

A note from Rachael

Advocacy is a powerful lever for achieving your nonprofit's mission. It creates better public policy and secures the public funding you need to serve your community. Board members bring legitimacy and authenticity to advocacy.

That is why the Housing Alliance is excited to host this new Board Advocacy Newsletter to share news and advocacy updates, feature the board members of our advocacy partners across the state, and offer easy, meaningful ways for board members to take action.

Use this newsletter to inspire advocacy on your board! Print out copies of this newsletter for your board packet and build time into your next board meeting to take advocacy actions or review highlighted resources. Don't hesitate to reach out.

Advocacy check-in | Announcing the 2019 Legislative Agenda

Every year the Housing Alliance adopts a legislative agenda with top policy and budget priorities. It is the product of an intensive, intentional effort to gather feedback from our organizational members, stakeholders, and community members around the state:

- **Create affordable homes.** Invest \$200 million in the Housing Trust Fund.
- **Help local communities house more people, sooner.** Allow local jurisdictions to retain a portion of the state's sales tax to invest directly into affordable homes.
- **Prevent homelessness by reducing evictions.** Implement eviction reform and require cause to terminate tenancy.
- **Expand Washington's lifeline for adults with disabilities.** Significantly increase the Housing and Essential Needs rental assistance program.

LEARN
at
LUNCH

Learn more about the 2019 legislative agenda:
<https://www.wliha.org/resources/webinars-and-tools>

Supporting the Housing Alliance's legislative agenda shows unity and strength in our movement, and can help your organization plan and meet your advocacy goals for the year!

Take this brief survey to share ways you can help:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BAPcommitments>

Partner spotlight | Amanda DeShazo, Rebuilding Together South Sound

Rebuilding Together South Sound (RTSS) board member Amanda DeShazo shares her thoughts on nonpartisan board advocacy during the election season and how nonprofits can elevate the homelessness crisis and deep need for affordable homes during an election.

Housing Alliance: Tell me about your work with Rebuilding Together South Sound.

Amanda DeShazo: Our mission at Rebuilding Together South Sound is "repairing homes, revitalizing communities, rebuilding lives" with a vision of safe homes and communities for everyone. I'm currently the Secretary of the Board and chair the Volunteer Management committee. One of our challenges in this construction boom is finding skilled volunteers with the time to give back to our neighbors in need.

HA: How does advocacy help RTSS to advance its' mission?

ADS: Advocacy for nonprofits, in general, helps us advance our mission because without the support of the general population we would have a much harder time raising funds. Our board members share our passion and stories in our daily lives, not knowing if the person we are talking with may have a need, a family member in need, or resources that could help us serve more people. In addition, we support requests from our Executive Director to contact our legislators on different issues that affect our work. Our most recent advocacy efforts were focused on making sure the AmeriCorps funding was included in this years' federal budget. Our work depends on the committed volunteers that serve through that program. Our board members were actively calling and writing legislators to make sure it passed - and it did!



HA: Are there benefits of board members participating in nonpartisan advocacy during an election?

ADS: There are many benefits to board members advocating in public and to legislators; board members come away feeling empowered to make a difference, the general public and legislators come away with more information about our current housing crisis and how it affects people, and our clients benefit anytime someone shares their story and expresses support and understanding.

HA: Are there any special ways the RTSS board is participating in the election?

ADS: I have been actively participating in our local candidate forums across Pierce County to voice our County's need for funding and support for more affordable homes. With the pressure of our housing shortage and the low housing vacancy rates, it is more important than ever that we continue funding the work of nonprofits, such as Rebuilding Together, so we can keep people safe and in their homes.

I urge board members to put a spotlight on prevention services for housing. I want board members to help their legislators understand that keeping individuals in their current safe, healthy, affordable home and out of the cycle of homelessness is one effective tool to be used in alleviating the homeless and housing crisis.