



Tulalip Charitable Contributions Funds Distribution Report

NAME OF AGENCY: West Seattle Helpline

DATE OF AWARD: 2017 Q4

ADDRESS: 6516 35th Ave SW, #204, Seattle, WA 98126

CONTACT: (206) 932-4357, <http://www.wshelpline.org>

GENERAL GOALS: The West Seattle Helpline offers emergency assistance for our West Seattle neighbors. We provide financial assistance, clothing, information, and referrals to help members of our community as they recover from a crisis or hardship. Since 1989, we have worked to strengthen our community through “neighbors helping neighbors.”

SPECIFIC USE FOR THIS AWARD:

This award went towards support of their administration and programs.

For more information please read the attached report from West Seattle Helpline.



FY18 Grant Report to the Tulalip Tribes Charitable Contributions Report Code: Q4 2017 14.2

West Seattle Helpline has made great strides in FY18, which began on July 1, 2017 and ended on June 30, 2018. The [REDACTED] grant award from the Tulalip Tribes Charitable Contributions was instrumental in our work, helping us to reach more than 5,100 people through our homelessness prevention services. We are proud to have made substantial headway this year in both our direct services as well as our organizational leadership and infrastructure. Below are the goals we set for FY18, and the progress made towards each one during the course of the year.

Serve at least 3,700 neighbors through our emergency assistance programs.

In FY18, we refined our database to improve the way we set, track, and report on service goals. Our overarching program is Stop Homelessness in West Seattle, which includes our Emergency Rent and Utility Assistance (ERUA), transportation vouchers, Clothesline, and Helpline Hotline. Over all, Stop Homelessness in West Seattle served over 5,100 people in FY18. ERUA supported 1,086 individuals, averaging \$291 in assistance. We are proud to see a 14% increase in the average pledge size this year. Overall, we contributed \$124,869 in pledges to our community in FY18, which shows a 2% increase over the previous year.

We also distributed 6,160 transportation vouchers to 352 people, welcomed 1,454 people into the Clothesline, and completed 2,400 conversations and referrals through the Helpline Hotline. In the past, some of these numbers were blended into ERUA service numbers in an inconsistent manner. With clarified and more consistent groupings of our services, WSH will be better able to hone in on goals and results of each portion of our work.

Continue to expand client-facing outreach to ensure that 100% of community members who may need support are aware of our services in time to prevent shutoffs and evictions.

WSH works hard to increase our visibility in the neighborhood. Two key ways we focused on this in FY18 were through community events, and the relocation of the Clothesline. Both approaches helped to improve community awareness of the breadth of our services

We organize two major community events each year. In the spring, Taste of West Seattle welcomes over 500 people to connect and celebrate the diversity among our shared neighborhood food and culture. This event has sold out two years running. In the fall, Neighbors Helping Neighbors brings together our most engaged supporters for a more formal celebration and fundraising auction. In FY18, for the first time, we sold out this fall event with 200 people in attendance.

WSH also has an intentional presence at summer festivals and outdoor movies throughout the summer. At these public events, we advertise our services and meet community members who may be looking for services and assistance.

The official opening of the Clothesline in a more central, larger, and more accessible location was March 2017. Our intention with this new space was to provide greater street presence in the neighborhood, more room to accommodate more shoppers at once, as well as more storage space



for donations. In our first full year of operation, we have already seen an increase in walk-in clients, making our space more accessible to the homeless population who may not have access to a phone to make an appointment.

Distribute transportation assistance vouchers valued at \$20,700, through our partnership King County metro.

WSH successfully distributed 6,160 vouchers valued at a total of \$14,860 - a 16% increase in number of vouchers distributed over FY17. Bus tickets are used to get clients to and from work, school, appointments, and to get to essential services, such as the foodbank.

Distribute clothing valued at \$224,000 to Seattle residents in need through WSH's

Clothesline. Over the course of FY18, WSH distributed clothing valued at \$140,228 to clients – a 5% increase over FY17. We believe that the jump in expectations during FY17 was related to the new Clothesline location and anticipated rate of growth. However, we are pleased to have demonstrated growth at a pace that is reasonable for our organizational capacity, and that meets our community's need.



Additionally, in FY18, we brought on a volunteer clothing coordinator with special expertise in clothing banks. Prior to this volunteer's critical support, we valued clothing through an average of the high value numbers from Goodwill and Salvation Army. Now, we have a more sophisticated approach that segments types of clothing more specifically, and relies on a formalized inventory and valuation system to sort and assess our activities. In fact, with a more accurate valuation system and more consistent tracking, we have effectively lowered the valuation of our clothing in FY18. Therefore, the 5% increase that we show this year is likely lower than actual increase if the valuation system had been the same between the two years.

Invest in WSH's leadership and operational capacity through key partnerships and staff and board training.

With a generous \$10,000 grant from the Cedarmere Foundation, WSH successfully provided our Board of Directors with ambassadorship and fundraising training resources. This capacity building project ultimately enhanced the sustainability, performance, and impact of our organization. Over the 2018 fiscal year, WSH hosted four group-training sessions that were paired with one-on-one mentoring with our board members. Through these sessions, our board members gained skills in the following areas:

1. Board Practices: development and implementation of high-efficacy board, financial, and HR policies, practices, norms, and by-laws.
2. Organizational Ambassadorship: tools for representing and promoting the organization within professional and personal networks



3. Direct-Appeal Fundraising: how to solicit, cultivate, and secure mid-level and major gifts from friends and colleagues.

4. Macro-Fundraising: how to support organizational efforts to expand donor base, increase event attendance, and boost returns from broad-reaching cultivation efforts.

Executive Director Erin Dury Moore successfully led our board through this capacity building project, while creating a strong relationship among board members, leadership, and staff. We are proud to report that all of our board members gained skills in these four focus areas and gave positive feedback on the process and lessons.

To ensure that our board retains this knowledge, WSH revised our board recruitment and onboarding processes to include each training module. In addition, we implemented a mentorship program that pairs new board members with a veteran board member. With these efforts, our current and future board members will have the tools and skills to successfully guide WSH and support our work in the community.

Additional Successes

ERUA Impact

In October 2017, WSH began to conduct surveys with ERUA clients after six months had passed since they received financial assistance. In the past 12 months (as of August 2018), we have found that 96% of self reporting respondents remain housed. 12% of respondents report that their income stayed the same, and 45% report increased income in the time that has passed since.

Our survey includes other questions about financial security, incidence of overdue bills, utility shutoffs, or evictions, and other topics that further illustrate the impact of our ERUA program. We look forward to using the data we are now collecting to demonstrate a broader range of indicators of success in this work.

Operations

Our contributed revenue increased from \$389,828 in FY17 to \$492,966 in FY18 – more than 26% growth. We attribute this success to greater development capacity as well as implementation power. This work yielded substantial increases in all revenue streams, enabling WSH to continue to focus on improving program quality and scope to best serve the community.

Specifically, FY18 was the first full year with a Development and Communications Manager on staff, and the second full year of contracted grant support. We built and executed more sophisticated individual giving, corporate, and event strategies, and matured our grant program into a more focused, strategic phase. We also saw direct results from the time spend on board training in this regard – for example, more tangible board engagement in the Neighbors Helping Neighbors fundraiser was a big factor in our ability to sell out the event.

We are proud to continue to be able to provide 100% approval of eligible applicants to our ERUA program. In the past this was not always possible, but since WSH began to strengthen our infrastructure this has been a key benchmark in our work, and it remains strong.



Our team of approximately 50 volunteers work diligently each year in a range of critical roles. Clothesline volunteers sort and stock donations, and assist clients as they shop. Hotline volunteers provide information to clients and also conduct six month follow up surveys. Event

volunteers represent WSH in a variety of roles, from greeting attendees at fundraisers to engaging the public at community events.

Service Delivery

WSH created a community partner referral form in FY18 that has dramatically impacted the efficiency of our service and referral system. With an online form, we are more easily able to gather, store, and track information, even shared among various community partners, and personal information is kept more secure in the process.



Additionally, we have been able to improve the speed of service delivery. Anecdotally, it used to take about one and half to three weeks to receive assistance, and now we are averaging about one to one and a half weeks. This can make a tangible and meaningful difference for clients who are needing financial support or other information.

Moreover, WSH is now in the 10th month of distributing follow up surveys to clients six months after they have received support. Results have been very affirming (as described above), and we are pleased to have begun this work with an approximately 25% response rate. We will continue to measure response rate and work to improve it over time.

Challenges

Service Delivery

WSH still would like to improve certain aspects of our service delivery. We find that clients need to come to our office or a community partner's office multiple times in order to receive support, whether it is due to a collaborative pledge (from multiple agencies) or just a multiplicity of services. This challenge has grown in FY18 because of the new Clothesline location, which is still in the neighborhood, but far enough from our office (which shares a building with the West Seattle Food Bank) to be an extra trip for clients. We want to explore ways to reduce the travel and time commitment that is currently needed. One idea we have is to consider a way to distribute transportation vouchers directly from the Clothesline location.

Additionally, we find it challenging to reach landlords via phone, which is a core part of our financial assistance process. This can be a frustrating communication exercise, and it leads to longer wait times for WSH to be able to supply assistance to our clients.

Community awareness continues to be a challenge that we work to mitigate. We made progress in FY18 and look forward to continuing to boost our presence wherever it may reach people in



our service area. We find that this can be difficult given our hyper-local focus, but WSH is committed to increasing community outreach on an ongoing basis.

Staff Transition

Over the past three years, WSH has experienced steep growth in both operations and programming. In response to a rapidly increasing need in our community, we are thrilled that we have been able to better meet the demand, and improve the ways in which we can help people build self sufficiency and avoid homelessness. But, during this time, the growth in operations

and infrastructure was not able to keep pace with the growth in programming. In FY18 we built a stronger infrastructure with more best practices around operational systems and process.

Our previous Executive Director oversaw much of the growth and strategic planning process through the fall of 2017. The structural and procedural shifts that resulted from this growth and better defined strategy were a natural factor in multiple staff transitions that occurred in both programming and development. And, the roles and responsibilities required to blend with WSH's strategic plan shifted as well. In FY18, we hired a new Executive Director, Program Coordinator, and Development & Communications Manager. Additionally, we added the Clothesline Coordinator position. WSH now has staff on board with a strong set of skills to support WSH's priorities, in accordance with our strategic plan.

In recent months, WSH strengthened our internal systems and infrastructure across a wide range of areas. We have clarified personnel policies, and created an employee handbook, staff job descriptions, and employment agreements. The board updated our bylaws to include, for the first time, term limits and a more specific committee structure. We now have a formal board application, written roles and responsibilities, committee descriptions, and board contracts including goals around fundraising and giving. Each board meeting has a consent agenda, quarterly strategic plan updates, and time set aside for training and mission-focused discussion, and we conducted our first full board self-evaluation at the end of FY18.

Conclusion

The progress WSH has seen in FY18 continues to shine a light on increasing need in our community and the important impact our services have on people who come to us for help. The Tulalip Tribes Charitable Contributions is a direct driver of this impact, and we are proud to have you as a partner in our work. Thank you so much for your contribution and for the change you are helping to make in our shared community.