

HILLTOP ACTION JOURNAL

Nov 2017- Dec 2017 | Hilltop Action Coalition | volunteer organized | www.hilltopactioncoalition.org



Fantasy Lights and Bates Technical College partnership fuels real-world experience



Poverty Summit Draws Hundreds of Community Leaders Together



Little Lincoln Abes Football Program



Historic Tacoma Church Receives Anonymous Million Dollar Gift



Quest' to understand homelessness

VICTORIA WOODARDS



Roller Derby Thrives in Tacoma: Jammers and Blockers battle for points



Marty Price Retirement: From Policeman to Pastor



Write253's writing program in partnership with the McCarver's Scholars after-school program



A network of the best podcasts of Tacoma



Catherine Place, An Oasis for Women: Improving quality of life for women of all backgrounds

Hilltop Action Journal

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- Safety through Community Policing
- Pathways to Home Ownership
- Sustain and Value Existing Community Organizations
- Programs for Youth and Seniors
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- Create a Hilltop Neighborhood Library
- Community Journalism
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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.

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Correction for last issue - St. Rita Church story was written by Francie Jordan, not Teresa.

HAC President’s Message



By Brendan Nelson

As another year draws to a close most of you will be in the midst of preparations for this festive season. This is a very special time of the year as it gives people a break from the hustle and bustle of our everyday working schedules. It provides many of us with some time to enjoy the company of family and friends that is all too often missing for the rest of the year. I urge each and every one of you to reflect on these special moments and savor the relationships that have been cultivated this year.

2017, without a doubt, has been one of the most exciting years for me. Being President of the Hilltop Action Coalition is by far one of the greatest honors of my pro-

fessional career. At the same time, this year has been one of some sadness as we have lost a number of wonderful members in our community. While keeping with the spirit of this joyous time, it is equally important to take a few moments and recall these other events and keep these people in our thoughts and our prayers.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Hilltop Action Coalition Board of Directors and Office Administrator for the tremendous effort they put in day in and day out to make sure that the organization continues to move forward and that we address some of the most pressing needs of our community. They commit endless hours of volunteer time continuing to learn, engage and support Hilltop residents in a multitude of ways. Much of the work done by our Board and staff goes unseen, but their work is greatly appreciated.

I also wish to acknowledge the participation

of City of Tacoma staff and elected officials. We don’t always see eye to eye on things but at the heart of what we do is out of the love, commitment and appreciation we have for the Hilltop, and our desire to see it continue being a vibrant, healthy and resilient place.

Lastly, to the Hilltop residents, I thank you for your dedication to the success of HAC for nearly 30 years, and for the tremendous input you have given us. You are truly the source of strength for our community.

I look forward to transitioning into 2018 with fresh vision and renewed excitement for the work ahead.

In service,
Brendan A. Nelson

Hilltop Action Coalition
Monthly Community Meetings
3rd Mondays @ 6pm

Community Healthcare Bldg. 1202 Martin Luther King Jr. Way

Meet your neighbors and become part of the local Hilltop community. Each month we have presentations and information about community events, activities, policy, and important news.

TCH to Host Computer Programming Course

Everybody do your share: Community building and cleaning up on Hilltop

By Courtesy of
WOCinTechChat.com

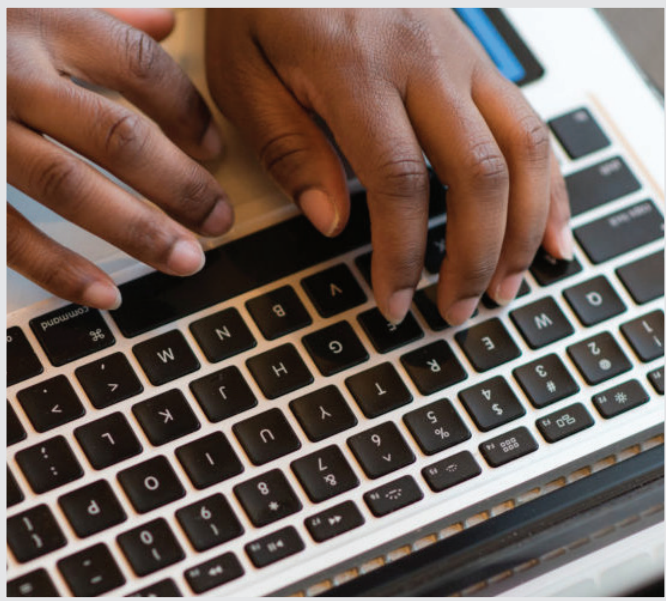
Tacoma Community House have partnered with the Olympia University of Business and Technology (OUBT) to offer an 8-week introductory course on Computer Programming!

Unlike similar courses that cost hundreds of dollars, our programming course is available for just \$50 (or free to those who are on public assistance). This provides a unique opportunity for those underrepresented in the high-demand tech industry to gain access to 2+ months of invaluable training and experience.

Students who successfully complete the course and earn their certification will be considered for a six-month internship with CodeSmart, Inc. or one of OUBT’s customers.

“Should the candidate perform exceptionally well through internship, we have something well planned for that too,” says OUBT Founder Mark Meyer.

Stop by the Tacoma Community House in person to learn more about this exciting addition to the services offered to community right here in the Hilltop.



Historic Tacoma Church Receives Anonymous Million Dollar Gift

Philanthropist recognizes Trinity Presbyterian's efforts to serve the Bryant Neighborhood in a big way

By Staff

Great news for the Hilltop area recently as Trinity Church receives a blessing in the form of a huge donation. For many years Trinity has been a quiet, hardworking stalwart in the local community and it is exciting to see years of hard work continue to be rewarded by the joy of helping people in community and the growth of their organization. Trinity recently announced some great news for the Hilltop area. Here is the scoop!

Thirty years ago, an average Sunday at Trinity Presbyterian meant just a couple dozen attendees. The small congregation considered closing down, but instead decided to launch new programs that would care for their neighbors. This community work, started decades ago, has not only helped the church to grow and thrive, but also recently inspired an anonymous donor to give a million dollar gift.

The program that started it all was an after-school tutoring program at Bryant Elementary School that continues to this day. More programs were added over the years, such as a clothing bank, a weekly community meal, and a free health clinic, making Trinity a central resource for the neighborhood. Today, Trinity has a vital, growing congregation and helps meet the basic needs for thousands of individuals each year through an array of neighborhood initiatives called Trinity Outreach Programs.

Last fall, Trinity Presbyterian celebrated its 125th Anniversary and began an ambitious capital campaign to restore its crumbling 1922 building. When the current church building was constructed, it was designed with not only the congregation, but the local community very much in mind. The local business association even contributed funds so that the building could include amenities like a gymnasium, a movie projector, and a large meeting hall which would address the needs and opportunities of the local neighborhood.

After decades of deferred maintenance, however, it was clear that Trinity could no longer safely serve its congregation and community without serious upgrades and renovations.

Historic status is by no means a guarantee of survivorship in Tacoma. In the past decade, several historic churches similar to Trinity Presbyterian have shuttered as the burden of capital expenses have overcome their dwindling congregations. Trinity Presbyterian spent several years considering options and consulting experts, ultimately deciding to rehab the current building in the same footprint. A monumental task to be sure, but one that reinforced Trinity Presbyterian's commitment to the neighborhood.

"We took a long time to explore our options given our deteriorating building and even considered the possibility of moving locations, but through the process, we realized how absolutely essential to who we are is our geography and this good soil we've been planted in since 1891. We began to dream about sending down even deeper roots here by investing in our historic building - and opening our doors to the neighborhood even wider through the Bryant Neighborhood Center." - Pastor Matt Robbins-Ghormley

Priorities for the HERE for GOOD capital campaign include a seismic retrofit, upgrading systems, improving the functionality of the space, and establishing the lower level of the building as the new Bryant Neighborhood Center.

considering the economic makeup and size of the congregation. To reach its overarching capital campaign goal of \$4.7 million, Trinity Presbyterian seeks to raise \$2.5 million from those outside the congregation through grants, corporate gifts, and individual

to renovate the facilities, expand your programs, and continue to do the great work you are doing." - Anonymous donor to the HERE for GOOD capital campaign Practically, this generous gift means that Trinity Presbyterian is on target to start

for the Bryant Neighborhood of Tacoma's Hilltop District for over 125 years. Today, Trinity is bursting with life, not only on Sunday mornings but all week long. While welcoming an average of 150 people on a Sunday morning,



The Bryant Neighborhood Center will augment the existing Trinity Outreach Programs and offer new amenities identified by Trinity's neighbors as areas of need. A yearlong series of community listening sessions and data analysis with partner organizations revealed a desire for free activities for youth and families, and a physical space for neighborhood events, community conversations about issues, information sessions, and recreational activities.

Seventy Trinity families have already pledged a collective \$1.16 million, a generous outpouring

donations.

In September, prayers were answered when an anonymous individual gave Trinity Presbyterian a \$1 million dollar gift for the capital campaign. The donor does not want their name or details about them shared, but told Trinity Presbyterian staff that they were inspired to give by the difference the church is making for those who live in the surrounding neighborhood. "We were really impressed with the work being done in the Bryant Neighborhood and the great impact it is having on the community. We are hoping this donation will help as you look

renovations in the summer of 2018. With this gift, Trinity Presbyterian is now just over 50% of its total goal. Church leadership also hopes that it will inspire others to learn more about how Trinity Presbyterian serves those in need and consider supporting Trinity Outreach Programs and the Bryant Neighborhood Center HERE for GOOD campaign.

For more information
<http://www.tpctacoma.org/hereforgood/>
About Trinity Presbyterian
Trinity Presbyterian Church has been a source of care and support

with many of those being children, Trinity also engages over 3,500 of our neighbors each year through Trinity Outreach Programs. Trinity is a true "neighborhood church" and regularly implements initiatives and partnerships which greatly benefit our neighbors. Trinity has stayed true to its original design of being a place where the community gathers, needs are met, and all are welcomed. We remain both immensely proud of Trinity's rich history and extremely passionate about our future.

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Help support the Tacoma Urban League! Proceeds will benefit the Urban League's social service programs for but not limited to African American Community of Pierce County.

For more information:

Tacoma Urban League

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TACOMA URBAN LEAGUE'S 6TH ANNUAL

Holiday

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Church Spotlight - Trinity Presbyterian Church

By Harlan Schoop & Rod Nash

In 1922, the young Trinity Presbyterian Church congregation took a leap of faith, and built a brand new building on its current site at 1619 6th Avenue. In order to meet the needs of the growing Hilltop neighborhood, and to develop lasting community, Trinity partnered with groups like the 6th Avenue Business Association who contributed financially to the new building because the community needed a place to gather for events. Over the past 95 years, Trinity has hosted countless community gatherings and events, in addition to a 30-year history of Community Support and

3,500 people take part each year in Trinity Outreach Programs, and the congregation contains over 200 regular attendees, with around 120 being children and youth. Trinity is teeming with energy and life. This, however, was not always the case. During the 1970s and '80s, the Trinity congregation dwindled down to about 15 people. One evening during that time, one longtime Trinity member, Irene Orando, came to a meeting at Trinity. No one else showed up. Rather than simply head home, Irene walked around the building, praying that the classrooms would one day be filled again with children. Around that same time, another Trinity member who happened to be a retired school principal, Hazel Pflugmacher, worked

to continue reaching out to the neighborhood, and to be a place where the neighborhood gathers on a daily basis. Through relationships with Bryant families, it was quickly noticed that many students needed school clothes. Pat's Clothing Closet was soon birthed at Trinity, and Pat's continues to serve around 100 neighbors each week. It also made sense to serve something to eat at the same time that Pat's Closet was open, so a community meal called Tony's Kitchen was started around the same time. Tony's Kitchen currently welcomes 30-40 guests to 'soup and conversation' each week. Soon, another inspiring thing happened: Trinity's pastor at the time, Lynn Longfield, asked a sister church (University Place Presbyterian) if

free medical care for those that don't have access to healthcare. Additionally, it was in 1998 that two newly-married school teachers, Tim and Anna Herron, who attended Trinity and lived in the neighborhood, were inspired to offer after-school homework help and tutoring for Hilltop students. The Herrons turned their garage on South 7th and Sheridan into a classroom, and The 7th Street Learning Center was born. Today, 19 years later, this program has officially become The Bobcat Learning Center, the after-school tutoring and enrichment program at Jason Lee Middle School. The Learning Center now runs under the leadership of Jaquette Easterlin, one of the very first Learning Center students back in 1998. The Bobcat Learning Center is

different neighbors and community organizations about what they felt was most needed in the Bryant Neighborhood. The number one need expressed in this listening project was for free activities for youth and families and a physical space to host them. Trinity's building has been used well for over 95 years, and it is imperative that it continues to be a safe place. The building needs major physical upkeep like a new roof, secured walls, and a better heating system. Simply taking care of building needs, however, isn't Trinity's only motivation. Trinity has launched "HERE For Good: The Bryant Neighborhood Center Campaign," an extensive \$3.1M campaign in which Trinity is actively seeking funding and new



Education and programs that have taken place through partnerships with Jason Lee Middle School and Bryant Montessori. From its very inception, Trinity has been an open and welcoming place that walks closely alongside its neighbors. Today, Trinity is flourishing. Over

with nearby Bryant Elementary to create the Trinity Afterschool Program (TAP). TAP has operated consistently over the last 30 years, assisting Bryant students with literacy intervention each day after school. The TAP program inspired the struggling Trinity community

they could help with some of the outreach that was overwhelming a small congregation. The Trinity Neighborhood Clinic was started on Tuesday evenings in the house next door to the church. For the last 27 years, volunteer doctors and healthcare professionals have offered

a formal partnership between Trinity, the Peace Community Center, and the Tacoma School District, helping middle school students achieve academic excellence. Here's the new part: The Bryant Neighborhood Center is coming. Trinity spent over a year talking to

partnerships to realize this future reality. In the midst of needing to address practical building needs, Trinity has embraced a new vision to turn its entire lower level into The Bryant Neighborhood Center, a renewed and reimagined space that will continue to house Trinity Outreach Programs, while also welcoming in new partnerships and programs on behalf of the Bryant Neighborhood. The Bryant Neighborhood Center will be a space where life-transforming relationships are made and grown, and a place where hope takes shape, and people are equipped for healthy lives and a healthy community. For more information about Trinity, or the HERE FOR GOOD Campaign, visit www.tpctacoma.org or contact Rod Nash, Director of Outreach, at rodn@tpctacoma.org or 253.272.8819.



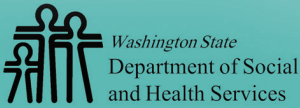
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Fantasy Lights and Bates Technical College partnership fuels real-world experience

By Chelsea Lindquist

The largest drive-through holiday lights display in the Northwest is just south of Tacoma at Spanaway Park. With more than 300 vibrant installations, Fantasy Lights has become a tradition for many—including students at Bates Technical College.

For the past 23 years, the college has collaborated with Pierce County Parks and Recreation to offer a hands-on learning opportunity for its welding students, who have built more than 70 displays for the park.

This year's contribution is a magnificent fairytale castle that reaches 16 feet into the night sky. Built during the college's summer quarter, the castle is an example of the real-world learning experiences the partnership helps provide.

Seventh-quarter students Jesse Breitbarth and Jose' Rogers, and fourth-quarter student Michael Bale laid out the design, and then bent, cut and welded the pieces together to form the framework.

The idea for each project comes from Pierce County Parks and Recreation, and it's the students' job to match the sketch and customize the displays for use in the park.

"Students take a great deal of pride in their work, and are always excited to watch their illuminated project set in motion at the park for their families and others to enjoy," said Rick Huston, Bates' welding program instructor.

The project is completed by the end of October, when a handful of truck driving students transport the large pieces to Spanaway Park for painting. Next, about 40 students enrolled in electronics wire the display with strings of lights that bring life and



Photo Courtesy of Bates Technical College



Photo Courtesy of Bates Technical College

movement to the displays.

Counting the resplendent Bates-built scenes and figures in the park will keep you busy. Scores of our students' work are found around each bend of the 2.2-mile drive-through event. The bright, giant pirate ship, rows of sunny daffodils and cherry-red tulips, swimming sea creatures, and a troupe of twinkling elves are just a few of the shining displays the college has contributed to annual light show.

Creative holiday scenes and strong community partners make Fantasy Lights a truly unique and festive experience—one that has become a cherished relationship for the college.

"Our annual participation in Fantasy Lights shines a light on our community involvement with neighborhood partners. Fantasy Lights is a fun and rewarding tradition for our students and employees, and we look forward to being a part of it each holiday season," said Bates Technical College President Dr. Ron Langrell.

Fantasy Lights is open nightly, 5:30-9 p.m., Thanksgiving Day through New Year's Day. For more information about the event, go to www.co.pierce.wa.us.

About Bates Technical College

Founded in 1940, Bates Technical College is a public college that offers certificate and degree opportunities in nearly 50 career education programs, and serves approximately 3,000 career training students and 10,000 more community members annually in extended learning, distance learning, high school, and other programs. For more information, go to www.bates.ctc.edu, or call 253.680.7000.



Good Bye Marty! From Policeman to Pastor

By Sharon Russell

Marty Price, CLO of Hilltop sector 1, will be moving into retirement on November 22 after almost 30 years of service. “Most of those years,” he says, “have been in the Hilltop.”

Price wasn’t sure what field he wanted to enter after he left high school. Then he took a class in law enforcement at CWU, and the rest, as they say, is history. After graduation, he’d been offered positions in Lacey, Kelso, and the Hilltop. He was advised that he’d learn more in the Hilltop, so he came here. ‘I’ve done about everything in the book since then,” he laughs.

Back in the 80’s and 90’s, Hilltop was known for its gang activity. At one time, 13-14 officers patrolled the area because of that activity. “It was exciting, for a young police officer,” he says, “to be the first on the scene.” Since then, the community has taken back its streets, and, he notes, it’s the community, not the policemen, who brought about change.

“Criminals operate in a cloak of darkness, so when the eyes of the community are always watching them, they move somewhere else,” he says. He cites the 8th and I neighborhood as an example of a community working together to provide the information the police need to crack down on crime. Area parks provide a place for neighbors to come together to work towards long-term problem solving. And when the community works with the police officers assigned to the area, the officers respond to the problems in their sector.

“Police officers are often faced with negative situations,” he says. “As a CLO, I have had the opportunity to develop positive personal relationships with the community.”

What will he miss? “I’ll miss the camaraderie as well as the action. It’s exciting to be the first officer at the door,” he says. He talks about the adrenaline rush of a SWAT raid on an apartment where a federal fugitive was hiding. Not-so-exciting times include being shot at. “My wife, Tricia, doesn’t share that excitement. She’s delighted I’m retiring.”

The names on the list to be his replacement, he says, are good ones. “I hope the new CLO comes on board before I leave so I can show him around and introduce him to people in the area.”

While serving on the police force, Price also coached “about 120 games” and traveled to many sports events in which his children participated. His children, Lynnea and Jimmie, are now grown. He’s also an assistant minister at Key Peninsula Lutheran Church. “When the minister’s gone,” he says, “I fill in.”

What does he plan to do in retirement? “We’re planning to travel. Our first trip will be to Branson, MO for country music.” The Prices also own 10 acres of land on Key Peninsula. They’re planning to plant “a lot of fruit trees.”

What does he think of the current gentrification of the Hilltop? “It’s not gentrification,” he says. “It’s a return to the 40’s when people wanted to live in the Hilltop; at one time, it was an incredible area to live. What we’re seeing is the natural evolution of things, the ebb and flow of an area.”

“And,” he adds, “It’s been a great place to finish my career.” Marty also plans to become more involved as a pastor with his Church and so it seems that tending to his flock - be it the Hilltop community or his faith community - Marty finds his himself in service to others. Thanks Marty!

Local Podcasts to Follow

By Korbett Mosesly



Interchangeable White Ladies Podcast

by Hope Teague-Bowlings & Annie Jansen

We discuss education, culture, and local activism. How can white women use their privilege to deconstruct white culture, confront their own biases, be better allies, and be less basic?



Citizen Tacoma

by Jenny Jacobs

Regular citizens CAN get involved at all levels of government. Through interviews with decision makers, candidates for office, and political activists, we hope to inspire YOU to take action.



Nerd Farmer Podcast

by Nate Bowlings

A podcast about education, civics, economics, life, and shade in the South Sound.



Move to Tacoma

by Marguerite Martin

Interviews with longtime and recent residents about community, transportation, neighborhoods, and the future of Tacoma, Washington - the City of Destiny.



Channel 253

by Channel 253

A network of the best podcasts of Tacoma. Download past episodes or subscribe to future episodes of Channel 253 by Channel 253 for free.



Credit Up

by Sound Outreach

From non-profit leaders to first- time borrowers, the hosts have authentic conversations with community residents about financial opportunities and obstacles in Tacoma, Washington.

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Hilltop Regional Health Center
1202 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Tacoma
(253) 441-4742
Learn more at www.commhealth.org

On Nov 7th, 2017 Voters Elected Victoria Woodards Mayor of Tacoma

By Woodards Campaign

Victoria Woodards has been proud to call Tacoma the “City of Destiny” her home for nearly her entire life. She is a product of the Tacoma Public School District and a proud graduate of Lincoln High School. In addition to being a US Army Veteran, she has worked in the public, private and nonprofit sectors.

For over three decades, Victoria has served as a passionate leader in our community in many ways. Some of those include former chair of the Washington State Commission on African American Affairs, Trustee for the Washington State History Museum, Co-Chair of the Tacoma Civil Rights Project, Senior Fellow in the American Leadership forum and Producer of the region’s largest celebration of diversity “Ethnic Fest.”

While Victoria has always had a desire to serve and work in her community, it was while working for Harold Moss on the Pierce County Council that she discovered her desire to serve in elected office. In May of 2004, she was appointed to the Board of Park Commissioners and subsequently elected in November 2005. She served as President of the Metro Parks Board until 2009 when she was elected to the Tacoma City Council.

As a member of the City Council, Victoria worked tirelessly to make Tacoma the best place to live, work and play. She was Deputy Mayor

in 2014 and during her tenure as a councilmember served in several capacities including chair of the Tacoma-Pierce County Board of Health, Community Vitality and Safety Committee and the Gang Reduction Task Force. She was also on the boards of the Foundation for Tacoma Students (Graduate Tacoma) and the Crystal Judson Family Justice Center.

Victoria has been a member of Allen AME Church for almost 40 years. As a youth, she was an active as a member of the youth choir, usher board and the Young Peoples Department (Y.P.D.). She has served in many positions within the church, including, a member of Ellen Kellum Missionary Society, YPD Director, and as a Choir Director for both the Youth and Women’s Choir.

Victoria took the reigns as the President and CEO of the Tacoma Urban League in 2011. There she led a devoted team, serving the local community while targeting the next generation. Under her leadership the League was stabilized and its budget was tripled. Today the league is thriving nonprofit serving youth and families in the areas of education, advocacy and financial prosperity.

She lives in the Southend of Tacoma with her baby (dog) “Genesis.” She believes “We make a living by what we get, we live by what we give.”



Photo Courtesy of Rai Jurado

Links to Opportunity Creative Conversations

Hilltop student help design the new streetscape!

By Andy Micklow

The Links to Opportunity project hosted two Creative Conversations workshops for Hilltop community members on October 4, 2017 in the Storefront office (1120 South 11th St).

Participants in the workshops included Hilltop residents, community leaders, and members of the business community. These interactive sessions asked participants to identify images, words, colors, and places that represent the past, present, and future of the Hilltop community. Community members described the Hilltop neighborhood with words such as “Unity, Revitalization, and Hope.” McCarver Elementary, Allen AME, and Tacoma Community House were just a few of the significant places identified by workshop participants. The information gathered from the community during these workshops will be used by streetscape designers to help integrate Hilltop’s story into the design plans for the sidewalk. Community members who were unable to attend the Creative Conversations workshops are encouraged to share their ideas through an online survey at cityoftacoma.org/links or in person

at the project office (1120 South 11th St).

Another exciting community engagement activity was the WRITE/DRAW exercise that asked local elementary students to help redesign the sidewalk by sketching or coloring in a workbook page. Student drawings included trees and water features; others included murals and art in the sidewalk area. Gabrielle (Grade 6) drew hanging baskets, bike racks, and planter boxes in her design. Arzella from Bryant Montessori (Grade 6) described the Hilltop as “a peaceful ocean, creative, and alive.” Students also submitted meaningful quotes by Martin Luther King, Jr., Albert Einstein, and Dr. Seuss that they think reflect their community. Community members can stop by the storefront office to view all of the submissions and chat with the streetscape design team.

As the Links to Opportunity streetscape design project continues to move forward, there will be many more exciting and engaging opportunities for Hilltop community members to participate in the design process. Visit the project’s website (cityoftacoma.org/links) or stop by the storefront office (1120 South 11th St - the old Key Bank building) to help stay informed.

LINKS TO OPPORTUNITY

Let’s get started!

STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

The City of Tacoma, in partnership with Sound Transit and Pierce Transit, is launching the Streetscape Improvements Project in your neighborhood! With your help, we want to design pedestrian spaces that fit your community, support local businesses, and make it easier to do the things you love.

- **WE’VE OPENED UP SHOP:** Visit our storefront office at 1120 South 11th Street to learn more about the project, check out maps and drawings and understand how you can participate in the design. Our office is open Tuesdays 12-4, Wednesdays 9-1 and Thursdays 9-1 and 4-8. Hours may change based on community needs.
- **STAY TUNED FOR MEETING DATES AND OTHER EVENTS:** We’ll be hosting several events and workshops so people can help us develop the design. Visit cityoftacoma.org/links for more information and updated schedule.



Photo Courtesy of Andy Micklow

And the Quest Continues

By Wendy Morris

People's Park was bustling on October 7th for Associated Ministries' first AMAZING QUEST to Understand Homelessness. The day was a success as people walked Hilltop to learn more about the issue of homelessness, and also see the many wonderful businesses we have in our community. Many of the participants stopped Red Elm Café for a warm-up as they went from one activity to another, and then stopped for a treat at Johnsons Candy!



There was no doubt that the Hilltop and Pierce County community has a heart for struggling families, and want to learn and make a real difference in their lives. Seeing the passion everyone had for working together, and learning how to best help people experiencing homelessness, was

uplifting.

Folks learned that the needs of people experiencing homelessness are as diverse as the homeless population itself. Someone staying in a car is going to have different needs than someone sleeping in a stairwell that has to pack up or hide their belongings each day. Activities included a Fact or Fiction review, learning what is true and what is not in regards to why people become homeless, and how they can best help.

Learning about what hygiene items are most helpful and what to donate or give to someone to help them through their current crisis. Understanding that experiencing homelessness is a trauma that too many of our citizens' experience. The main lesson people learned was that people who are experiencing homelessness are people just like them. And that one of the biggest needs is compassion, a friendly smile and a hello; an acknowledgement that they are seen and are not alone.

We are thankful to all the participants, sponsors, vendors, and volunteers who made our first AMAZING QUEST success! With their help, Associated Ministries was



Photo Courtesy of Associated Ministries

able to launch what we hope will grow into one of the most anticipated annual events in our community. Thanks to our sponsors, Chase, Amerigroup, United Healthcare, City of Tacoma, Alterius College, CHI



Franciscan, Holiday Inn Express.

And an extra big thank you to our fellow Hilltop businesses, KBTC,

Peace Community Center, Tacoma Community House, Community Healthcare and Catherine Place for their support.

We've been blessed to receive feedback like this note from our friends at First United Methodist Church, Tacoma:

"Thank you for working so hard to make the Amazing Quest a success. It was a valuable learning experience for our team. Even those of us who thought we had all the answers had something to learn. It's opened our eyes to the challenges facing the homeless and those trying to provide services."

If you were unable to attend, but would still like to learn more about

the issue of homelessness and ways to become involved, please visit the Associated Ministries website at www.associatedministries.org. Or you can attend one of our Community Quarterly Meetings; the next one is on Tuesday, December 6th from 4:00 – 6:00 pm at Bethlehem Baptist Church (4818 Portland Avenue, Tacoma, Washington 98404).

By uniting together, we are building a stronger community!

Wendy Morris - Community Engagement Coordinator
wendym@associatedministries.org

TACOMA COMMUNITY HOUSE

BECOME A READ2ME VOLUNTEER

What is Read2Me?

Read2Me is a unique **tutoring program** where trained volunteers work with striving 1st-3rd grade students to improve their reading comprehension skills and nurture a life-long love of reading.



Tutors meet one-on-one with students for one 45-minute session each week



Sessions are held at Arlington, Lister, McCarver, and Manitou Park Elementary School during school hours



On-site coordinators provide support



Tutors learn teaching methods and learning outcomes that mirror the curriculum of each child's classroom



Tutors stay with the same child for the entire school year to aid with relationship-building

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EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES THROUGH EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, IMMIGRATION & ADVOCACY SINCE 1910

Little Lincoln Abes Football Program

“Little Abes” keep it R.E.A.L.”

By Kris “Sonics Guy” Brannon

One of the local bright spots in our sports community is the Little Lincoln Abes Football Program. The Little Lincoln Abes Football Program is designed to be an eventual feeder program to Lincoln High School Football. Chris Wells, Head Coach of the program, created the program when his childhood friend Ex-NFL Quarterback Jon Kitna, who was the coach at Lincoln High School at the time, reached out and asked Chris to start a feeder football program to help prepare young men to be ready to attend Lincoln High School. Chris explains, “Our mission is to train and graduate R.E.A.L. men.” Which means:

- R- Rejects passivity
- E- Empathizes with others
- A- Accepts responsibility
- L- Leads courageously

Chris’s favorite thing about coaching is watching players put in the time and effort to be successful in the classroom and on the field. He also enjoys seeing these young men come back and volunteer in the community and serve others. What inspires Coach Chris Wells about these young men is he sees something special in each and every one of them — and it’s not always football related. “We have kids from two parent households and kids who are raised by their grandparents, but I always tell the kids it still comes down to choices and making the right ones to reach your goal” says Chris. Our program tries



Photo Courtesy of Rai Jurado

to instill a little discipline, a little toughness/resilience, and a blue collar work ethic that they can use in life as well as on the football field. The football season runs from July to November. There are 3 Abes’ teams, 3rd & 4th grade, 5th & 6th grade and 7th and 8th grade. This year they decided not to have the same coaches go up each year with their teams from 3rd to 8th grade. They now have coaches who will always coach 3rd & 4th grade then the players move on to another coach for 5th & 6th grade and then another coach for 7th and 8th grade.



“We all coach the same offense and defense but it comes from different styles of coaching which hopefully helps the kids be more coachable in the long run,” notes Chris, “which is the main thing the High School coaching staff asks of our players.” Mike Kutz who is one of the assistant coaches who is also barber at Flawless Cuts located in the Hilltop.

It’s Mike’s first year volunteering with the team. Mike volunteers because his kids are part of the program and it allows him to help kids and his own kids learn how to play the game of football and have fun and be safe. In closing, Head Coach Wells states the difference in coaching younger vs older kids to him is the younger ones are like a sponge and soak up every-

thing while the older players at times are more challenging to coach because they are at that age when they start to questioning everything, however, he believes all kids just want someone to love them and know that they have some adults in their corner. If you’re interested in finding out more about this program you can go to LincolnAbesFootball.com and look under youth programs or e-mail them at Lincolnjrfootball@gmail.com



Photo Courtesy of Rai Jurado

Roller Derby Thrives in Tacoma

Jammers and Blockers battle for points

By Kris “Sonics Guy” Brannon

One of the most exciting sports that continues to enjoy a sustained and growing popularity in our loce area is Roller Derby. It’s fast paced non-stop action easily allows the fan to get hooked! One of the oldest Derby groups in this city is the Dockyard Derby Dames, whose are starting their 12th season. They play at the Pierce College gym in Steilacoom with monthly matches during the season. The Dockyard Derby Dames consist of 3 home teams. The Trampires, the Marauding Mollys

and the Femme Fianna. In a typical Roller Derby match or bout, two of the home teams will play each other with one of them playing a team from another city. A Roller Derby match consists two 30 minute halves. The hardest thing to keep track of when you’re becoming a fan is keeping track of how points are scored. There are a ton of rules in Roller Derby but the easiest ones to remember are there are two types of players on a play — Jammers and Blockers. Only the Jammers can score points. They score by passing the Blockers. They get one point for each Blocker they pass. They have to pass the group

of Blockers once (for no points) and then they can score points on the second pass. Luckily I was able to talk to couple of great Roller Derby women in the league Aashiyanna Koreishi and Jessica Moonchild of the Trampires and ask them a few questions.

- 1.) How long have you been involved in Roller Derby?

AK: I have been doing Derby for 3 years.

JMS: I started in the Dockyard Bruiser program last June and was drafted the Trampires in September.
- 2.) What drew you to Roller Derby?

AK: I was interested in Derby for years. I played sports in college and have missed team sports so much since then. I realised I could be an adult athlete and get to meet some amazing people.

JMS: I’ve played team sports all my life and I really missed that feeling. I love the camaraderie and that it is a place I can be myself.
- 3.) What keeps you involved in Roller Derby?

AK: The people are the number one reason that keeps me involved. Add into that the athleticism, empowerment and confidence that

Derby has given me and it keeps me hooked.

JMS: The thrill of the game. It is an absolute blast. Each bout is anyone’s game and every bout is different.

- 4.) What would you tell someone just starting out in Roller Derby?

AK: I’d tell someone starting out that it’s a blast. To be involved in a community sport is wonderful. To be introduced to new people on a nearly a weekly basis is amazing. It takes time, commitment and but in the end it’s worth it.

JMS: If you want results you have to work for them. Derby is what you put into it. In the beginning you are going to resemble a newborn giraffe.....it gets better, I promise. Every time you are on your skates. You get better, welcome to your new addiction.
- 5.) Anything I missed that you’d like to mention?

AK: As skaters couldn’t do what we do without local communities that support us (our sponsors and our fans) and our Derby community that is made up of countless volunteers and supporters so thank you all from the bottom of my heart.

JMS: Come watch a bout and say Hello! I promise don’t bite.

Middle schoolers invited to drop in from 8 p.m. until 11 p.m.

Picture Late Night on the Hilltop.

Is it a bunch of sweat-streaked teenage boys battling it out on the basketball court?

Well, yes. And, no. The familiar Hilltop institution known as Late Night is a middle school gig for both boys and girls. And, yes, they do play basketball. But lots of other stuff goes on, too.

The free, drop-in program is a Metro Parks Tacoma program partially funded by the City of Tacoma in the People's Community Center. Late Night runs from 8:00 to 11:00pm. on most Fridays, except on Tacoma Public Schools holidays.

Late Night revolves around the interests of participants, who are encouraged to practice their fitness for leadership by taking charge of elements of the program, said Gloria Muhammad, Late Night's site lead. "Being able to initiate things is important in life," she said. "At Late Night, we give youth opportunities to do that."

Every evening begins with an introductory icebreaker activity often led by teens. It's a way for them to quickly get to know each other. Many Late Night regulars live on the Hilltop or attend school in the neighborhood, and the program is geared to local youth. Attendance varies, but recent participation numbers have been reaching 50 or more.

"It brings youth together from all types of backgrounds. ... And we've got a variety of different activities going on," Muhammad said.

Throughout the evening, the gym is busy with basketball, volleyball and group games. While that goes

on, a new activity begins each hour. It starts with swimming in the People's pool, which opened in 2016. Later on, there's often an opportunity to try some cooking. Other activities have included crafts or art projects, a poetry workshop, bingo, karaoke and guest speakers. Last summer, the final session featured a guest disc jockey and a dance party.

Adults mentors and role models oversee each Late Night session, said Leandra Shelton, Metro Parks recreation supervisor for youth services. Most are people passionate and dedicated to the Hilltop community, much like Muhammad, who lives walking distance from the People's Center and grew up on the Hilltop. She said she applied for the job because she was looking for ways to give back.

The program's goal is to provide free, safe activities and opportunities for youth to interact, engage, learn and partner with their peers and positive adults outside of school. On their first visit to Late Night, participants must sign a pledge to adhere to the program's code of conduct. Youth must sign in and out each evening, and no re-entry is permitted. The rules emphasize the importance of respect for each other, staff members, property and the facility.

Most of the youth easily comply with the rules. Muhammad said a warning is usually enough to get behavior back on track. So far, she hasn't had to expel anyone.

Many parents are grateful that Late Night exists. One is Jennifer Stolle, who is office administrator for the Hilltop Action Coalition and a member of the People's Center Steering Committee. Her son, Jason, 12, who attends Bryant Montessori School, is a Late Night regular.

from youth, business owner's parents, community members and the media. You are the experts in your community, come help us make a difference!

Here are some ways to get involved!

1. Take our quick online survey
@ www.hyctacoma.org
2. Attend our 3rd Thursday of the
month meeting- it's open to the
public!
3. If you are an organization,
consider hosting a parenting
class.

Learn more on our website or email
Erin Watlington at erin@hycycoma.org.



His mother usually drops him off, along with two or three of his friends, then returns at 11:00pm. to take them home. "They would get mad if I picked them up early," she said. "They come out exhausted, sweaty and

stinky, but also bright and happy and full of energy. They love Late Night."

Because young people of this age are vulnerable and are easily drawn into unhealthy activities, Late Night is a critical resource on

the Hilltop, where family income is limited, Jennifer Stolle said.

Shelton appreciates the endorsement. "The love of this program from the community is huge," she said.

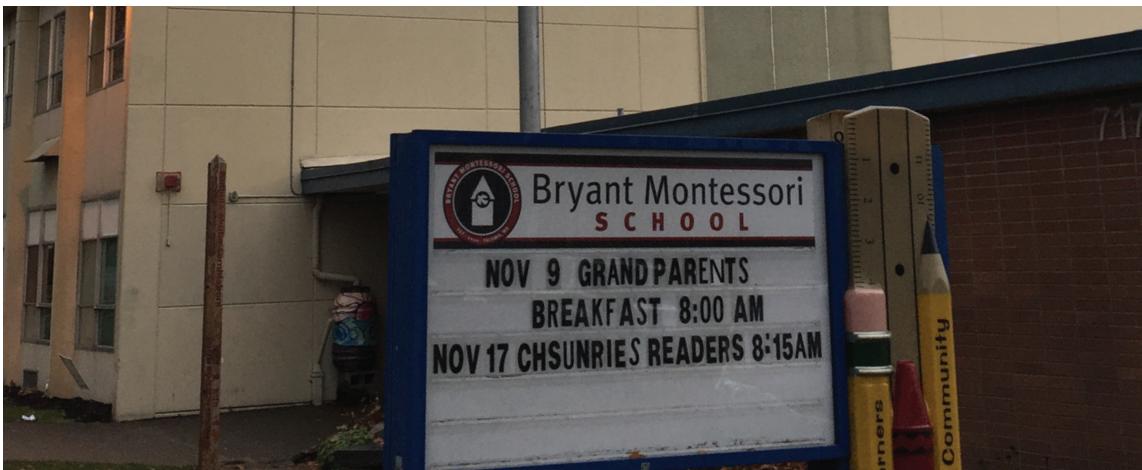
By Erin Watlington

We often are asked what a coalition is or does. Hilltop residents may know the definition of the word better than most since the Hilltop Action Coalition has a long running history of advocacy and action but let me share a little about the Healthy Youth Coalition.

First of all, a coalition is a group of people coming together to address an issue, but come with varied experiences and opinions. A coalition should be diverse and represent the community they are seeking to support.

The Healthy Youth Coalition of Tacoma is a group of folks who care about youth and their families and want to see them thrive. The focus of our work is to help educate the community on youth substance use prevention and reduce the risks associated with this issue. Our primary area of effort is right here in Hilltop and Central Tacoma. Our group is currently made up of healthcare workers, law enforcement, state agencies, faith groups, youth organizations and the school district.

We are seeking more influence



By Jenna Buswell

We feel so honored to be a part of the Hilltop Community which is a vibrant and thriving community. The magic of this morning spent with grandparents and special people of students' lives came together to celebrate and share a community breakfast. The halls are bustling and things are moving. We had our PTO (Parent Teacher Organization) sponsored BINGO night in October and it was an amazing celebration of our community with over

300 people in attendance. Many more community and family events are coming and we are so excited.

How you can get involved?

We are working on putting together over 40 Holiday Meal Baskets all of which will go into the hands of our students and their families. If you are interested in donating non-perishable holiday food you can do so by dropping it off to the Bryant Montessori Main Office between 8-4:00PM the week of November 13 th -20 th . Your support of our

school community is so appreciated!

We are continually looking for adult volunteers to come in and support our students with their academic learning, field studies, as well as just being a support and special person to them. If this is a opportunity that interests you, please contact: Jenna Buswell, Family Support Liaison @ Bryant: 253- 571-2842 or jbuswel@tacoma.k12.wa.us.

We love the community in which we are lucky enough to reside and call home.



Important Colors

By A'mya Moore

Once upon a time, there was a crayon in a box. The color was bright yellow. No one ever used this crayon. It was always called the ugly color.

One day a little boy named Jonny took the crayon box and saw yellow. “Why is this color in here?” he said. And Jonny looked at it and examined. He just left it alone. He picked up red and drew a fire breathing dragon.

“Why can’t I be like red?!” cried Yellow. Jonny picked up pink and drew a unicorn. “Why can’t I be pink?” asked Yellow. Jonny picked up every color except yellow and drew something fantastic. And then Sally came to color. Sally said, “Look at this color, it’s so amazing.” “Is she talking about me?” wondered Yellow. “I’m going to use him. He’s very sharp. Has anyone ever used him before?” “Woah! She’s talking about me,” Yellow said.

And Sally used him with pride. “Hey!” said Jonny, “Yellow is useless.” “Don’t say that!” said Sally. Jonny took the color and was about to break it. Sally stopped him and said, “Every color deserves to be used. Just because you think it’s bad doesn’t mean you can judge it by its opinion! Now you’ve learned.” One day, Jonny saw the color yellow and he made a banana with it.

Big Rainbow

By A'mya Moore

Once was a rainbow, so great and tall. But it only came out in the orange early fall. Why was this? No-body knew. It was all a mystery for Fo and Fu. “How can this be? Look at this tree compared to this tree.” “Fu! It’s a she and a he, and a small beautiful me.”

A'mya Moore, the daughter of Dar-ylann Pease, is a 10-year-old fifth grader at McCarver Elementary where she participates in the McCarver Scholars after-school program. Her favorite subject is writing. Her love of writing started in the first grade, when her teacher said she had the best handwriting in the class! She enjoys writing creative stories and encourages students who struggle to write about something they really like: “Maybe then, they’ll have a more fun time,” she said. When she grows up, she wants to be a plastic surgeon or a pre-school teacher.

These next poems were written by 2nd and 3rd graders in Write253's writing program in partnership with the McCarver's Scholars after-school program

Dogs

by Iyana

A dog that hates school
“I don’t like school,” she said,
“I will hide in my room.”
So she didn’t go to school
Today so she had a sleep over
And her mom told her if she
Doesn’t go to school, “you will
Get a spanking in front of your
friends.”
“ok mom, I will.”

Rhymes

By Samya

Samya is bright as a light
She have a fright that bites

There was a moon in the sky
It was so high
That was so far
Along with the stars

Rhymes are fun
In the sun
Chewing gum too is fun
When you share with everyone

I like to write
In your sight

There was a rabbit on the boat
That had a coat
On the boat

I Love My Dog

By Eslinda

Once upon a time
There was a dog
She was running around
And she bite his tail
And she screamed
And his name is Love
But she pass away and
I love my dog.

I Like

By Eslinda

I like to play.
I like to have fun.
I like to game.
I like to have fun.
I love to play.

Charlotte

By Amoni

Once upon a time
There was a beautiful Princes
And her name is
Charlotte
And she was the
Best girl in the kingdom
And everybody
Love her
Because she
Knew everything

The World

By Sharaya

One day the world was turning
Blue and my life was to
Four five six the world was a mix
824 the war between the air

and the water the war’s not over
but it was not beginning
You will live but you’ll not die

The people lived but not for long
Mahahah
But the world
Was flooded and
The people had to rebuild

Love It

By Adriana

Once upon a time
There was a girl who
Kissed a boy whale
And a girl octopus kiss
A boy octopus
And a crab was silly
And a bird was set down on the log
There was a cat silly and a smiley
face
And a car was crazy
The light white

McCarver Eagles

By Kaila

I see an eagle
In the sky flying
Soaring looking fly
Looking nice
Looking strong
With no fear, so fly
I go to a school
Name McCarver Eagles
All the eagles that go
To the school
Looking strong
Looking smart
Learning all they can
Never stop

I See Free

By Kaila

I see a tree with a lot of leaves
There’s a lot of dogs looking free
Nice dogs in the tree
No directions
No Rules
Have a free life that
Must feel good, a pretty tree
With pretty dogs
Nothing more I can say
I am exhausted for writing everyday

Swinging Girl

By Vy

I see a girl is swinging at the ground
All the way to the sky.
I see a girl wear a yellow shirt
And a black skirt and a pink shoes.
I see the girl was very “Happy!!”
I see the girl have a long pony tails.
I see the sky was blue.
I see the wind.
I see 8 trees.
I see white cloud.
I see the cloud look like a mountain.
I see the girl has a beautiful “smile.”

Hearts

By Alexandria

I see hearts and kissing
And a bird doing nothing.
I see a lovely moon that is little.
It was night time in a sea.

Big Foot

By Alexandria

I went to the forest.
It was night time.
Suddenly I saw Big Foot.
I said, “aaaaa!!!”
I threw a toy cat
And a hat
And a rat
And Big Foot was knocked out.
I was shaking.

Happy Birthday Scott

By Jelina

Once upon a time,
There was a squid name Scott.
It was his birthday

And he got to invite 3 people
Named Emily, Cream, and Alexan-
der.
He turned 7. He got 20 presents.
The best present he got was a fidget
spinner.
The cake was shaped like a car
And it was red.
It was time for presents.
All his friends went home.
He took his shower
And brushed his teeth
And went to his room.
His bed is Lightening McQueen,
Like his cake.
His mom came in his room
And read him Llama Llama Red
Pajama.

Dolphin

By Aaliyah

I see a dolphin
In the water.
I see a jelly fish.
I see seaweed.
I see a frog.

Achoo!

By Madison

There were presents
Under the tree
When we came down
We said “whoopee!”
And we open
The navis
And my wish
Came true, “hortoo!!!”
And I said, “achoo!”

I Like

By Dai’ja

I like riding my bike.
I like running with my kite,
Singing in the mic.
I like to hike
With my son Mike.
Psych Psych Psych Psych
Like pie pie pie pie
I have some slime
I can rhyme
And squish it any time.

Trees

By Jeremiah

Trees
Trees
Trees
Trees
And monsters
And a bike
People
People
People

A Girl

By Liberty

A girl sleeping
While her friends
Are playing baseball
While she is sleeping
Dreaming about magic.

Pumpkin

By Caden

Once upon a time
There were two chidren and
They were carving a pumpkin.
And they have a robbery!
And someone got hurt and
Blood came out and
The pumpkin came alive.
They were scare of the pumpkin.

I See

By Malachi

I see a rat with horns,
That’s tired, riding a bike.
It is red and does not look old.
I think the rat is Big Foot’s son.
I named him Jeff and he is riding
To his friend’s house.

Dogs in a Tree

By Azzy

Once there was a colorful tree
And there were dogs that
Lived in that tree
And they were happy
And somebody found the dogs
And took the dogs
And cared for them
And the girl’s name was Ann
And she told the story
And that story was she went
To traveled to the colorful forest
And she came to the colorful tree
And found the dogs
And named them
Bella, Hannah, Lily, Jr, Rocky,
Haydn.

Noise of the Game

By Jason

Noisy
Whizz
Rrrr
Eeekk
Bam Bam
Honnnnkkkk!
Beep Beep
RRRRRRRRR!

The Water

By Mateo

Once upon a time
I put a gopro under the water,
And I see all kind of fish
In the water.
And lots of boats on top of the
water.

Once upon a time in Tacoma,
On the water at sunset,
I saw a train going anywhere
But it was find, Awwww!!!

A Girl

By Khiymea

There was a girl
That she wanted to go on a swing
And she had to do some chores
And a lot of chores
She was so sad that
She cannot go on the swing
Because she not done.

A Boy

By Shamiyah

A boy holding a box
And Looking at a monster
And the monster is looking at a girl
The girl is looking at an elephant
The elephant is looking at
An elephant writing on paper.

I Like

By Sam

I like to play games.
I like to play tag.
I like to Pokemon.
I like to play on my tablet.

Adventures

By Heaven

An adventure is
so much fun
Because you can play
with your friends
And your sisters.

TCH Trunk or Treat Event

By Tacoma Community House Staff

On October 31st, we invited Tacoma families to join us for trunk-or-treating! Staff members and generous volunteers decorated their cars in fun themes — from pirates, to Harry Potter, to Under the Sea — to hand out candy to local children. It was a blast for all involved, and we thank everyone who donated their time (and delicious treats!) to make this event a success. Check out all the amazing images! Thank you Tacoma Community House!



Catherine Place, An Oasis for Women

By Traci Kelly

When you step into Catherine Place, you step into an oasis for women.

This non-profit women's center is located in a beautiful century-old house here in Hilltop.

Catherine Place was founded in 2000 by the Tacoma Dominican Community. The Sisters of Saint Dominic were inspired by Catherine of Siena, a 14th century saint whose passion for truth, compassion for humanity, and spiritual vision changed the society of her day. Similarly, staff and volunteers at Catherine Place are focused on improving quality of life for women of all backgrounds.

This quiet house provides a safe place where women are offered a cup of tea, listened to, and supported. Individual advocacy services are provided for many different issues; illness, immigration, violence, unemployment, loss/grief, and or other significant life shifts. Support groups or 'Circles' are also offered almost every day on a number of topics.

Healing and Creative Arts are another service offered at Catherine Place. Healing Touch and massage are offered by appointment for donations. Creative workshops like SoulCollage and basket weaving are offered at low cost.

Recently, Catherine Place welcomed a new Executive Director, Traci Kelly. "Our focus on self-care, leadership, safety and nonviolent communication is so important right now. I love the idea of an oasis, a place where women can rest and rejuvenate, regardless of their experience in the outside world."

More than 850 women access Catherine Place's individual support and Circle Programs annually. Catherine Place is open to all women, with or without an appointment, from 10 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday. Visit catherineplace.org for a list of all of our upcoming events and workshops.



Individual advocacy and ongoing group support for women in English & Spanish

Catherine Place
Hope Healing Connection

(253) 572-3547

www.catherineplace.org

cplace@catherineplace.org

Hilltop Business Association Year in Review

By Mario Lorenz & Jo
Davies

When 2017 began I had no idea where we were headed in the district but as I reflect a little this year has been a wonder. I say this because sometimes I wonder how we survived. At our retreat in February we developed several goals based on the Main Street model:

- 1.) Organization,
- 2.) Promotion,
- 3.) Design
- 4.) Economic Restructuring.

We also renewed our Mission Statement: promote revitalization and advocate for Hilltop businesses and organizations. Many of the goals were accomplished during the year but there are several that still need attention. A few of these goals include replacement of the Hilltop street banners, partnerships for the care and maintenance of the planters, stronger membership participation in committees, and improve good and services on the Hilltop.

The HBA is excited about the district's future. New businesses have opened and there is a trend in Hilltop towards new growth. We must work together to provide for every business and community member in a way that follows the golden rule. Much of our efforts in 2018 will be devoted to enhancing the district and fulfilling the goals that will come from our retreat in early 2018.

Mario Lorenz
HBA Manager
November 13, 2017

In other HBA news

The Hilltop Business Association is proud to announce our newest member to the board. Anne Artman, who is a long-time resident of the Tacoma Area. Her father was a twenty-year veteran, who moved their family to Tacoma in 1962, where she grew up attending St. John Baptist church. She has witnessed the Hilltop transformation, with the encouragement of Pastor Steele, HBA Board President, she relocated The Tacoma Recovery Café to the Hilltop area. The café serves nearly 75 Individuals per day. These individuals come from diverse backgrounds to receive recovery support, recovery coaches and a variety of social service concerns, such as housing, education, training and health and wellness support- the Café treats the entire system. The success of the program was founded on community partnerships, alliances and sitting on several boards, such as Optum, Drug Court Advisory and Goodwill Women to Work board. Anne brings an understanding of the community and a strong desire to improve homelessness, and other social concerns. This means bringing employment opportunities to the hilltop community, while addressing the business concerns. Tacoma is growing, Anne is committed to the Street Fair, Cherry Blossom Festival, Wine Walk and events that support and promote community unity and success. Let's also congratulate our new member, who received her MA in Counseling on October 13, 2017. Congratulations and Welcome!



2018 Disparity Study of Business Owners

By City of Tacoma

Griffin & Strong, P.C. ("GSPC") is under contract with the City of Tacoma, WA ("City") to conduct the 2018 Disparity Study and analysis of the Tacoma LEAP and SBE Programs. The Disparity Study will review the City's procurement policies and analyze participation in awards by small, disadvantaged, minority, and women owned business enterprises.

It is the City's desire to offer a diverse and equitable business environment that will benefit all of its communities. Therefore, GSPC has partnered with Creative Research

Solutions, a small, minority-owned, research firm, to create and distribute the Online Survey of Business Owners. The City of Tacoma invites its vendors and local business community to participate in this Online Survey of Business Owners designed to capture demographic, statistical and anecdotal information regarding local businesses, their individual operating capacity, and past impressions of doing business, or attempting to do business with the City of Tacoma. This survey traditionally takes 15-20 minutes to complete.

Local, for-profit, businesses, in all business sectors (including

small, minority, disadvantaged and women owned for-profit businesses) are encouraged to participate in the Disparity Study survey. If you are a Not For Profit business or government entity, please refrain from completion of the study. For more information or to take the survey, please visit access the link below or visit TacomaDisparityStudy.com.

For Questions, or to report technical difficulties with the study, please contact GSPC Deputy Project Manager, Sterling Johnson, at TacomaStudy@gspclaw.com or sterling@gspclaw.com.



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Evergreen Empowerment Group



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- Expunge, vacate, and seal criminal record(s)
- Remove barriers to housing and employment
- Learn how to reduce fee's, fines & LFO's

Contact us today to learn more.
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Poverty Summit Draws Hundreds of Community Leaders Together

Event Promotes Conversation and Action Plans To Lift Residents out of Poverty

By Katherine Ransom

In Pierce County alone, nearly 100,000 households struggle to make ends meet and one in three families are homeless or housing insecure. These alarming statistics sounded a reverberating response from United Way of Pierce County to host a poverty summit on November 14 at the Hotel Murano to present an ambitious, multifaceted, collaborative conversation focused on ways to improve conditions for individuals and families in Pierce County.

The event was free thanks to the generous support of lead sponsor State Farm, along with CHI Franciscan Health, Columbia Bank, Harborstone Credit Union, WorkForce Central, KeyBank, Regence, The Greater Tacoma Community Foundation, WSECU, African American Financial Capability, Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Board Tacoma-Pierce County.

According to Dona Ponopinto, President and CEO, United Way of Pierce County, “Too many families are not earning enough to meet basic needs. Yet many of our families are working in multiple jobs. The reasons include lack of access to workforce and training programs in addition to access to reliable transportation, affordable housing and daycare. By bringing together key community leaders to tackle the issues together, we can begin to move the needle and close the income gap.”

Tapping into the knowledge and expertise of prominent regional academics, United Way leadership, executives from leading nonprofits, city and county government officials and international activists, the event, From Poverty to Possibilities seeks to improve conditions and outcomes in areas such as employment, financial stability and health.

Ponopinto kicked off the event and was followed by Bruce Dammeier, Pierce County Executive, Ali Modarres, director of Urban Studies at University of Washington, Tacoma. Modarres sited that perhaps the biggest barriers low income individuals and families face are systemic and that lack of access to education and healthcare prohibit people from advancing.

Approximately 200 participants filled a room that featured panel discussions that highlighted global national and regional perspectives on issues impacting generational poverty as well as solutions. Panel discussions were led by moderator Carol Mitchell, Director, Justice Services and Special Projects, Office of the County Executive.

Panel members included Mia Birdsong, Alex Gambler, Mavuno, Laura Schlerer, United Way Worldwide, Laura D’Alessandro, LISC, Marilyn Strickland, Mayor of Tacoma, Michael Mirra, Tacoma Housing Authority and Tom Pierson, Pierce County-Tacoma Chamber of Commerce. Two breakout sessions followed each panel discussion, providing guests the opportunity to delve into systems and discuss community assets in place as well as the challenges that are blocking progress.

An emotional highpoint of the event included a moving story of Anita, a local mother who benefitted



Photo Courtesy of Bob Connelly

from numerous local health and human service programs and services during her battle with addiction and homelessness. While Anita is now happily employed and has reached many of her dreams, she reminded the audience that the struggle continues as she loses eligibility for key benefits. This experience known as the “benefits cliffs” describes what happens when public benefits programs phase down or out quickly, leading to an abrupt reduction or loss of benefits for families as household earnings increase, but have not increased enough for self-sufficiency to be reached.

Keynote speaker Mia Birdsong, a family activist who advocates for the strengthening of communities and the self-determination of low-income people provided insights into the continual war on poverty. She has been featured in numerous national publications and her provocative TED Talk called “The Story We Tell About Poverty Isn’t True, has drawn more than 1.6 million views.

Birdsong also praised Anita for her courage and reminded the audience that while the programs were critical to her success, it still took tremendous courage and fortitude to beat an addiction, get a higher paying job, care for her family and get up in front of a room of strangers to tell her story.

Ponopinto provided context about United Way’s role, “Our role is to bring people together and do the hard work that’s necessary to figure out how to improve conditions for the long run. We need to make sure the next generation is able to succeed, otherwise not only will individuals and families continue to suffer and

our economy is not sustainable.”

The seeds for From Poverty to Possibilities were planted 16 months ago when United Way announced its ‘bold goal’ to lift 15,000 people out of poverty by 2028. Since then, The Greater Tacoma Community Foundation of Pierce County and many other local non-profit organizations have held community conversations around different aspects that impact low-income families.” This summit seems like a natural outgrowth and we are encour-

who also serves as Vice Chair, United Way’s Board of Directors. “This event is a reminder that there are organizations of all shapes and sizes committed to improving the health and quality of life of Pierce County residents. It’s encouraging to see that so many leaders are interested in supporting these kinds of events. The work, collaboration and communication needed going forward has just begun but when the community comes together we can do so much more.”

of every person in Pierce County. We focus on long-term solutions to the most critical interconnected challenges facing local individuals, children and families. Through our 10-year plan, by 2028 we will lift 15,000 people out of poverty and into financial stability. By mobilizing local businesses, community organizations, governmental agencies and individuals, we make a long-term measurable difference in our community. United, we change the lives of adults and



Photo Courtesy of Bob Connelly

aged to build on the momentum.”

“Sometimes, working in the health and human services arena can be challenging, even isolating,” said Bill Berry, Tacoma Public Utilities,

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children right here in Pierce County and create a brighter future for every one of us. To learn more or to join our fight, visit www.uwpc.org.

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