



2023 Annual Report

Facing Homelessness



Mission & Values

MISSION

Inspire deliberate relationship building, engagement, and community mobilization toward ending homelessness.

VALUES

Love, Compassion & Empathy

We believe people should be valued, seen and accepted for who they are, and not judged by their circumstances.

Equity & Social Justice

We believe in and are actively committed to anti-racism/anti-oppression, diversity, equity, and inclusion work as a pathway towards social justice.

Community & Collective Responsibility

We believe that working together as a community is the only way to end homelessness.

Accountability & Transparency

We use evidence, feedback and measurement to responsibly guide our work.

Action & Impact

We are a catalyst for transformational change.



From the Executive Director

Hello! I am excited to share with you our annual report and to share the joy I feel to be here at Facing Homelessness as the new Executive Director.

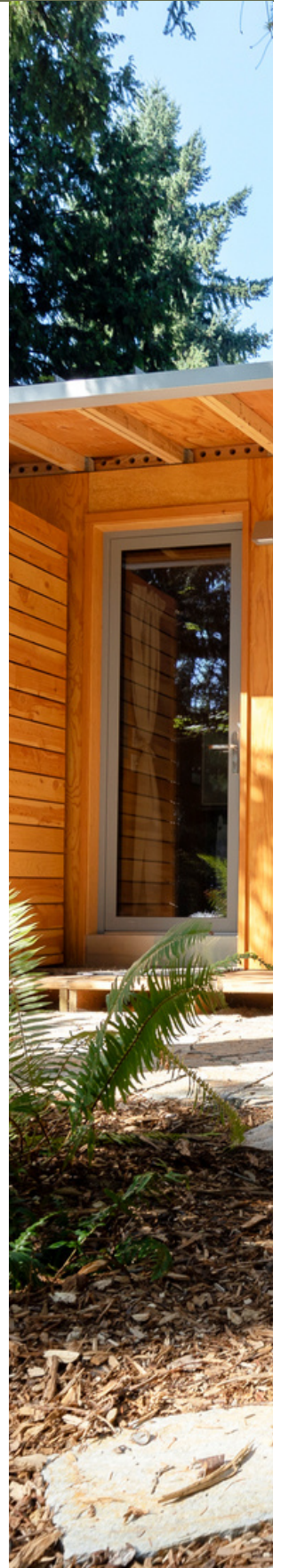
While I'm new to the team, I've admired Facing Homelessness since its founding. The organization's commitment to uplifting the humanity in everyone is both deeply inspirational and also a basic and foundational way to operate. Now that I am here, I get to witness first hand that seeing the humanity in everyone is a natural and seamless attitude held by the entire Facing Homelessness community.

Since my arrival in late August, I've been deeply engaged in our programs, had the opportunity to assess our opportunities for growth, and even helped stand-up BLOCK Home 16! Over the past year, Facing Homelessness has also expanded how we show up for our unhoused neighbors. At our Window of Kindness, we greet over 40 guests each day and have added resource navigation support to our offerings. Our BLOCK Homes are now Living Building Challenge certified, a rigorous sustainability certification and we've seen a 50% increase in BLOCK Project volunteers. These are only a couple of highlights of all the things we've accomplished this year.

I'm so happy to share with you the following stories that highlight the power of each person doing their part for a better community. When all of us contribute our unique skills and resources, we are forging a path toward ending homelessness. Thank you for being with us.



Christina Rocks
Executive Director



BY THE NUMBERS:

8,300

Connections at
the Window of
Kindness

One of the most important things we do is create opportunities for our housed and unhoused community to connect. Each conversation represented here is a beautiful example of the power of "Just Say Hello".



15,000+

Days of Providing
Shelter through
The BLOCK Project

The BLOCK Project has provided supportive housing to 21 Residents who formerly experienced homelessness since it's founding in 2017 - that adds up to 15,000+ days of shelter and care! This high touch program with wrap-around support services benefits residents, hosts, as well as participants in our companionship program.



\$142,000

In-Kind Donations

Our work isn't possible without our community's generous in-kind donations of supplies and labor. Thank you to everyone who provided clothing, food, and survival essentials donations, and a special shoutout to our partners in the construction industry for their expertise and time.



95%

of BLOCK Home
residents maintain
permanent housing

95% of BLOCK Home residents maintain continuous housing either in their BLOCK Home or in other permanent housing, compared to 15%-50% for similar programs in our region. Clients report having increased community, healing, access to resources, and a foundation for pursuing individual goals.



2,944

Volunteer hours this
year, performed by 453
volunteers

From the conversations and care at the Window of Kindness, to raising the roof on our newly constructed BLOCK homes, to building new friendships through the companionship program, volunteers help make this work possible!





“My first shift at the Window of Kindness was also the first conversation I ever had with a person experiencing homelessness – so after just a few short hours connecting with clients, I started to completely reshape my understanding of homelessness. By swapping stories and learning more about our clients’ individual journeys, I was prompted to face a fear of the unknown, challenge stereotypes, and dismantle my assumptions. My experiences at the Window have helped me grow as a person, but at the end of the day, it’s all about building community and treating people with the dignity everyone deserves.”

- Window of Kindness Volunteer

Programs | Window of Kindness

The Window of Kindness has had an incredible year filled with growth and positive impact. We've had the pleasure of welcoming numerous new guests seeking warm meals and friendly conversations.

Our volunteer team has expanded significantly with the addition of 25 new volunteers, and we've established valuable partnerships with organizations like University District Street Medicine, the Department of Health, Department of Home and Community Services, Uplift Northwest, University Food Bank, and Interconnection. These collaborations have enabled us to provide our guests with access to essential resources such as technology, clothing, bus tickets, job training, life-saving Narcan supplies, and podiatry services.

We're proud to be working alongside Arianna Lyman, the creator of "Best Day Ever," and to have co-created four of these inclusive events in 2023 that celebrate and serve our unhoused neighbors. Seattle's youth have also showed up for our unhoused neighbors this year by creating hygiene kits, hot and cold weather kits, sock drives, and more to help those in need. Special thanks to the support and dedication of Life Scouts Troop 636, TOPS Elementary, University Prep, and Seattle Academy.

Finally, this year we are thrilled to have introduced a new Resource Navigation programing partnership with the UW School of Social Work. We've trained Master of Social Work candidates to work one-on-one with our clients, assisting them in accessing government-sponsored phones, case management, new IDs, bus tickets, and various other essential services. This initiative helps us break down barriers to services and provide more comprehensive support to our clients.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our community members who have generously donated, cooked for our clients, organized at the Window of Kindness, and spread the word about our mission. The Window of Kindness is a true community endeavor, and with your unwavering support, we are making the world a more beautiful and compassionate place for everyone.



"I continue to come back to The Window every day because of the care that I receive from staff, volunteers, and everyone that I see while I'm here. Also, The Window provides everything you might need on a given day, and everything we do need, we get. Sometimes the Window is lucky enough to receive gift cards to share with us, but even when not, there is always other supplies we get that helps us get by day to day. The most important thing is that staff and volunteers are there for us, no matter what. If anyone is having a crisis in their life, staff will pull us aside for a one-on-one chat to see what they can do to help, and to make sure that we will be alright."

- Window of Kindness Guest



Programs | BLOCK Residents

This year, we welcomed three exceptional individuals to our Resident community, while renewing Residency Agreements for all twelve BLOCK Residents who were already a part of our BLOCK Project. As 2023 comes to a close, we eagerly anticipate the arrival of one more Resident in our newly completed BLOCK Home 15.

This year also marked a remarkable achievement – five years of the BLOCK Project actively housing people. It's a testament to our mission that our very first Resident continues to reside with us today, forging a beautiful and neighborly bond with the Hosts of their BLOCK Home.

The BLOCK Project takes immense pride in its impressive success rate in helping people transition out of homelessness and maintain stable housing: we have a 95% success rate in Resident retention or transitioning to other permanent housing options. Our small yet passionate team, including our dedicated Community and Construction teams, plays a pivotal role in this success. They regularly check in and engage with our Residents to ensure the safety and upkeep of BLOCK Homes and foster supportive relationships so Residents feel comfortable reaching out for assistance when needed.



“Because of the BLOCK Project and Facing Homelessness I have been able to gain control over my life for the first time... And I have hope for a future.”

- Alexiel, BLOCK Home Resident

Programs | Companionship



"I finally have something concrete to talk about, All around me I just see a lot of people shouting into the wind. But now I get to make a contribution to the problem, and I can see the visual results in those who live there, in the buildings themselves."

**- Caroline,
Companion
Volunteer**

You know how you can blink and suddenly that new friend you made is a core part of your life? That's what our Companionship Program often feels like. While it is by nature small, eight Companionship Program participants have actively engaged with us since its inception in 2020, meeting regularly for meaningful conversations and connections. We also welcomed a new Companion to the program this year and continue to provide training and educational opportunities on Companionship principles, skills, and the broader systems impacting homelessness.



"We have more than about 12,000 people who are homeless in Seattle. My hope is that seeing this space in my backyard will give others a space to question the way they're thinking when they meet somebody who is homeless on the street."

- Pam, BLOCK Project Host

Programs | BLOCK Project Hosts

In 2023, we launched our first intentional Host Recruitment Campaign since 2017. This was a significant milestone for the BLOCK team, aided by BLOCK Ambassadors comprising current Hosts and devoted volunteers who tirelessly promoted the BLOCK Project within their communities. Thanks to their efforts, we received over 12 inquiries from individuals interested in saying "YES! In my backyard" and welcoming a BLOCK Home onto their property.

Community connection thrived this year, with Hosts and Residents participating in various gatherings, including open houses for new BLOCK Homes. Existing Hosts and Residents played a vital role by mentoring newcomers, fostering a sense of belonging and support within the BLOCK Project.

The BLOCK Project is so grateful for our Host families who have opened up their yards, their schedules, and their hearts to this project. Without our Hosts and our Residents, this project wouldn't be possible!





"I love volunteering with the Block Project as it allows me to do something that directly impacts the life of another person. I know that through donating my time and money I am helping someone take a step forward in making a new life for themselves. Last week it struck me, as I was up a ladder, electric drill in hand that I was literally helping to put a roof over someone's head. It's not often you get to say that."

-Sinead, BLOCK Project Volunteer

Programs | BLOCK Construction

The BLOCK Project expanded its presence in Seattle this year, with the construction of its fifteenth and sixteenth BLOCK Homes in the Northgate and Bitterlake neighborhoods. Plans are in place to break ground on the seventeenth BLOCK home by the end of 2023, extending the project's reach just beyond Seattle's city limits in Burien. We look forward to a future where a BLOCK home is in every Seattle neighborhood and its neighboring cities.

One of the most significant accomplishments of the year was achieving Living Building Challenge Certification for BLOCK Home 009. This certification makes The BLOCK Project the first low-income housing project to attain this prestigious recognition. The Living Building Challenge is the most rigorous environmental certification program, shifting the focus from traditional sustainability to regeneration, where buildings aim to have a positive impact on the environment and a healing relationship with the planet.

This achievement is of paramount importance for The BLOCK Project because it aligns with its holistic approach to address the pressing issues of climate change and homelessness. The BLOCK Project recognizes the intersectionality of these problems, with pollution disproportionately affecting marginalized communities and homeless individuals. Current construction practices often prioritize cheaper but environmentally harmful materials, resulting in less healthy buildings and harm to communities where these materials are manufactured.

In contrast, The BLOCK Project has always prioritized the use of healthy, durable, and environmentally conscious materials and features in its homes. This approach not only benefits the residents but also contributes to a healing planet and a sustainable future. Through the Living Building Challenge, The BLOCK Project is actively tackling housing insecurity and climate change, both of which disproportionately affect the most vulnerable members of society.

Achieving the Living Building Challenge Certification was a collaborative effort, with partners contributing nearly \$250,000 in in-kind contributions of labor and materials. Our community and partners continue to demonstrate our values in that when we work together in collective action we can face the seemingly impossible challenges in homelessness and climate change.

Acknowledgements



Thank you to the many individuals and organizations who support our programs.

Facing Homelessness is a 501(C)3 nonprofit organization. All donations are 100% tax-deductible. EIN # 46-2376967

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