

# The Journey



Creating Hope, Nurturing Strength, Transforming Lives

Second Quarter 2024 Vol 5, Issue 2



## An Ounce of Prevention . . .

by Vonda McFadden, Board Chair

Greetings from the Board! Our vision for FPCC is a "Cowlitz County in which every family has a home and the chance to build a better future." During the years I have served on the board we've had many changes but one of the most important change involves our prevention work. Thanks to Lisa (our first director) and Sara our current director we have prevented over 100 families from entering shelter. This means sometimes our shelter has fewer families than we can house. While some might feel this is a bad thing, I believe it means we are doing good work.

to do and to be the best for all families in Cowlitz County. I can't say enough about them. If you see them when stopping by the shelter be sure to tell them how much you appreciate all that they do.

So, if you see that our shelter only has one or two families, be assured it is because our staff have prevented a family from losing their home or found a home for one of our clients. Sara continues to build relationships with landlords and others to allow our families to start their new lives in their new homes as quickly as possible.

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Preventing a family from entering shelter and the trauma that entails can be

considered nothing but exceptional. By preventing a child from being without a home and losing that sense of stability, we are reducing the chance they will experience higher levels of emotional and behavioral problems. We are also reducing the increased risk of serious health problems; lessening the chance they will repeat a grade, be expelled or drop out of school, and have lower academic performance.

While we certainly seek to aid our families in shelter and continue to do that good work, we know that prevention is key to ending homelessness. Our staff works tirelessly

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**"Preventing a family from entering shelter and the trauma that entails can be considered nothing but exceptional."**

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Also, a shout out to our own Nancy Baldwin, Kelso School District McKinney Vento Coordinator. Another article in this issue of "The Journey" reports

that 100% of the McKinney Vento Kelso High School Seniors graduated this year. These are kids that are without a home, and some are unaccompanied youth. We are honored Nancy serves on the board and celebrate the good work she is doing at Kelso High School. We also celebrate the hard work each of these students put forth over their years in school.

Thank you for your continued support. We are blessed to be in partnership with so many good and wonderful people and organizations who support our efforts to end homelessness in our county.

# New Program: A Promise of CHANGE

***“We want to eliminate the damaging impression that is associated with the word ‘homeless’ ”***

It is with great pride and pleasure that we announce FPCC’s newest program: the Promise of CHANGE young adult program.

In Partnership with Kelso School District’s Family & Community Resource Center (FCRC) program Family Promise will support an unaccompanied youth (youth that lives independently, without a parent or guardian) sheltering an 18 yr. senior through graduation in preparation for college or the next venture in life. Nancy Baldwin, the McKinney Vento liaison works closely with these students and supports unhoused youth, their families, unaccompanied youth and at-risk students within the KSD. This unique new development evolved into so much more than what was initially anticipated.

Here is one student’s incredible journey with us this far:

With a GPA of 3.9, having been accepted to a prestigious University, working two jobs, participating in various school activities and events was a young man with the world at his fingertips. Wearing cap and gown, he successfully graduated with honors, with his class of 2024 and was headed to WSU in the fall, earning scholarships to fund the first-year room and board of college. Within the district he is classified as an unaccompanied youth. Through this classification he can access services through the FCRC and Nancy. With no stable housing - Wait, what?..... no stable housing? Imagine that... No home, yet he still has accomplished so much. He found himself in a situation that would be difficult for any adult to navigate, much less a senior in high school. The determination and perseverance through it all was astounding. He never once used his situation as an excuse.

When this student needed a solution, Family Promise felt the calling of a child in need. We have a small dorm like room that is separated from the other family rooms in our shelter. He has his own shower space as well. He participates in dinners if he is not working and has access to the Case Manager for any support or resource he may need. Staying here he can save earnings from both jobs over this summer, accumulating some financial security when school begins. This well-spoken, witty young man is a prime example of how strong and resilient these students are. He is inspiring and we are in awe of his motivation and his attitude. He is gracious and helpful and always kind. He has also created bonds within the other families in our program. Our hats are off to this amazing resourceful brilliant young adult!

Fun fact: we had a clean-up day in shelter today. He assisted us, and other volunteers as we scrubbed the bathrooms! He is grateful and humble to be here!

Some food for thought:

The unaccompanied youth graduation rate is 100% vs. the 60% state average. Of the 16 in Nancy’s program, ALL graduated; 11 were accepted to universities, 2 of those received full rides, 2 for local junior college, 2 opted for military careers and one is attending a prestigious trade school. One even earned her associates degree, as she earned her HS diploma. This is nothing short of amazing. These young people have many barriers before reaching adulthood, yet their success is their focus. FCRC and Nancy Baldwin are an outlet for kids of any background to come and gain the resources they need to succeed. The program has changed the lives of so many students who feel they have no one. They learned to adapt and push through situations most adults will never experience.

Our goal is to change the narrative. The stereotype is that “homeless” children are more likely to drop out, do drugs or be burdens on society, are blown away with these statistics. We want to eliminate the damaging impression that is associated with the word ‘homeless’. These are children, who for whatever reason have not been dealt the best hand in life. But where they came from is not nearly as important as where they are going. Family Promise offers a secure welcoming space to come home to a stable environment each day. A chance to rebuild confidence that may have been lost in themselves, that they may have been had been ashamed of, merely because they no longer have an address. Imagine that? Where they slept last night should not equal their worth. At FPCC, we strive to build relationships with these students, earn their trust, open them up to these teachable moments and experiences that they will take with them while achieving every goal they set.

Although our main mission is to house families with children, these young adults, while they are 18 years old, are essentially still children themselves, only without the family to support their journey. Family Promise is adapting to fill this void in the community.

If you would like to learn more, become a volunteer or donate to any of our 5 programs, please visit our website ([www.FPcollitz.org](http://www.FPcollitz.org)), or scan the QR code.

Thank you,

Sara Wallace, Executive Director



# Donors to the General Fund & Grants

(thru May 31st, 2024)

Judy Ainslie	Amy & Brian Hamilton	Patricia Peterson & Stephen Jones
Robert Avignone	Marcia Hamm	Kat Pettersen
Tim & Patricia Baker	Connie & Howard Hammond	Eugene Pistoress
Cindy Barbee	Kate Harlan	Susan Pointer
Alan & Deana Barkman	Jackie & Ray Harrison	Diane & Steve Pond
Greg & Karla Bean	Jan Heaton	Margaret Porter
Daryl & Gail Berg	Chuck & CreeAnn Henderson	Bill Hundley & Kay Purcell
Arthur & Mary Birkmeyer	Sarah Hines	Cherie & Larry Rapp
Shelly Buller	Allison Hutchinson	Lam Research Corporation
Bethany Lutheran Church	Doug Irvine & Marilyn Melville-Irvine	Julie Rinard
East Hills Alliance Church	Don Iverson	Jori Scruggs-Brown
Emmanuel Lutheran Church	Gary & Susan Jackson	J. Chris & Heidi Shaw
Grace Bible Church	Janet Jacobs	Autumn Sheridan
Longview Presbyterian Church	Darylan Johnson	Patty & Steven Sheridan
Renewal City Church	Dayne & Jim Johnston	Stephen Shope
Ann Cordero	Sally Jones	Debra & Richard Shuren
Susan Coulombe	Mike & Teri Karnofski	Claudia Sobczuk
Longview-Kelso Beta Sigma	Jackie & James Keller	Lisa & Robert Sudar
Phi Council	Ronald & Ruth Kimmel	Judy & Ron Ten Harmsel
Laura Countouriotis	Carol & Thomas Kirwan	Ian Thompson
Pete & Frances Crosby	Kathy & Tom Laird	Annie & Darrel Tietze
Barbara Davis	Beverly Laulainen	Marsha Treadway
Anne DeFrancisco	Lucy Lehman	Adam & Danielle Trimble
Pat Doebele	Nancy Lundquist	Julie Unsell
Donovan Doerr	Donna & Joe MacKenzie	Sara Wallace
Gary & Ruth Earnest	Donald & Mollie Mackey	Kamren Wallace
Lila Ellis	Hal Mahnke	The Walworth Family
Bob & Kathy Erickson	Roy Maier	Mary Wheeler
Jan Ferguson	Larry & Margaret Malone	Melissa Wilkie Living Trust &
Cindy & Pete Foley	Diane Manasco	Robert Wilke Living Trust
Dan Frei	Ron Marshall	Mary Wingate
Tom Garstki	Allison Mattocks	Michael & Trudy Woods
Nancy Gill	Louise McAuliffe	New Song Worship Center
Rose Foundation Grant	Rev. Vonda & Thomas McFadden	
Bob & Marie Grant	Donna McLain	
John & Trudi Gross	Sandra Meske	
Gail & Judy Groth	Donald & Gavin Jeanne Mills	
Kay Gunter	Patricia Morrison	
Abby Guttormsen	Kay & Ron Naff	
Kerry & James Hall	Grocery Outlet	
Arlene Hambly	Family Promise National	
David Hamilton	Michael Pervere	

## In-Kind Contributions

Linda Beattie Inlow  
Savanah Clement  
Coralee Frederick  
Jackie & James Keller



# Past, Present and Beyond!

*by Sara Wallace, Executive Director*

## *An update on our Families and giving you a look inside our program along the way!*

We have some exciting news for our supporters: the family we featured in our last newsletter -- Brandon, his fiancé Jamie, and kids have Graduated!

Baby Brandon and Melody now have a permanent home! We will miss his little feet running into Jamies office or seeing Melody blossom into herself. We are beyond happy for them! The day they signed the lease and came back with keys, there were tears, laughter hugs and gratefulness all around you could feel the hum of excitement and relief. "YES, WE DID IT!", they shouted as they embraced one another.

Brandon and Jamie came to us in mid-February. By this time, they had lived primarily in their vehicle for over 8 months, occasionally showering at friends and family locations. When you don't have a steady place to call home and routine it is difficult to hold down a steady job. They craved that home environment for their two small children and dreamed of the day when, as they said, they could be "normal" again. While here, Brandon broke his hand and was unable to work for about 6 weeks. Things started out rocky with the injury, but they got through it as a family. As soon as humanly possible Brandon gained employment and they saved diligently to meet their goal. Then it all came together in early June when they signed a lease and secured stable housing!



*Baby Brandon, Jamie, Melody and Brandon*

The day of the lease signing, as Brandon arrived back at FPCC, they laughed cried and jumped up and down. I have the chills just recalling those moments. We are so happy for them and our prayer for them is eternal happiness and success!

So, with graduations and families moving out, means more room for families in need to move in! We have welcomed two new families to our Shelter program.

Jessica, her baby girl, lives here full-time and her two boys who live in California will be visiting June to July. We welcome Jessica and her littles with open arms. She has been a joy!

We also welcomed another single momma and her 3 children! Welcome family! We are so happy to have them here with us. Now the kids and mom can take a load off and settle into their new environment.

We are searching for summer childcare. If you know an agency or private daycare that may have availability, please contact Sara.

## Our Awesome Church Partners

### A **HUGE** thank you to the last 8 Host Churches:

- Kelso First Baptist and Grace Bible Church
- Trinity Lutheran and Evangel
- Longview Presbyterian
- Northlake and Exodus
- St Rose / Immaculate Heart of Mary and Lake Sacajawea Ward
- Emmanuel and East Hills Alliance
- Kelso United Methodist Presbyterian and Longview United Methodist
- Longview First Christian and Kalama Ward

### Next 8 weeks of Host Churches:

- Kelso United Methodist Presbyterian and Longview United Methodist 6/23 - 6/29
- Emmanuel and East Hills Alliance 6/30 - 7/6
- Gloria Dei, Rose Valley Friends and Renewal City 7/7 - 7/13
- St Rose / Immaculate Heart of Mary and Lake Sacajawea Ward 7/14 - 7/20
- Northlake and Exodus 7/21-7/27
- Longview Presbyterian 7/28 - 8/3
- Trinity Lutheran and Evangel 8/4 - 8/10
- Gloria Dei, Rose Valley Friends and Renewal City 8/11 - 8/17

Save the Date



Family Promise Week National is coming up October 21-25, along with our annual “*Night Without A Bed*” awareness fundraiser also coming in October 2024!  
Dates to be announced soon!

## Our Local Impact



Through 5.31.24

## Bits & Pieces

**GO 4TH!**

• Emmanuel Lutheran & Family Promise of Cowlitz County have partnered to provide safe, paid parking for the Go 4th Fest. If you would like to *volunteer* to assist us during this event, please contact Sara. We need your support!

• Housing Opportunities for SouthWest Washington (HOSWWA) is offering \$1000 in deposit assistance for verified homeless Longview citizens. Please visit 820 11th Ave., Longview WA, 98632 for the application.

• FPCC has been granted funding for homeowners in Wahkiakum County, in need of mortgage assistance. We can assist with up to one month's mortgage payment. For details, please call Sara.







This issue, we would like to shine the volunteer spotlight on Jim Wallace and Laurie Harris, a couple who felt the calling to support FPCC with their time and love. They have lived in the Cowlitz County area for over two years and are both retired. They fill their time having their grandchildren visit and in addition, run a dog boarding service out of their home, treating each pup like family! Jim and Laurie have spent many hours helping at the Family Center: bringing thoughtful gifts when a little one had a birthday, changing many light bulbs, cleaning rooms and making improvements throughout. It is always a fun day when they arrive to help. Laurie has a keen eye for decorating and Jim is quite the handy man! But no job is too big or small! They are happy to do the not so fun stuff and with a smile. We have built an amazing relationship, and they are such a blessing!

Thank you, Jim and Laurie for your support for our mission. The families in our program can see the love you put into each day you spend here and that is the heart of our program, community!

## The View from the Office

by Jamie Craig, Office Manager

There has been so much change throughout Family Promise, but this means successful graduating families! As one group of pitter-pattering feet leave the halls to go into their new home, a new set appears. It is always such a treat to get to know the families while they are here and bittersweet to see them graduate into their own home.

May was a busy month for the FP office as we undertook our GiveBIG 2024 Campaign. Thanks to all our donors we were able to raise just over \$15,000! We would like to give a huge Thank You to the [Rose Foundation](#) and the [Community Foundation](#) for their matching contributions. As a small nonprofit, we are constantly striving to seek financial support to continue to help families with children avoid homelessness.

We have also been out in the community at various tabling events such as the GiveBIG event at the Merk (see photo of Sara and Jenny) and the International Festival. These events help us reach possible clients and network with new agencies. It is always a pleasure to connect with other local nonprofits. Like minds think alike!

Also, thank all of you who have joined our Campaign for Sustainability. Please share this important giving opportunity with your friends, family, coworkers and colleagues. Our goal is to have 100 givers giving \$100/month by the end of the year.

An update of the Campaign for Sustainability can be found on page 7 of this issue of “The Journey”.

— Jamie Craig



## 2024 FAMILY PROMISE CAMPAIGN FOR SUSTAINABILITY

We continue to look for churches, individuals, civic organizations, small business, families and foundations to come together and pledge \$100 a month to Family Promise of Cowlitz County!



Family promise of Cowlitz County is the midst of a new giving campaign for 2024!

We strive to teach our families to be self-sustaining in life. If you contribute \$100 a month, you will be helping us to apply these same practices, while also leaving our grants and other income sources available for other programs, such as promise of home.

Join our fight against homelessness by donating \$100 monthly, and we will feature your name or business in our newsletter that goes out to over 1,500 Cowlitz county residents.

You can donate by scanning the QR code, below, with your smartphone or by going to [www.fpcowlitz.org](http://www.fpcowlitz.org), select "Donate" and choose the "2024 one hundred" campaign. Or, you can mail a check to PO Box 1152, Kelso WA, 98626. Payments can also be dropped off at our office at 215 Academy Street in Kelso.

If you all ready donate monthly and would like to increase your donation amount we would love to have you onboard! If your donation is ACH, just reach out to Jamie Craig at [office@fpcowlitz.org](mailto:office@fpcowlitz.org) and she can help you.



The list of donors continues to grow for this campaign:

- Daryl & Gail Berg
- Emmanuel Lutheran Church
- Renewal City Church
- Grace Bible Church
- Bob & Kathy Erickson
- Dan Frei
- John & Joanne Gotshall
- Rose Foundation Grant
- Chuck & CreeAnn Henderson
- Ardyth & Richard Loewen
- Jim & Judy MacLoed
- Roy Maier
- Louise McAuliffe
- Rev. Vonda & Thomas McFadden
- Kay & Ron Naff
- Patty & Steven Sheridan
- Debra & Richard Shuren
- Watershed Science & Engineering
- Melissa Wilkie & Robert Wilke Living Trust

## Financial Update

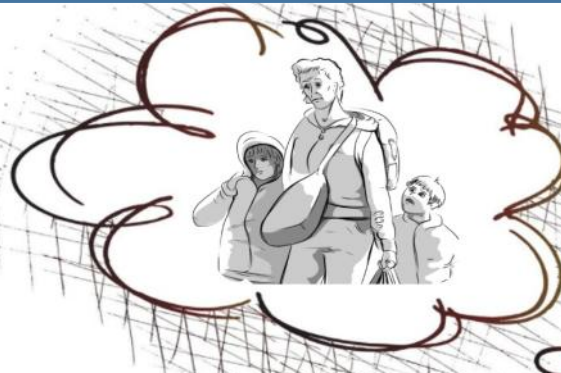
*Updates are through May 31, 2024*

2024 Annual Budget:  
**\$ 149,881.00**

2024 Contributions to date:  
**\$ 47,034.89**

2024 Avg. monthly contributions:  
**\$ 9,406.98**

2024 Volunteer hours reported:  
**651 total hours**



***Do You Know a  
Family with  
Children That  
Needs Help?***

Refer them to Family Promise of Cowlitz County. FPCC can provide shelter or resources to keep a family in their home. Contact Sara Wallace at FPCC at [sara@fpcowlitz.org](mailto:sara@fpcowlitz.org) or call 360-703-3131

For a full community resource list please visit our website ([www.FPCowlitz.org](http://www.FPCowlitz.org)).



# At Your Service

## Board of Directors

Pr. Vonda McFadden	President
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Laura Countouriotis	At-Large
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Jan Heaton	At-Large
Jim Johnston	At-Large
Ron Naff	At-Large
Julie Rinard	At-Large
Marsha Treadway	At-Large
Jovan Tyler	At-Large

## Family Center Staff

<u>Sara Wallace</u>	Executive Director
<u>Jamie Craig</u>	Office Manager
<u>Jenny Kendall</u>	Administrative Assistant

**Email Newsletter Editor:** Steve Sheridan  
**Print Newsletter Editor:** Richard Shuren

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Family Center Hours  
Monday through Friday, by appointment only

Family Center Office Phone  
360-703-3131

*Visit our website at:*

*[www.fpcowlitz.org](http://www.fpcowlitz.org) (Cowlitz County)  
[www.familypromise.org](http://www.familypromise.org) (National Organization)*

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