trips, home pick-up and drop-off is now completely free of charge (though donations are always welcome) for participants living in zip codes 97219, 97221, and 97239, as well as parts of 97201 and 97205. Anyone else is welcome to join, but they must provide their own transport to the Senior Center. Participants are driven from their front

door to a new adventure, only paying for entry fees and meals.

"[The Neighborhood House transportation program] is so convenient," says long-time client Pram Dahya. "You get to meet new friends, communicate with them, go to interesting places, and have good lunches. The driver is very thoughtful and drives safely. I'd love a lot more seating, because more people are signing up now to go [on the recreational trips]!"

The shuttle can accommodate 14 ambulatory riders, or 10 ambulatory riders and two wheelchairs. A recent itinerary began with a tour and tasting at the Ranger Chocolate Factory, brought riders to visit the quirky Stark's Vacuum Museum, and ended with a gourmet lunch at Produce Row Café. "We want to get the word out and grow our ridership," says Nancy Burke, Senior Center Outreach Coordinator. In addition to the recreational shuttle service, the Center continues to offer door-to-door service for errands and appointments.

To learn about upcoming trips or reserve your spot, call the Senior Center at (503) 244-5204 and ask for Marie Haviland. You can also contact Ride Connection at (503) 226-0700. ■

Thirteenth Annual SW HOPE Campaign Works to Fight Hunger at Home

Despite the ever-present narrative of Portland's rapid growth and booming economy, thousands of Portlanders still struggle to put food on the table every single day. And while the holiday season means an outpouring of generosity, the long winter months that follow tend to see a sharp decline in giving. Neighborhood House's annual SW HOPE: Feed the Hungry community food drive aims to combat this pattern. Every winter, the agency partners with 40+ local faith and community organizations to keep the Food Pantry's shelves fully stocked.

SW HOPE 2019 kicks off with an Interfaith Kickoff on Sunday, March 10th, hosted by St. Barnabas Episcopal Church. In the following weeks, community members will organize other fun, family-friendly events to raise funds and food in support of the Pantry, which is the largest food distribution center on Portland's west side. On April 5th, supporters can purchase beautiful, locally crafted pottery and enjoy delicious soups at the popular Empty Bowls Soup Dinner at the Multnomah Arts Center. The last event is the fourth annual SW HOPE 5k on April 6th, coordinated by



Guests Joan Wray and Linda Rogers enjoy an evening of food and community at the 2018 SW HOPE Empty Bowls Soup Dinner. This year's event is scheduled for April 5th.

Missio Portland.

SW HOPE began in 2007, with a goal to raise 50,000 pounds of food. Since then, food costs have gradually risen—but the community's generosity has risen to match. This year, the campaign aims to gather 200,000 pounds of food (or the cash equivalent of \$50,000). While every donation helps, Neighborhood House can buy four pounds of food directly from the Oregon Food Bank for just one dollar, making cash donations the most

effective way to support the program. With rising housing costs and cuts to SNAP benefits, the Food Pantry is welcoming more clients than ever before; last year, they served a record-breaking 4,651 individuals.

Local faith partners will be collecting food and cash donations through April 14th. Non-perishable food items can be dropped off at collection barrels throughout the area, located at local businesses, community centers, and congregations. ■

FUTURE SW HOPE 2019 EVENTS

EVENT	WHEN	LOCATION	BENEFIT TO SW HOPE
Interfaith Kickoff	Sunday, March 10, 3:00–4:00 pm	St. Barnabas Episcopal Church, 2201 SW Vermont St	Meet local faith leaders at this welcoming event.
Salvador Molly's Dine Out to Donate	Monday, March 11 5:00 pm–close	Salvador Molly's, 1523 SW Sunset Blvd	20% of proceeds from sales go to SW HOPE.
McMenamins Hillsdale Brewery & Public House Friends and Family Night	Tuesday, March 19, 5:00 pm–midnight	McMenamins Hillsdale Brewery & Public House, 1505 SW Sunset Blvd	50% of proceeds from sales go to SW HOPE.
Empty Bowls Soup Dinner	Friday, April 5, 5:00–7:00 pm	Multnomah Arts Center, 7688 SW Capitol Hwy	100% of proceeds from soup and bowl sales go to SW HOPE.
SW HOPE 5K	Saturday, April 6, Registration begins at 8:30 am	SW Community Center at Gabriel Park, 6820 SW 45th Ave	100% of proceeds benefit SW HOPE.

For a complete list of community partners and participating congregations, visit www.SWHOPE.org.



Neighborhood House
Helping Neighbors Help Themselves

7780 SW Capitol Highway, Portland, OR 97219

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www.nhpdx.org
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fête locale: There's no place like home

SATURDAY, MAY 11, 2019

DOORS OPEN AT 6:00 PM: DINNER AT 7:15 PM
 MULTNOMAH ATHLETIC CLUB, 1849 SW SALMON ST.

Join us for our tenth, and final, Fête Locale, before we switch to a mission-focused luncheon event in 2020. This year's theme is "There's No Place Like Home." We'll celebrate our courageous program participants, who have overcome incredible obstacles to achieve their dreams and build a home in Portland.

TICKETS: \$125/INDIVIDUAL \$1.250/TABLE OF 10

To pay by credit card, purchase tickets online at www.nhpdx.org or call **503-246-1663, x2117**. To pay by check, make your check out to "Neighborhood House," with "Fête tickets" in the memo line, and mail it to 7780 SW Capitol Hwy, Portland, OR 97219.

Please note if you prefer lemon artichoke chicken (GF), pesto crusted salmon, or quinoa cakes with curried cauliflower (GF/vegan). The last day to purchase tickets is **Friday, May 3rd**. **Get your tickets now for Fête Locale: There's No Place Like Home!**

CAN'T MAKE IT ON MAY 11TH?

We'll miss you, but you can still be there in spirit by donating in support of our Special Appeal! Help us reach our goal of \$180,000.

To donate, just click on "Special Appeal" on our online Fête ticket sales page.

