

# HILLTOP ACTION JOURNAL

Mar. - Apr. 2017 | Hilltop Action Coalition | Volunteer Organized

## Affordable Housing on the Hilltop

By Scott Hollis  
Guest Writer

This spring, Tacoma Housing Authority (THA) will open the second phase of Bay Terrace apartments and town homes, located at South 25th Street and Yakima Avenue in the Hilltop neighborhood. Bay Terrace is Tacoma Housing Authority's newest subsidized and workforce housing development.

Bay Terrace Phase 2 will feature 74 new apartments with rents affordable to those who live and work in the neighborhood. It is part of THA's larger redevelopment strategy to do its part to ensure the Hilltop provides enough affordable housing choices for all of its current and future residents.

THA's goal is to build more housing that includes:

- More housing in an appropriate density that serves the city's comprehensive plan
- More apartments affordable to a wider range of incomes
- More apartments accessible to persons with disabilities
- Community buildings and outdoor play and gathering spaces
- Financially sustainable operations
- Environmentally responsible features and improved tree canopy
- Attractive design

...SEE PAGE 3

## The Red Elm Cafe

By Kris "Sonics Guy" Brannon  
Guest Writer

There are many good new stories happening in the Hilltop. One of those new stories is the Red Elm Cafe. The Red Elm Cafe is the brainchild of 3 sisters Jennifer Richardson, Adina Joslyn and Sarah Joslyn. The idea for The Red Elm sprung from Adina and Sarah both wanting to start a new business 3 years ago. Both formally have barista experience so a coffee house seemed like a natural fit. Their older sister Jennifer came on board 2 years ago as they started to search

for a location for the coffee house. Jennifer also has Hilltop business experience as she currently owns Kyva Spa & Wellness 1212 S. 11th located in the business park across from Safeway.

...SEE PAGE 6



Tacoma 311  
■ Page 14



What we owe to the next generation of teachers?  
■ Page 6



Poems from Write253  
■ Page 7



Five High Demand Construction Jobs & Training Programs  
■ Page 2 & Back Cover

Property Tax Relief for Seniors, and Widows Program  
■ Page 13

Community Stories and Voices  
■ Every Page

Immigrants are anxious, but supporters are stepping up  
■ Page 10

The People's Community Center  
■ Page 12

Safe  
Clean  
Healthy  
Resilient  
United  
Community

## Hilltop Action Coalition

Hilltop Action Coalition is a community-based coalition and 501(c)3 nonprofit that is working to mobilize and empower diverse individuals, families, businesses and other public and community organizations to build a safe, clean, healthy resilient and united community.

### President

Brendan Nelson

### Secretary/Treasurer

Jennifer Schaal

### Board of Directors

Fletcher Jenkins - Emeritus

Jo Davies

Christina Blocker

Ashley Sutton

William Towey

Teresa Jackson

Ameedah Hasan

## Hilltop Action Journal

### Publisher

Corey Mosesly

### Editor

William Towey

### Photographer

Raimundo Jurado

### Guest Writers

Kris "Sonics Guy" Brannon

Scott Holis

Nate Bowling

Jenny Miller

Danielle Burch

Write@253 Students

## Community Priorities

- Good Jobs and Local Hires
- Safety through Community Policing
- Pathways to Home Ownership
- Sustain and Value Existing Community Organizations
- Programs for Youth and Seniors
- Peoples Center as a Cultural Hub of Information & Programs
- Create a Hilltop Neighborhood Library
- Community Journalism
- Keep Homes Affordable for Seniors and People with Fixed Incomes

## Interested in Writing?

Contact William Towey - toweyw@uw.edu to learn how to submit articles for consideration?

## Area Wide Meetings:

3rd Mondays 6pm

Community Healthcare Bldg.

1202 Martin Luther King Jr. Way

Tacoma, WA 98405



### President of Hilltop Action Coalition

Brendan Nelson

### Area Wide Meetings:

3rd Mondays 6pm

Community Healthcare Bldg.

1202 Martin Luther King Jr. Way

Tacoma, WA 98405

Hilltop Action Coalition (HAC) continues a nearly 30 year legacy of community engagement and development services including the block leader program, area wide community meetings, and a multi-platform communications network that reaches traditional and non-traditional community members. The Hilltop Action Coalition has become the "Communications Anchor" for the Hilltop area and offers a unique capacity to provide services related to neighborhood stabilization and community mobilization.

With nationally recognized success in organizing community action to fight gang violence and build community, Hilltop Action Coalition continues to be a driving force of community engagement in the Hilltop. As our organization has matured, HAC has grown to serve a wider range of local community needs

that directly link to neighborhood stabilization, hotspot identification, property maintenance, and homeownership. With the City of Tacoma and private/public sector agencies like Tacoma Housing Authority (THA) and others HAC works to create a cohesive and connected community that is able to participate in meaningful ways to help determine and shape its present and future.

I am extremely excited about the Hilltop Action Journal, as it is an important new method of communication. This is an exciting platform and opportunity for us to connect to residents who are not online or social media users. This is a neighborhood passion project and my hope is that it will strengthen the Hilltop and have residents feel more connected to what is happening.

WHERE ARE THE **FAMILY**

**WAGE**   

   **JOBS**

Washington State nearly leads the nation in job growth over the past year, much of it driven by growth in the construction sector. Construction employment grew 11 percent in the Tacoma-Lakewood area, the 14th fastest in the country.

## Five High Demand Construction Jobs



Construction apprenticeship graduates earn an average of \$58,000 per year plus benefits; slightly higher than our median household income.

OCCUPATION	AVERAGE WAGES HOURLY	ANNUAL	ANNUAL (2014-2019) GROWTH	ARE YOU INTERESTED?
Carpenters	\$25.08	\$52,166	2.75%	<input type="checkbox"/>
Construction Labor	\$20.69	\$43,035	2.58%	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electricians	\$28.07	\$54,385	3.21%	<input type="checkbox"/>
Painters, Construction	\$20.29	\$42,203	3.19%	<input type="checkbox"/>
Construction Managers	\$48.61	\$101,108	2.46%	<input type="checkbox"/>

**PAGE 16**

Advertise with the Hilltop Action Journal

Email: William Towey, toweyw@uw.edu



## Affordable Housing Coming Hilltop... continued from cover

Bay Terrace Phase 2 will have a special emphasis on providing space and activities for youth and teens. Bay Terrace Phase 2 will have a large lobby at the Court G entrance and additional gathering space at the southwest corner of each floor. Additional amenities will include a lobby game room, outdoor basketball half court, grotto, patio and barbecue space, rooftop deck and more.

Bay Terrace is part of THA's larger development between South 18th and South 27th Street. In 2008, THA demolished 104 old, unsightly public housing units. In their place, THA is building Bay Terrace, which will total 140 to 190 apartments in cottage clusters, town homes and midrise buildings with community buildings, green spaces and new infrastructure.

By building Bay Terrace and other new developments in the Hilltop neighborhood, THA hopes to accomplish two things. The first is to provide more high-quality and affordable housing for workers in the Hilltop neighborhood. This will allow more of them to choose to live, walk, shop, eat, and play on the Hilltop in walking distance of their jobs. If this happens, the Hilltop will support more of the private and public businesses and services that make a neighborhood healthy, prosperous and appealing. The second goal is to provide the

affordable housing for lower-income households so that when the Hilltop develops it will have room for households at all income levels. That will help preserve its present diversity and vibrancy.

Established in 1940, Tacoma Housing Authority provides high-quality, stable and sustainable housing and supportive services to people in need. It does this in ways that help them prosper and help our communities develop equitably. THA develops and manages real estate and provides rental housing. In partnership with thousands of private landlords, it helps families pay the rent in the private rental market. It delivers supportive services to help families succeed as "tenants, parents, students, wage earners and builders of assets who can live without assistance". THA seeks to do its work in ways that help our community be an "attractive place to live, work, attend school, shop and play," and that help Tacoma be "safe, vibrant, prosperous, attractive and just."

For more information about THA and its work, go to [www.tacomahousing.org](http://www.tacomahousing.org).

Check out Bay Terrace on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/bayterracetacoma](http://www.facebook.com/bayterracetacoma). For rental information, call Bay Terrace at (253) 207-4400.



## Introducing Housing Hilltop

Housing Hilltop was an outcome-oriented planning process designed to deliver new affordable housing and supportive services to the Hilltop community and build upon the social capital and organizational infrastructure needed to set goals, measure progress, and implement course corrections in the neighborhood on an ongoing basis. Housing Hilltop works to establish a framework to set goals, measure progress and build upon the opportunities to collaborate creatively on innovative solutions.

Throughout the Summer and Fall of 2016 THA and its design team collected and analyzed community recommendations and feedback to produce the following phase I building design options. The designs are preliminary and require additional community input. To learn more and review, share and provide comments to help define and shape the future of Hilltop contact:

Joshua Jorgensen, Project Manager, [JJorgensen@tacomahousing.org](mailto:JJorgensen@tacomahousing.org)  
Brittani Flowers, Project Specialist, [BFlowers@tacomahousing.org](mailto:BFlowers@tacomahousing.org)

## HILLTOP RESTAURANT HIGHLIGHTS



**The Fish House Cafe**  
Seafood  
1814 S Martin Luther King Jr Way  
Tacoma, WA 98405  
(253) 383-7144



**Southern Kitchen**  
Southern Restaurant  
1716 6th Ave, Tacoma, WA  
(253) 627-4282



**Pho King**  
Thai Restaurant  
1716 6th Ave, Tacoma, WA  
(253) 272-6287



**Le-Le**  
Thai Restaurant  
1012 M.L.K. Jr Way, Tacoma  
(253) 572-9491



**Quickie Too**  
Vegetarian Restaurant  
1324 Martin Luther King Jr Way,  
Tacoma (253) 572-4549

## Church Spotlight

Peace Lutheran Church reflects the ethnic, generational, socioeconomic and cultural diversity of our Hilltop community. Our worshipping community is about 42% people of color and 58% white. Members of Peace include single parents, individuals cycling in and out of homelessness and folks incarcerated in jails and prisons, struggling with addictions and doing drug rehab. Members of Peace include the unemployed and the underemployed, the working poor, teachers, professors, social workers, health care employees (including two medical doctors.) Peace has significant young adult presence. People drawn to Peace value diversity, social justice, meaningful service, education, youth ministry, Gospel music, and a church committed to the neighborhood and community.

Since the early 1970's, the congregation has had an active and meaningful outreach in the neighborhood. In 1996 Peace Lutheran Church started the non-profit Peace Community Center as a place where Hilltop youth could find safety and positive opportunities for growth in a neighborhood that was negatively impacted by drugs, gangs, and violence in the 1980's and early 1990's. The Peace Community Center provides much needed academic, spiritual, and personal development support services to the Hilltop community; Serving children and youth from kindergarten through graduation from college or trade school, providing a continuous pipeline of support.

Peace has purchased two houses near the church which are rented to low income families at an affordable rent. Twice a year, during the months of April and October, Peace serves and hosts a free dinner meal for the community. An annual Holiday Bazaar is held selling gently used clothing, household items, and holiday crafts at inexpensive prices. A Family Day Event is held during the summer for the community.



Two church services are held each Sunday, one at 8:30am and one at 11am. Pastor John Stroeh serves as pastor and has served there for the past 10 years. A weekly Bible Study is held each Wednesday evening at 6pm. Sunday School for all ages is at 9:45am each Sunday. Brendan Nelson serves as Director of Children's Youth and Family Ministry.

Please visit the church website at [www.peacelutherantacoma.org](http://www.peacelutherantacoma.org) for more information about Peace and it's staff, programs, and activities.



## APRIL 8, 2017 TACOMA'S HILLTOP CHERRY BLOSSOM FEST & WINE WALK

**FAMILY FEST IN PEOPLE'S PARK 11AM-5 PM**

Join us at People's Park for family activities with a Japanese theme: haiku poetry writing, origami, kite flying, picnics, entertainment, and a cherry blossom walk in the neighborhood. Great discounts at neighborhood businesses and restaurants are available throughout the day.

**CHERRY BLOSSOM WINE WALK 4 PM-7PM**  
at Sponsoring Merchants—\$ 25- get your tickets on line or at sponsoring merchants. Tickets \$ 30 on April 8. Register and get your wine glass and entry stamp and passport at Marconi's Chiropractic and Wellness Parking Lot, 1002 Martin Luther King Way.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION: Sponsorships/Booths**

**CONTACT: Frances Lorenz (253) 363-2956**

**EMAIL: franceslorenz@gmail.com**

SATURDAY, APRIL 8, 2017

**FREE  
Family Fest in  
People's Park**

**S 9<sup>th</sup> & MLK Way**

**11:00 am-4 pm**

\*Cherry Blossom Walk

\*Haiku \*Origami

\*Kite Flying

\*Entertainment

\* Picnic

**Festival Booklet with  
Discounts from Hilltop  
businesses**

**WINE WALK**

**4:00-7:00 PM**

Register at Marconi's  
Chiropractic & Wellness  
parking lot 1002 MLK Way

Tickets: \$ 25 in advance;  
\$ 30 on April 8



## Photo Stream Hilltop Carnival & Events by Raimundo Jurado



# PEOPLES

BARBERSHOP

**HOURS**  
MON -SAT: 9am-7pm SUN 10am-2pm

**901 s. MLK Way**  
**Tacoma, WA. 98405**  
**(253)314-5676**

FOLLOW US @PEOPLES253

## Tacoma Urban League

*Empowering Communities.  
Changing Lives.*

### Young Adult Employment Program

Learn job readiness and skills training in construction, aerospace, and tech!  
Upon graduation receive a brand new Tablet!

**Call 253-383-2006**

**Program Information:**

- 8-week employment program
- Open-door application
- Space is Limited
- Contact us for upcoming classes

**Requirements:**

- Can be a student or "out of school"
- Ages 16-24
- Can commit to 8-week training program
- Desire gainful employment

**Gain Certificates In:**

- OSHA 10
- Hazardous Materials
- First Aid/CPR
- Flagger
- Forklift

**Location:**  
Tacoma Urban League  
2550 Yakima Ave. Tacoma, WA 98405



**I DARE YOU**  
**TO BE THE**  
**teacher**  
**I NEVER FORGET**

Dare to find a career where you can truly make a difference. Your skills and talents could be exactly what we need to build the next generation of great teachers. Get resources to explore whether teaching is right for you at [teach.org](https://www.teach.org).

**TEACH**



# What We Owe the Next Generation of Teachers

By Nathan Bowling  
Guest Writer, High School Teacher

I was a fairly mediocre teacher when I first started. Sometimes I look back on my first few years and wonder why my students didn't walk out on me. My old slides look atrocious; my handouts were too wordy; my instruction was completely teacher centered: me talking, me explaining, me doing some weird dance. There were some long, sad, doubt-filled nights my first few years of teaching. I thought frequently about moving into law. For the first several years of my career, every spring, I would thumb through an LSAT prep book and browse law school catalogues. It wasn't until my seventh year that I didn't get that "ritual spring itch." That's when I knew I had hit my stride.

I am now eleven years in and I think I have things kind of figured out. In my classroom my students do most of the talking and a fair amount of the teaching. They tweet articles from the National Review and the Atlantic to me and to each other in the evenings. I have waves of students in college and they almost always report they felt prepared. I have sharpened my craft. I have grown and progressed.

But I wonder what might have been for me and for others in the career field? Roughly half of the teachers who started this fall will be gone from the career field in five years. Nearly ten percent will bounce before the year is up. For many of them, that's for the best. Teaching isn't for them or they aren't especially good at communicating complex ideas or building relationships with students and their colleagues. But also in that 50% are some phenomenal educators who will never get a chance to hit their stride.



Teaching is hard. The early parts of our career are harder. Being a new teacher in a high-need school, without the appropriate supports is the hardest. It breaks strong, smart people, but it's the most important work imaginable.

We know from research and I tell audiences every opportunity that I get that the number one in-school factor impacting student achievement is the effectiveness of the teacher in the classroom. The constant turnover of teachers, particularly at high-poverty schools, creates a revolving door that robs our neediest students. Year after year, they have earnest, good hearted, but green teachers who are

still sorting things out. Our neediest students deserve our best; instead far too often they get whoever is available.

For the sake of their students, we owe new teachers meaningful supports:

- We owe our teacher candidates intentional placements with effective mentor teachers.
- We owe our new teachers effective, successful mentors who can support them in their professional growth.
- We owe our new teachers meaningful and timely feedback that gives them specific areas for improvement and

growth.

- We owe our new teachers a salary commensurate with the gravity of their work.
- We owe our new teachers assignments that set them up for success—rather than failure.

I'm the teacher I am today largely because I stuck it out and learned from my early career failures and missteps. Too many who enter our ranks depart too soon. We owe them better, better preparation, better mentors, and better support. This post originally appeared on the US Department of Education Homeroom Blog.



## The Red Elm Cafe

... continued from cover

Adina and Sarah designed the floor plan which uses natural light and earth tones to give the cafe a comfy familiar feel. This warm, comfy atmosphere extends to much of the furniture, including furniture acquired from other restaurants, a refinished church pew from Snohomish, a stained family table is the centerpiece of the 15+ seat conference room. One of the three sisters' priorities was to use recycled or salvaged material whenever possible to lower their carbon footprint. They also used material from KOA salvaged wood and Earthwise. This can particularly be observed when noticing the grandest piece, the main bar. Which uses salvaged doors, windows and wood, to give it a cheerful, pleasant look. This massive piece was designed and built by the three sisters, Sarah referred to it as a labor of love as it was crafted over time to be ready for the cafe opening. Their goal is to use renewable materials whenever possible.

They serve Caravan Coffee, which is responsibly sourced. Another main theme of The Red Elm Cafe is community. All three sisters impressed this upon me strongly when I was interviewing them. Jennifer told me she envisions the cafe as "A community gathering place. A place for Hilltop neighbors to come here and hangout." this also involves giving back to the community by donating to different organizations and charities in the community. Adina remarked "Our goal once we get up and going is being able to donate to a different organization every quarter." this includes giving back through a percentage of their sales.



There are plenty of areas for the community to gather here. The kids' play area has an adorable picture of self portraits from a class at Bryant Montessori School overlooking it. The conference room, which can be reserved free of charge, gives people a gathering place. Artists can display their works on the huge brick wall for as long or as short as they want. Beyond the usual cafe fare, one of their

specialties is a bacon and cheddar waffle/omelette made on a waffle iron or as they lovingly refer to it as a "Womlette". Sarah said "We want to be a place for breakfast and coffee on the Hill." and during a recent visit to the cafe it looks as though this is already the case!

Advertise with the Hilltop Action Journal

Email: William Towey, toweyw@uw.edu



## Poems from Youth

Founded in 2011, Write253 is a literacy arts organization that provides writing education throughout Pierce County, especially in underserved neighborhoods. Whether we are meeting after school for poetry, film or debate club, leading regular writing workshops at Remann Hall, or hosting Tacoma's only teen poetry festival, we believe in the power of the written and spoken word to encourage creativity and transform lives.

### Untitled

by Dominique

It's like Biggie and Tupac  
they would never talk  
they just fought  
till bullets were shot.  
This fight between us  
color and white  
has me losin' my sight.  
I have children in the halls  
talkin' about Jim Crow laws  
and I think about my ancestors who were  
hung by the trees  
with their feet not on the ground.  
Hopefully one day my ancestors can be  
found  
not in a forgotten memory  
but in this generation today  
because it is as if we forgot Martin Luther  
King's dream  
for some now in 2017 means  
nothing.  
Bones brittle and broken creating the  
streets  
we all walk on  
the words "nigger" and "cracker"  
hurtful words people talk of  
creating illusions of unworthy born with  
more or less pigment or color.  
I can almost hear the sound of our world  
being crumbled like a piece of paper  
that was supposed to be recycled  
but instead thrown into the abyss  
polluting and killing even the innocent.  
Hitler had a plan of genocide.  
It seems Trump's here to finish it.  
You allow him to make black and white  
out of what should be gray.  
We allow people to disturb the peace  
so we cannot be at ease  
as we lay.  
So let me ask you when you sit and pray  
to your god and thank him for the  
blessings of your day:  
Is he black or white  
and if he wasn't your preference  
would you go astray?

### Pain

by anonymous

If pain could be measured  
would you know how I feel?  
If pain could be shared,  
would you take mine so I could heal  
the pain I feel?  
I caress her body and kiss her lips that drip  
poison.  
Her presence in the streets corrupts the  
little boys and  
girls that grew up to know selfish love.  
Pain, she knows us more than anybody  
else does.  
"Why me?" I ask. "Why me?"  
Pain responds and says: "Because I'm  
something you need."  
So I think, "What does she mean?"  
Do you remember the times you were  
alone and going through pain?  
That's what made you.  
Then you forgot when you had money and  
fun and fame.  
That's what saved you.  
Now you're back at stage one.  
The things you thought matter don't  
matter and  
the things that really do matter  
you realize you took in vain.  
Pain, that's what saved you.  
Pain is something we all have in common.  
Pain, she even knows your white friend  
Thomas.  
And to be honest  
she hurts too  
because before pain can heal  
she has to hurt you.

### Trials & Tribulations

by Isaac

I look at these ceilings and my heart feels  
weak.  
I think so hard I can't even sleep.  
Sometimes I wonder if God is with me in  
the room.  
I know he's watching me being a fool.  
I'm trying to change though.  
I can't do this no more.  
I just want to follow to God and his word  
and just grow.  
My mom was sad when she heard that her  
son got caught doing dirt.  
She stood right beside me when stuff  
happened.  
I said, "Momma, I'm sorry. I didn't want  
none of this to happen."  
I sit back and wish I could take it back  
but there's nothing I can do now  
so I can only blame myself for my choices  
and learn from them.  
I just got to change myself around.  
People in here try to make me mad.  
But I just look at them with silence and  
just laugh  
because to me they're not worth my time  
of day.  
So at night I just pray  
it will get better  
throughout the day.  
When stuff goes wrong  
I ask God for questions  
and every time it's a blessing to hear his  
answer from the heavens.  
I just hope I can go back to my family and  
just prove to them that I'm ready to change  
my ways.  
I just want another chance to make things  
right  
so when I die I can look to the heavens for  
light.

### These Walls

by anonymous

If these walls could talk  
They'd tell me to fly straight  
Telling my destiny  
Accept my fate.  
These walls ask me: Do you think she's  
gonna stay  
just because you love her?  
Do you think she feels the same?  
These walls have graffiti on them  
Tell me a story of every other person who's  
been here before me  
So I call all y'all  
To put your walls up  
Cause every time I come around  
Demolition's gonna crush.

### What Am I?

by Josiah

I lurk in the background  
and go unnoticed.  
I follow behind you  
when you are in motion.  
When the sun is gone  
I'm not so around.  
Turn on your light  
and you'll find me in the ground.  
I wonder if you every notice me.  
See I'm like love  
I'm there but I don't speak up.  
Yeah, I always got your back.  
Is that my place?  
Why don't you notice me?  
I know everything about you.  
I even do what you do  
All the pain and sorrow you faced  
I faced it, too.  
And to me that's love  
But yeah, I'm just a thing that goes  
unnoticed.  
What am I?

## 2025 Writing Competition

The City of Tacoma's TacomaFirst 3-1-1 and the Hilltop Action Journal are pleased to announce the First Annual Vision 2025 Writing Competition is now open. All contest entries should explore, include, or reflect one of two themes:

- **My 2025 Vision for Hilltop, Or**
- **Finding beauty wherever you are.**

All entries should be submitted with an all-ages audience in mind.

Winning submissions will be awarded prizes from Tinkertopia, King's Books and Publication in the Hilltop Action Journal.

The Competition is open to students in grades 3rd, 4th and 5th. Poetry or Short Story entries must be 50 - 200 words.

Judges will include City of Tacoma Poet Laureate and Mary Fox of Write @253.

The top four submissions will be featured on the Hilltop Action Coalition website and each selected short story will appear in the Hilltop Action Journal.

Submissions are due Friday March 31, 2017 by 4:00pm. For further details or to entire online visit: [www.hilltopactioncoalition.org](http://www.hilltopactioncoalition.org)



“When I found out about the Technical High School at Bates, I knew this was the perfect opportunity to do something that spoke to me.”

GROW. LEARN. TRANSFORM!



www.bates.ctc.edu  
253.680.7000

# Non-traditional path is tradition for this female auto body student

For Technical High School student Demry Polum, working in a male-dominated environment doesn't intimidate her. In fact, it's in her blood.

Her grandmother was a truck driver for five years, and her mother has been in the industry for 15 years. So it was no surprise that when she heard about Bates' Technical High School, she was drawn toward the Auto Body Rebuilding and Refinishing program.

“When I found out about the Technical High School at Bates, I knew this was the perfect opportunity to do something that spoke to me,” said Demry.

“When I found out about the Technical High School at Bates, I knew this was the perfect opportunity to do something that spoke to me,” says 19-year-old Demry, who learned of the high school from friends when she was a senior at Tacoma's Wilson High School. “A traditional high school environment wasn't working, and I have always wanted to work with cars, so I transferred, and it's been a great experience!”

Looking back on her upbringing, Demry notes that her grandmother mostly raised her and her three siblings because of the long hours her mother worked. She recalls tinkering with items around the house, pulling things apart and putting them together to see how they functioned.

“My childhood helped push me toward what I want to do in my professional life. Grandma always taught me that women can do the same thing men can,” says Demry. “If my mom and grandma could handle working in a mostly-male industry, then I can handle it, too.”

**“I love watching cars transform from their bashed, broken and battered state when they come into the shop, and then leaving looking like a masterpiece.”**

When she started the program, she was the sole female. Now, there are three others. “I love that there are more girls in the program,” she says. “I like being able to see that there are others like me out there, who are able to say to the world, ‘you can't tell me I can't do this.’ It's been awesome having them there,” says Demry, who also works at a restaurant five days a week, following her studies.

Demry lights up when she talks about painting cars. “I love watching cars transform from their bashed, broken and battered

state when they come into the shop, and then leaving looking like a masterpiece. That's my art—to paint and blend a part of a car so that it matches perfectly with the rest of it. I consider that an art, and it's what I love doing,” she smiles.

When she talks about her motivation to succeed, she does it for her mom and grandma. “I want to be able to give back to them, because they provided me with so much growing up,” Demry says.

Demry is set to graduate with both her Associate in Applied Science degree and high school diploma in August, 2017. Her ultimate goal is to open her own shop, after gaining work experience painting in other shops.

## Center for Strong Families

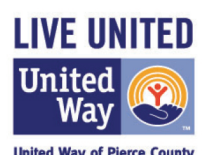
Our Financial and Career Coaches can help you

- Land careers that pay a family-wage
- Improve your credit score
- Access public benefits you qualify for

Center for Strong Families' services are located in your neighborhood and provide access to high-quality, one-on-one career and financial coaching when you need them. Our coaches will work with you over an extended period of time to help you increase your income, decrease your expenses, and acquire new assets.

Get connected with a coach today! Dial 2-1-1 to find a Center for Strong Families near you or visit [uwpc.org/CSF](http://uwpc.org/CSF).

Get connected with a coach today!  
Dial 2-1-1 to find a Center for Strong Families near you or visit [uwpc.org/CSF](http://uwpc.org/CSF).





# A MODEL THAT RESPONDS TO PERSISTENT POVERTY, FINANCIAL INSTABILITY, & LOW-WAGE STAGNATION

## LEARN

basic Math and Literacy skills, build human capital, and attain educational/training credentials.

## EARN

income and public benefits.

## SAVE

for emergencies and the future.

## OWN

assets that generate wealth and income.

**By Corey Mosesly**  
Manager of Family Stability Initiatives,  
United Way of Pierce County

*A job is not enough. That's the reality facing the tens of thousands of unemployed neighborhood residents and low-wage workers who visit their local community-based organizations to seek help with employment, emergency food and utility assistance, or a brighter future for their families. Even among those who are employed, many families struggle with monthly expenses that exceed their income ("negative monthly cash flow")—an uphill financial battle that, without room to build a savings cushion, grows more unsustainable if a car breaks down, a family member become ill, or an employer cuts even a few weeks' hours from full-time to part-time. Low-income families who lack emergency savings or a favorable credit score often turn to the few alternative options that are available to them and easily accessible in their neighborhoods: payday lenders, check-cashing services, high-interest auto lots, rent-to-own stores, and the like. In many markets, utilities and cell phone providers also require up-front deposits, in the absence of good credit, to establish service. These deposits, fees, and high-interest charges of alternative financial providers take a significant bite out of monthly cash flow. [excerpt modified from Local Initiative Support Corporation]*

With the growing population of those who are one paycheck away from crisis, UWPC partnered with other United Ways in a research endeavor.

## One in three Pierce County households can't afford the basics of housing, food, health care, child care, and transportation, despite working hard

UWPC recently participated in a regional research study of households in our communities who do not earn enough to afford basic necessities, a population called ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, and Employed\*). ALICE families are typically wage earners, but are one paycheck away from poverty. The ALICE report identified that "one in three Pierce County households can't afford the basics of housing, food, health care, child care, and transportation, despite working hard." There are nearly 67,000 ALICE households in Pierce County, more than double the official poverty rate. Together, with those in poverty, there are over 102,000 households unable to make ends meet in Pierce County. (ALICE Report, 2016)

UWPC is investing in a model of services commonly referred to as Integrated Service Delivery – a evidence-based approach that is being used by a number of national organizations including the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), and the U.S. Department of Labor.

Due to low wages, lack of benefits and inconsistent employment, many workers are unable to meet their own and their families' basic needs through employment alone. Further, becoming financially secure and building long-term assets requires more than a paycheck—smart budgeting, building strong credit and saving habits are all part of the full equation.

## People are more likely to be employed year-round, reduce non-asset related debt, and build positive credit histories

Research on the Centers for Working Families initiative found that when services are bundled, clients were three to four times more likely to achieve a "major economic outcome" than were non-bundlers. LISC's researchers reviewed initial data from across its Financial Opportunity Center network in 2012 and found that of those who remained attached to the program, 73 percent recorded gains in net income, 43 percent showed increases in credit scores, and 43 percent increased net worth.

The integrated services delivery approach recognizes the reality that true financial security comes from the totality of how individuals manage their financial affairs. Programs bundle and sequence services rather than offering just one component or leaving it up to participants to seek out additional services.

The integrated service delivery theory of change stipulates that each service works best when delivered in conjunction with the others. As clients reduce expenses, obtain public benefits and remove barriers to employment, the net value of their earnings rises sharply, dramatically increasing their incentives to work longer and earn more.

An independent study has found that Financial Opportunity Center clients, who access a range of services, have more success meeting their financial goals than people in programs offering employment assistance alone. Clients are more likely to be employed year-round, reduce non-asset related debt, and build positive credit histories (Economic Mobility Corporation, 2016).

UWPC is launching a network of ISD organizations throughout Pierce County that focus on improving the financial bottom line for low- to moderate-income families and helping people in a way that encourages a long-term commitment to increasing income, decreasing expenses, building credit and acquiring assets. Each center provides families with three core program services:

### Workforce Development

Employment placement and career improvement — and the ability to find or transition to good jobs — is the basis for a family's financial security. Employment services are often the main platform on which most of the Centers are based, and might include basic job readiness soft-skills training,

hard skills training or other post-secondary education, and/or career advancement. The employment component often serves as an entry point through which clients participate in financial coaching and public benefits access. Employment services offered must consistently lead to job placement and retention.

### Financial Education and Coaching

While each Center varies in its implementation of financial education and coaching, the core model is similar across sites. All Centers offer one-on-one financial coaching, which focuses on solving specific problems or crises, such as high debt or eviction prevention; and then working—through a coaching relationship—on long-term financial interventions. Most, but not all, Centers also offer group-based financial education, which provides general information on a range of topics, such as budgeting and developing savings plans. Finally, Centers help clients connect to mainstream financial service providers and free tax preparation services whenever and wherever possible. A lifetime of working and saving money is the surest way to economic stability. UWPC believes financial coaching is the best technique to help clients stay on course. Though they are versatile enough to help clients fix an immediate problem, the coaches' key role is to help clients create a vision of financial stability, develop financial goals, and hold the client accountable for achieving those goals. The coaches' ongoing encouragement and support helps to make it easier for clients to stay on a consistent asset building course that leads to economic stability budget for specific staff training requirements and cost estimates.

### Income Supports Access

CSF clients are employed or will become employed, but their wages and benefits are often insufficient to meet their daily needs. Income supports, such as food stamps or the Earned Income Tax Credit play a key role in helping working families pay for their everyday living expenses. While individuals may want to access public benefits, the system itself is cumbersome and complicated, making it difficult for working people to access the benefits for which they qualify. Having a place that helps people understand what they qualify for, complete the application correctly, advocate for them at the various agencies that administer benefits and is open during non-business hours is important in order for working people to receive the benefits for which they qualify.

These core services are integrated together and delivered to clients in a bundled fashion in order to provide a multi-faceted approach to income and wealth building. One-stop centers have been a staple of the publicly funded workforce system for many years. In most cases, they offer a menu of services from which clients can choose as many or as few with no program or participation requirements. The CSF model takes the workforce development one-stop concept a step further under the premise that clients who receive more than one service are more likely to achieve economic stability. Therefore, bundling of services is very deliberate through the design of the program, staff interactions, and data collection so that clients can benefit from multiple, reinforcing services that contribute to their overall financial stability. Bundling of services is central to the model and clients' success.

For more information, please visit: [www.uwpc.org](http://www.uwpc.org)

# Immigrants are anxious, but supporters are stepping up

By Danielle Burch

Immigrants and refugees who seek services at the Hilltop-based nonprofit Tacoma Community House fear what the President's immigration actions will mean for their families. Amidst that fear, supporters are offering help to their immigrant and refugee neighbors.



Wadhah Al-Shargabi on his last day at TCH, surrounded by staff members who helped him (left to right: Mari Stiffler, Latasha Ware, Mischa McCann, Darren Anderson, Charlene McKenzie, Stephanie Hopkins, Paul Man)

Tacoma Community House (TCH) is a community-based service center on the Hilltop that serves immigrants, refugees, and low-income South Sound residents. For 107 years, we've helped tens of thousands of people gain the skills necessary to transition out of poverty, navigate a new culture, and find personal and professional success.

Originally built as a Settlement House to serve Hilltop's sizeable Italian and Scandinavian communities, TCH has evolved with demographic shifts over many decades. In 1923, the agency began providing English language courses to Filipino immigrants. The 1960s saw an influx of Southeast Asian refugees displaced by war. Today, a majority of our clients come from Mexico and Vietnam.

Just last year, we served over 3,500 people from 103 countries. Walk our halls and you will hear a symphony of languages and voices, all eager to work hard and utilize one (or several!) of our programs. Whether a person needs help prepping for their GED exam, learning English, finding a job, navigating the immigration system, or finding resources after they've been the victim of a crime, TCH is their "one-stop shop."

We are a home away from home for so many. But things have been tense lately.

Some of our clients are fearful because of President Trump's recent executive orders targeting immigrants and refugees.

"They ask us if it's safe to come back to school," says Liz Dunbar, TCH Executive Director. "They ask us if it's safe to go to the grocery store."

We field dozens of phone calls a day from anxious clients—even those who are citizens or have legal permanent residency (green) cards—who worry Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) will knock on their door, separate them from their families, and deport them to a country that, in some cases, they haven't visited in decades.

Our clients have also come to us with heartbreaking stories of harassment.

One woman, a Muslim mother who wears a hijab, was humiliated at a big box retail store when an older couple screamed at her to "go back to [her] own country." Shaken, the woman called her husband. He told her to leave the store immediately.

This is not an exceptional story. Immigrants, refugees, and people of color more generally experience these types of attacks—including what sociologists call "microaggressions"—on a regular basis. The Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) reports a spike of 867 hate crimes in the ten days after President Trump's election, where 32% (the largest percentage) were motivated by anti-immigrant sentiment, for instance.

Now, we acknowledge that SPLC's data collection is flawed (as most studies' are). They relied on individuals submitting reports through their website, when not everyone knows to do that or has easy access to a computer. Still, stories are important. The way we talk about, stereotype, and essentialize entire groups of people has real world consequences. One need only think back to the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, Japanese internment, or the Holocaust to understand.

## Neighbors Helping Neighbors

If there is a silver lining to all of this, it's that many people are stepping up to defend their immigrant neighbors, friends, family, and coworkers on both local and national stages.

On February 9th, a federal appeals court voted to maintain the freeze on the President's travel ban on seven Muslim-majority countries.

Last month, Mayor Strickland and the Tacoma City Council unanimously voted to adopt Resolution Number 39642 establishing an Immigration and Refugee Task Force to monitor and address local immigrant communities' concerns. Over one year earlier, Mayor Strickland issued a proclamation declaring Tacoma as a Welcoming City—the first city on the West Coast to do so.

At TCH, we are awed by the number of people stepping up to volunteer, donate, and voice their support. We've received 10 times the usual number of phone calls in the last few months.

The community's swell of support isn't lost on our clients, either. Wadhah Al-Shargabi, a TCH client and Yemeni refugee, says Tacomans are showing his family more kindness than ever before.

"Most people would stand on our side," he says, hopeful.

Danielle Burch is a Communications Associate at Tacoma Community House. Learn more about TCH on their website, [www.TacomaCommunityHouse.org](http://www.TacomaCommunityHouse.org), and follow them on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or YouTube.



A TCH client works with Immigration Specialist, Mari Stiffler (left). (Photo by Dane Gregory Meyer Photo)



Students in TCH's English Language Acquisition (ELA) class. (Photo by Dane Gregory Meyer)



We're hosting a neighborhood meeting Thursday, March 9th (5:30-7pm) to share plans about the construction of a new TCH building on 13th and L!

One Call, One Click, One Visit

# TACOMA FIRST 311

The **TacomaFIRST** (Fast Information Resource Service Team) **Customer Support Center** offers you a concierge feel in the way of reception, face-to-face interaction, telephone and online support. It is located on the 2nd floor of the Tacoma Municipal Building (747 Market St.) and is open Monday - Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with the exception of City-observed holidays.



Dial 311 from a landline or mobile device. 311 is a centralized telephone number that provides live and after-hours voicemail support for callers seeking City services.



Submit and track your requests for City services online, and find answers to questions pertaining to City policies and programs.



The Tacoma FIRST 311 mobile app is free to download on any Apple or Android mobile device (running version 2.1 or greater) and provides quick and easy access to the City of Tacoma's non-emergency services. Submit more than 70 types of requests, track the progress of your requests with a free customer account, and peruse more than 700 frequently asked questions and answers.

El **Centro de Asistencia al Cliente de TacomaFIRST** (equipo de servicio rápido de recursos de información, Fast Information Resource Service Team) le ofrece atención estilo concierge en cuanto a la recepción, interacción cara a cara, y soporte telefónico y en línea. Se ubica en el 2.º piso del Edificio Municipal de Tacoma (747 Market St.) y está abierto de lunes a viernes, de 8 a. m. a 5 p. m., con excepción de los días festivos oficiales de la ciudad.



Marque 311 desde un teléfono fijo o dispositivo móvil. El 311 es un número telefónico centralizado que ofrece soporte en vivo y mediante correo de voz después del horario de atención para las personas que llaman para obtener información sobre los servicios de la ciudad.



Envíe y rastree sus solicitudes de los servicios de la ciudad en línea y encuentre respuestas a las preguntas relacionadas con las políticas y los programas de la ciudad.



La aplicación móvil Tacoma FIRST 311 puede descargarse gratuitamente en cualquier dispositivo móvil Apple o Android (versión 2.1 o posterior), y ofrece acceso fácil y rápido a los servicios que no son de emergencia de la ciudad de Tacoma. Envíe más de 70 tipos de solicitudes, rastree el progreso de sus solicitudes con una cuenta gratuita de usuario y lea detenidamente más de 700 preguntas y respuestas frecuentes.

**Trung Tâm Trợ Giúp Khách Hàng TacomaFIRST** (Nhóm Phục Vụ Thông Tin Nhanh) tạo cho quý vị cảm giác thuận tiện về cách đón tiếp, tương tác trực tiếp, trợ giúp qua điện thoại và trong mạng điện toán. Văn phòng đặt ở lầu 2 của Trụ Sở Thành Phố Tacoma (747 Market St.) và làm việc từ thứ Hai đến thứ Sáu, 8 giờ sáng đến 5 giờ chiều, ngoại trừ những ngày lễ của Thành Phố.



Gọi số 311 từ điện thoại nhà hoặc điện thoại di động. 311 là số điện thoại trung tâm cung cấp sự trợ giúp trực tiếp và ngoài giờ làm việc qua hệ thống thu lời nhắn (voicemail) cho những người cần dịch vụ của Thành Phố.



Hãy gọi và theo dõi những yêu cầu của quý vị về dịch vụ của Thành Phố trong mạng điện toán, và tìm giải đáp cho những thắc mắc về chính sách và chương trình của Thành Phố.



Download miễn phí ứng dụng di động (mobile app) Tacoma FIRST 311 trong bất cứ thiết bị di động nào của Apple hay Android (sử dụng phiên bản 2.1 hoặc mới hơn) và giúp sử dụng những dịch vụ không khẩn cấp của Thành Phố Tacoma nhanh chóng và dễ dàng. Quý vị có thể yêu cầu hơn 70 loại dịch vụ, theo dõi tiến trình giải quyết yêu cầu của quý vị bằng một trương mục khách hàng miễn phí, và nghiên cứu hơn 700 thắc mắc thông thường và giải đáp.

**Центр поддержки клиентов TacomaFIRST** (служба быстрого предоставления информационных ресурсов) предлагает комфорт уровня «консьерж-службы» при начальном обращении, прямом взаимодействии, поддержке по телефону и через Интернет. Центр располагается на 2-м этаже здания муниципалитета Такомы (Tacoma Municipal Building, 747 Market St.) и работает с понедельника по пятницу, 08:00 – 17:00, за исключением праздничных дней.



Наберите 311 со стационарного или мобильного телефона. 311 — это централизованный номер службы поддержки (голосовая почта в нерабочие часы) для тех, кому требуются муниципальные услуги.



Отправляйте запросы о предоставлении муниципальных услуг и отслеживайте их рассмотрение через Интернет; находите ответы на вопросы, касающиеся муниципальных политик и программ.



Мобильное приложение Tacoma FIRST 311 можно бесплатно загрузить на любое устройство Apple или Android (требуется версия 2.1 или выше). Оно обеспечивает быстрый и простой доступ к неэкстренным службам города Такома. Позволяет подавать более 70 типов запросов и отслеживать процесс их рассмотрения с помощью бесплатной учетной записи клиента, а также выполнять поиск по более чем 700 типовым вопросам и ответам.

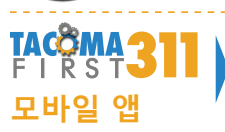
**TacomaFIRST** (Fast Information Resource Service Team, 빠른 정보 리소스 서비스 팀) 고객 지원 센터는 접수, 대면 소통, 전화 응대 및 온라인 지원에서 컨시어지 수준의 서비스를 제공합니다. TacomaFIRST는 Tacoma Municipal Building(747 Market St.) 2층에 있으며 시 지정 공휴일을 제외한 월요일~금요일 오전 8시부터 오후 5시까지 운영됩니다.



유선 또는 모바일 기기에서 311번으로 전화 주십시오. 311번은 통합 전화번호로, 시 서비스를 원하는 사용자에게 실시간 및 운영시간 외 음성 지원을 제공합니다.



시 서비스 관련 요청을 온라인으로 제출 및 추적하고 시 정책 및 프로그램에 관한 답변을 확인하십시오.



Tacoma FIRST 311 모바일 앱은 모든 Apple 또는 Android(2.1 이상 버전) 모바일 기기에 무료로 다운로드할 수 있고 타코마 시의 비긴급 서비스에 빠르고 쉬운 액세스를 제공합니다. 70개 이상 유형의 요청을 제출하고 무료 고객 계정을 통해 제출된 요청의 진행 상황을 추적하며 700개 이상의 자주 묻는 질문에 대한 답변을 확인할 수 있습니다.

[다운로드 지침](#)

# The People's Community Center

By Jenny Miller



The Hilltop Action Coalition is motivated in providing the community with more information about The Center's programs, services, and equitable access. I sat down with Dave Lewis, the Director of Recreation & Community Services with Metro Parks, not only to learn more about these programs and services, but to also discuss their goals, the problems they're encountering, and what they need to better serve the community.

On September 24th, 2016 the People's Community Center reopened after the completion of an \$8 million renovation. Originally built in 1978, The Center closed in 2008 due to structural concerns. After 10 years of fundraising and working with city officials, construction started in May 2016.

The Center's goal is to be the space that the local community needs and wants. They love to hear from the people so they know how best to serve them. The Center designs its programming around the feedback it receives.

"We sent out surveys to 500 addresses near the center and we asked people at different events throughout the year to learn the needs and wants of the community. Then we built the programs around that feedback," said Lewis. When the people voiced a need for a daycare, PCC created a space to fulfill that need. The daycare is called Little Village Childcare Center. They take children ages 1 month- 12 years.

Many popular classes like Zumba, Yoga, MixxedFit®, BeliRaq Kung Fu, and more, are available as a drop-in or as part of

the membership. There are currently 16 different fitness classes available Monday through Saturday. These classes can change depending on the feedback of the community. If there is a class anyone in the community want to see at The Center they want to know.

There is a gym available for open gym, volleyball, basketball, dodgeball, for organizations like Come Back Sports Tacoma, and more. The gym is open 7 days a week. The gym can also be rented for non-sporting events.

The Center has meeting rooms available to rent for a fee or for free. If you are part of a community group who wants to have a meeting that is open to the public and free the space would be free to rent. There are party rooms, and multi-purpose rooms, the gym, and the kitchen available as well.

And of course, there is the pool, which is available for lap swim, open swim, swim lessons, fitness classes, and party rentals. The pool features: a three-lane lap pool, passive swim area and bench, a spray pad, a current channel and vortex, a floating pads for walk-on-water play, two, poolside basketball hoops, two party rooms, two family changing areas/restrooms, one additional restroom, and more.

Memberships range from \$4 to \$23 a month depending on age and financial ability of the person or family. The Center has financial assistance at all rates and some programs for those who qualify. "Verification of income is required such as a copy of last year's tax return or verification of free and reduced lunch

letter or a benefits letter. There is a qualifying income scale, based on USDA income eligibility guidelines, that is used for determinations of fee reduction."

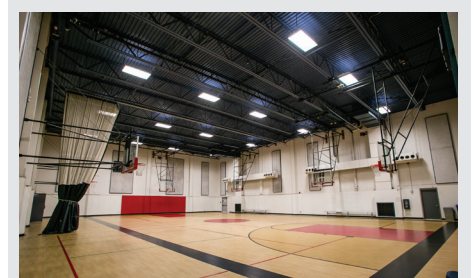
For example, a single membership for an adult is \$23 a month, however, depending on their income level they could receive 50% or 75% off that rate. The adult rate could go down as far as \$5.75

There are also rates for: young adult, teen, youth, military, and senior available. The financial assistance request form is available at The Center or their website and is available in Spanish, English and Russian.

However, the difficulty they are encountering is in getting all of this information to the people who need it.

"We want to empower community members to get the word out that these programs exist," said Lewis. Sometimes it's a language barrier. The membership form is currently available in English, Spanish, and Russian. You can find them at The Center. There is information via phone available in 5 languages. However, people can't access this information if they don't know it is there.

The Center would like to work with various community leaders in the area to help bridge the communication gap between The Center and the people. To help learn what else the Center could provide to help the needs of the community, and to learn in which languages the information on memberships, rentals, and financial assistance are still needed.



**People's Center**  
1602 MLK Jr Way  
Tacoma, WA 98405

**Hours of operation:**  
Mon-Friday 5:30 am-8:30 pm  
Saturday 8 am-8 pm  
Sunday 8 am-7 pm

For more info about the Center and a complete list of all programs and services offered, please visit:  
[www.metroparkstacoma.org/peoples/](http://www.metroparkstacoma.org/peoples/)





**Services**

Sound Outreach's Credit UP program offers free one-on-one financial coaching and access to traditional financial products for residents with bad credit or no credit. Your Hilltop Credit Up financial counselor, Silke Bone, can help build budgets, review credit reports and scores, and help identify financial goals as well as the first steps to achieve those goals.



**Emergency Loan**

This month Sound Outreach released its third Credit UP financial product in partnership with Harborstone: an emergency loan. This is a short-term loan to cover unexpected expenses. Unlike the two-week repayment terms from a payday lender, the emergency loan can be repaid over six months. It is not for everyday expenses because it requires a \$20 application fee and has an interest rate between 12% and 28% depending on the applicant's credit score. Applicants must have an income or demonstrated ability to repay the loan in six months, and a Credit UP financial coach must agree the emergency loan is an appropriate solution.

**Credit Builder Loan**

Rather than receiving cash up front, the credit builder loan is for clients who need to practice saving money and improve their credit score. With this product, a

loan for \$300 is placed in a secured savings account. After making 12 small monthly payments, the borrower has access to the money they have saved. A 3.1% interest rate is built into each payment, costing the client approximately \$5 over 12 months of payments. Payments will be reported to the three major credit reporting bureaus. This product is ideal for anyone looking to build or increase their credit score for future large purchases such as a car or home.

**Unlimited Potential Checking Accounts**

This account is for clients who don't have a traditional checking or savings account due to negative checking histories. Unlimited Potential Checking is a low-fee account that comes with a debit card, online banking access, and automatic deposit.

If you or someone you know is interested in a Credit UP product or free financial coaching session, contact your Hilltop Credit UP representative:

**Silke Bone, AFC, CCRR**  
**253-719-3079**  
**www.soundoutreach.org**



# Property Tax Relief for Seniors and Widows Program

Resource Shared by Hilltop Action Journal Staff

If you are a senior citizen or disabled with your primary residence in Washington State, there are two programs that may help you pay your property taxes and/or special assessments. Your household income and your age or disability determine your eligibility for both programs. The qualifying applicant receives a reduction in the amount of property taxes due. The amount of the reduction is based on the applicant's income, the value of the residence, and the local levy rates.

**Program Overview**

Under the exemption program, the value of your Washington State residence is frozen for property tax purposes, and you become exempt from all excess and special levies and possibly regular levies – resulting in a reduction in your property taxes. The exemption is available for your primary residence and up to five acres of land. A mobile home may qualify, even if the land where the mobile home is located is leased or rented.

**Eligibility Requirements**

To be eligible for this program you must meet the age or disability, ownership, residency, and income requirements. Your application must include proof of your age or disability.

**Age and Disability**

On December 31 of the year before the tax is due, you must meet one of the following criteria. At least 61 years of age or Unable to work because of a disability OR a veteran entitled to and receiving compensation from the United States

Department of Veterans Affairs at a total disability rating for a service-connected disability.

**Ownership**

You must own your home in Washington

State by December 31 the year before the taxes to be exempted are due. For example,

the program requirements, you may be eligible for a leasehold excise tax credit.

**Residency**

The property must be your primary residence by December 31 the year before the tax is due. For example, you must be living in your home by December 31, 2015, to receive an exemption on your 2016 property tax. To keep your exemption going forward, you must live in your home for more than six months each year.

Household income includes the combined disposable income of you, your spouse or domestic partner, and any co-tenants. A co-tenant is a person who lives in your home and has an ownership interest in your home.

**Renewal Applications Every Six Years**  
A renewal application is required at least once every six years. After your initial application and approval, you will be notified by your county assessor when it is time to submit a renewal application.



to receive an exemption in 2016, you must own your home by December 31, 2015.

A home owned jointly by a married couple, a registered domestic partnership, or by co-tenants is considered owned by each spouse, domestic partner, or co-tenant. Only one person must meet the age or disability requirement. If you share ownership in a cooperative housing unit and your share represents the specific unit or portion where you live, you will be eligible for the exemption of your unit.

If your primary residence or the land under your primary residence is owned by a government entity and you meet

Your residence may qualify even if you are in a hospital, nursing home, boarding home or adult family home. You may rent your residence to someone else during your stay in one of these facilities if the rental income is used to pay the facility costs. Property used as a vacation home is not eligible for the exemption program.

**Household Income**

Your annual household disposable income may not exceed \$40,000. If your household income is between \$40,000 and \$45,000, you may qualify for the deferral program. See the Property Tax Deferral for Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons fact sheet for more information.

**For More Information**

If you need help or have questions regarding the property tax exemption, application form, or the application process, contact your local county assessor's office. The telephone number is listed in the local county government pages (usually the blue pages) of your telephone book. If you have questions about the laws and rules governing this program contact the Washington State Department of Revenue at (360) 534-1400.

Visit our website at:  
[www.dor.wa.gov](http://www.dor.wa.gov)



## What is 3-1-1?

By Kris "Sonics Guy" Brannon

**Do you have a complaint about garbage collection or want to know what to do about a dispute with your landlord?**

The staff at the 311 Customer Support Center, located in City Hall, has helped 136,000 Community residents with questions like that since it's opening in the fall of 2013.

The Support Center is a testament to helping the people of Tacoma access information about local government and non-emergency services. Staff describes the center as a "one-stop shop" and strives to offer a concierge like feel in its dealings with the public. No one is asked to "take a number" - customers are treated respectfully and as individuals. The center provides access to two large conference rooms set up with UBS chords and plug-ins to fit every type of computer and computers for public use are located in the lobby. The Center's many windows provide a feeling of openness and the staff is friendly and professional.

The 311 Center makes the comfort of its patrons and the transparency and accessibility of government services their top priorities.

# Hilltop Action Coalition & Tacoma FIRST 311 Services

By William Towey, Editor's Corner

In addition the personal experience of visiting the exciting new 311 'digs' down at City Hall, as described by Hilltop Action Journal contributor Kris Brannon, Hilltop Action Coalition are excited to share more information about our growing partnership with the TacomaFirst 311 center. Since opening its doors in October 2013 the Tacoma FIRST 311 Customer Support Center has become a key point of contact between residents and the wide range of services offered by the City. We recently met with La'Toya Mason, Customer Support Center Manager, and Marcus Young, Management Analyst, at their soon to be opened new



Marcus Young (Photo by Raimundo Jurado)

location at City Hall in the Tacoma Municipal Building at 747 Market Street in downtown Tacoma. We were there to talk about the new emphasis the City has placed on neighborhood mobilization and stability services for the Hilltop area. One of the first things we chatted about was the wide range of services that are available through the 311 center. Both La'Toya and Marcus emphasized that their goal is to be a valuable resource to local community by sharing information about the various services and programs that are available to residents. One of the greatest services they can offer is acting as a connection between residents and the people who work at the city.

While much of their work is related to the various reporting options that are available online or through their new "Tacoma FIRST 311" mobile app, they also spoke about how they spend a lot of time working through the process of connecting people to the correct office or resource within the City. Many times finding the right person to solve your problem isn't always clear and it can take some detective work to find out who you really need to be speaking with — often it may be people from multiple departments that need to be involved to address a resident's needs — and 311 can help make that happen. This ability to be a resource to help the city be more responsive and helpful for residents is forefront in the minds of staff. Marcus noted that they want people to know they are the place residents can contact in order to solve their problems — not just report them. This goal of delivering information and support to community is what the partnership between Hilltop Action Coalition and the Tacoma FIRST 311 service is all about.

Our partnership is centered in support of the City of Tacoma Ten-Year Citywide strategic plan and vision that focuses on essential and complementary neighborhood services and mobilization. In order for the City to best serve a community it is crucial that the community can participate in the process and be well informed. This is how the Hilltop Action Coalition fits in as the 'Communications Anchor' of the Hilltop area. Over the coming years we will be working closely with the City of Tacoma to help it achieve its goals in the area of neighborhood stability in historically underserved areas by closing gaps in engagement and utilization rates for services and support. Utilizing the Tacoma FIRST 311 Customer Support Center as a one stop shop for community members to be able to interact with City services is central to this mission.



For many residents in the Hilltop reporting crime or blight is an important task. However learning more about the many programs that the city offers to help people improve their property, lower their taxes, get assistance with housing, home-ownership, and financial assistance are also vital in our efforts to avoid the negative impacts of economic development and gentrification as the Hilltop finds itself at the center of several hundred million dollars of new investment in the coming years. At the Hilltop Action Coalition website you'll find information and resources that connect you not only to City of Tacoma services, but also a variety of other important sources of information including other meetings and groups in the area, the City's Hilltop Engagement Committee and the Sound Transit Link Rail extension. Our partnership with the Tacoma FIRST 311 service is just one of the many ways that Hilltop Action Coalition is working to help the Hilltop community remain connected to its past while ensuring all residents enjoy the benefits of its future.

Customers can continue to utilize TacomaFIRST 311 online resources to access more than 700 answers to commonly asked City-related questions, submit and track more than 70 types of requests for City services, and direct questions to City departments.

The new TacomaFIRST 311 mobile app for your Apple or Android device is available to customers who wish to make and track non-emergency City service requests, and find answers to frequently asked questions, from anywhere with smartphone connectivity.

Telephone Support  
Customers can continue to dial 311 within Tacoma city limits or (253) 591-5000 from anywhere else.



## LET'S BUILD WEALTH A Real Estate Workshop

March 25 | Tacoma Urban League  
9 a.m. - Noon | 2550 S. Yakima Ave.  
Tacoma, WA 98405

Attend this **FREE 3-hour workshop** featuring guest presenters from Onpoint Real Estate Services and learn how to build wealth for yourself or your family through real estate. Whether you're looking into real estate as a profession or one of many revenue streams, you won't want to miss this exciting, non-traditional workshop.

RSVP to India Adams at [iadams@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:iadams@cityoftacoma.org) or (253) 591-5142 to reserve your spot.



Tacoma Urban League  
Empowering Communities.  
Changing Lives.

Hosted by the City of Tacoma's Community and Economic Development Department, in partnership with Tacoma Urban League



District 3  
Council Member  
**Keith Blocker**  
invites you to the

## Hilltop Community Forum

This forum is a great opportunity to connect with your neighbors, to inform and be informed about issues of importance to you, and to meet with representatives from various City of Tacoma departments.

Thursday, March 16  
6 - 8 PM  
People's Community Center  
1602 Martin Luther King Jr. Way



For more information please contact  
[rboyston@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:rboyston@cityoftacoma.org) or 253-591-5164.

# SPRING

INTO FITNESS

**AT PEOPLE'S COMMUNITY CENTER  
with \$0 Set-up Fee!**

## Join Now and Enjoy:

our new pool, fitness center and group fitness classes,  
remodeled locker rooms and basketball gym!



## People's Community Center has fun group exercise classes for every level of fitness.

Try Zumba, MixedFit, Yoga, Fit Camp, Senior Fitness and Kickboxing. Fitness classes are included in your membership and all levels and ages are welcome. Personal training is available too.



[MetroParksTacoma.org/Peoples](http://MetroParksTacoma.org/Peoples)  
1602 MLK Jr Way • (253) 591-5321

# TOOL center

TRADE OCCUPATIONS OPPORTUNITY LEARNING

## INTERESTED IN THE TRADES?

### APPLY IN PERSON

### Saturday

### 3/18/17@10am

Orientations held at:  
SureHouse OBC 901 South  
10th Street Tacoma, WA. 98405

### 253-383-5821



#### Eligibility:

- 18+
- GED or HS Equiv.
- Social Security Card
- 7<sup>th</sup> grade Reading & Math
- Ability to pass a drug test
- Have or be eligible to obtain a driver's license

#### Curriculum:

- Training at Bates Technical College
- Industry Awareness
  - Tools & Materials
  - Blueprint Reading
  - Construction Math
  - Welding,
  - Financial Literacy
  - Labor History
  - Green Construction
  - Applied Learning

#### Certifications:

- OSHA 10
- CPR & First Aid
- Flagging
- Forklift



## 12 - WEEK TRAINING & EMPLOYMENT SERVICES



Duration: 12-weeks total  
Tuesday through Friday  
7:00 AM to 3:30 PM