

Preventing and Ending Youth and Young Adult Homelessness

Our Campaign and Campaign Director Position

OUR CURRENT REALITY

Too many young people in our community do not have a safe, stable place to sleep and call home. National disparities in youth and young adult homelessness are mirrored locally:

The current national YYAH system results in racially inequitable experiences and outcomes. According to an extensive report published in 2019 by Chaplin Hall, University of Chicago, structural racism, inequities and institutional biases continue to result in some young people being placed at higher risk of experiencing homelessness:¹

- 33% higher risk: Hispanic, non-white youth
- 83% higher risk: Black or African American youth
- 120% higher risk: LGBTQ youth
- 200% higher risk: unmarried, parenting youth

These same disparities occur in Pierce County.

Local systems of response are inadequate: Our community has worked hard to develop and sustain a safety net to respond to this crisis. Providers, funders, local government, businesses and young people have all stepped up. But it's not enough. The current countywide response to youth and young adult homelessness is set up to primarily address one-time or sporadic episodes of homelessness. It's not designed or supported at a level required to prevent and adequately address the ongoing, chronic and crisis levels of youth and young homelessness we face today.

Parts of our system are too disconnected and under resourced to effectively and collectively address the many factors that contribute to homelessness. The system is too fragmented for youth and young adults, particularly minors, to navigate when they seek help. Resources designated to address homelessness are spread too widely and thinly to actively prevent young people from experiencing ongoing homelessness.

We must act:

Our young people deserve our care and our collective commitment to remedy and resolve this critical community problem. We would not hesitate for a moment to help our own child if their need for shelter was in question. It is with the same passion and commitment

¹ Morton, M.H., Dworsky, A., & Samuels, G.M. (2017). *Missed opportunities: Youth homelessness in America. National estimates*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
<https://voicesofyouthcount.org/brief/national-estimates-of-youth-homelessness/>

we would bring forward for our own children, that we need brought forward to assure that the young people in our community in need of stable, safe shelter and long-term housing. This movement invites us all to see our community's homeless youth as our collective responsibility.

OUR VISION FOR OUR FUTURE

We have joined together as a community collaborative because we believe:

- That anyone experiencing homelessness, particularly our young people, is unacceptable
- That it is not acceptable when our Black and LGBTQ+ youth, because of systemic racism and injustice, face the harm of experiencing homelessness in dramatically worse ways
- That when young people experience homelessness, it must be rare, brief, and one-time
- These young people are our young people
- We have a responsibility to ensure all our young people *are* safely housed and *feel* safely housed and can live to their full potential
- The time has come to put our intentions into action, and to directly address and remedy the systemic issues that must be resolved to make meaningful progress, especially for Black and LGBTQ+ youth who are disproportionately neglected and harmed by the status quo
- That essential to this work is an enduring commitment to listening to our young people who experience homelessness and intentionally supporting and lifting up their voices, with an emphasis on those disproportionately impacted; Black and LGBTQ+ youth and young adults

We envision a Pierce County community where:

- We end youth and young adult homelessness
- All young people are safely housed
- All young people have a promising path forward
- All young people are secure enough to live their fullest lives
- A whole, connected system prevents any young person or young family from falling into chronic instability that leads to ongoing homelessness
- A whole, connected system helps meet any young person or family's whole needs when they seek support
- Community-centered, youth-voice-centered solutions are essential for achieving meaningful, measurable progress.

OUR COLLABORATIVE CAMPAIGN – JOINING THE “YES to YES” VISION

This campaign builds on all the work our community has done to support youth and young adults experiencing homelessness. The campaign will prioritize aligning all efforts with the

Office of Homeless Youth, A Way Home Washington's Anchor Community Initiative, the local ecosystem of youth service providers, and most critically, with young people who have lived the direct experience of homelessness or housing insecurity. Like other efforts, this campaign will further the important vision of enabling our community to respond to a young person who says, "Yes...I'm ready to come inside," by saying, "Yes...we're here, prepared, and ready to help."

To support our community's ability to say "Yes," our community-led campaign will:

- Prevent youth and young adult homelessness by addressing and resolving the root causes of homelessness in Pierce County
- Lead with a commitment to racial equity and inclusiveness of all voices, particularly those most impacted by youth and young adult homelessness
- Decrease racial and other disparities by ensuring attention and resources are disproportionately focused on those young people disproportionately affected
- Advocate for system changes and solutions so that when young people experience homelessness in our community, that the experience is rare, brief, and one-time.
- Identify the policy, data, resource, and advocacy opportunities that lead to a connected, sufficiently resourced system
- Convene and align the systems, providers, and funders that intersect with youth and young adults experiencing homelessness so youth know where to go when they seek help and the door that opens for them is one, easily accessible door
- Ensure that our collective investments in addressing youth homelessness lead to durable results and positive outcomes for young people in Pierce County

YOUR CAMPAIGN DIRECTOR ROLE

We are seeking a dedicated and creative campaign director to advance this movement. You understand the reality of this crisis. You want to end the inequities that lead to some youth – Black, LGBTQ+, Latinx, youth with disabilities including trauma-related disabilities - experiencing homelessness in far greater numbers than others because of systemic racism and injustice. You share our vision and want to generate momentum so that others also join in the opportunity to end youth and young adult homelessness. You have the energy, knowledge relationships and drive to move this work, and you demonstrate in your lived experience and expertise that you are of the work and not larger than the work.

You have a deep, observable commitment to equity and centering all voices in the work, particularly those of young people most impacted by crisis. You realize the necessity to include and learn from the lived experiences of young people in achieving our vision. And, you have a deep, observable commitment to community-centered solutions built on what works, using all our assets - funding, advocacy, voice, data and evidence, good-will – to achieve our goals.

You will help keep our collaborative focused on our vision and what we want to achieve and be a compelling voice for the work. You will [develop] and implement a strategy that moves the work forward and maintains momentum. You will hold all of us accountable to our goals. And, you will attract new and deeper resources to our community to build a system that achieves our vision.

YOUR WORK

ADVOCACY

- You will be an adept and nimble advocate, able to balance being an unapologetic champion for youth and young people who face homelessness with diplomacy
- You have demonstrated your understanding and dedication to working to end systems of racism and injustice which disproportionately harm BIPOC, LGBTQ+, communities and communities who are differently abled
- You have a deep understanding of the ecosystem – community, landscape, relationships, sectors - and the systems at play
- You understand how to harness and support community power and community solutions
- You understand how to authentically listen to and center youth voices and support their own agency and advocacy for themselves
- You are deeply committed to advocacy that is equity-based and lifts up inequities in the system with a solution-oriented focus
- You will have facility with using soft authority and influence
- You are able to be laser-focused on the work as well holding a broader, multi-sector perspective to ensure systems become connected and are talking to and working with each other
- You understand the importance of basing effective advocacy on moving hearts and using data and pragmatic solutions to moving minds
- You have the nimbleness, flexibility and ability to anticipate and proactively address issues and trends affecting the work

VOICE

- You understand the value of all voices and are committed to centering the voices of young people facing homelessness in the work
- You are able to talk across any and all audiences with diverse perspectives about complex issues in inspiring and accessible ways
- You have the knowledge and credibility to center equity in your discussion of the reality of the crisis and the vision of getting to Yes for all young people.
- You are fluent in building and maintaining community relationships
- You live, walk and talk the campaign's vision and pragmatic optimism
- You lead with emotional intelligence

- You can build and communicate compelling stories as well as data analysis

CONNECTION

- You are a bridge-builder, connector and unitor; able to bring people together while also holding our community accountable
- You are able to build trusted relationships and maintain credibility across the community and the system
- You are a transparent and honest broker
- You are unafraid and able to connect diverse communities with diverse perspectives by building emotional ties to a vision as well as intellectual ties to effective solutions
- You are able to connect all of our community and build buy-in to an equity-based vision and equity-based solutions to end youth and young adult homelessness

STRATEGIC THINKER

- You are a Strategist who is data-driven - understanding how to use data to surface inequities and support equitable solutions
- You are a risk-taker with the facility to elicit solutions, test, learn, champion them and move to action (activate)
- You are able to weave best practices from inside and outside the community to help craft innovative solutions
- You understand and are able to integrate progress measures towards achieving goals and hold yourself and our campaign accountable to them
- You are able to develop strategic pathways that combine the different aspects of this work – advocacy, voice, connection and equity - pivot as needed and as we learn while being able to implement with attention to detail

RESOURCE MOBILIZER

- You are eager, ready and capable to raise and mobilize resources to help achieve our vision
- You think holistically about all the resources our community can bring to bear to end youth and young adult homelessness
- You bring together people, groups, organizations and support them in mobilizing the assets they have in common purpose around our vision
- You are able to persuade others to join our community in achieving our vision and learning from our work for their own communities

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

We will be seeking a director with experience commensurate with the requirements of the role.

Local and regional travel, at a minimum, will be involved.

This role will be part of the [Comprehensive Life Resources](#) team.

COMPENSATION

This position will offer a competitive salary and benefits package, with a salary range between \$100 - \$115K depending on experience. Benefits will include medical, dental, vision, long-term disability and life insurance.

TO APPLY

We invite you to apply by describing to us why this offer is meaningful to you and how you would fit the attributes of the role and help move this work. We've set up an online application portal where you can submit your resume, a cover letter and any other information you think is helpful to tell us who you are and how you envision, as Campaign Director, being part of changing the lives of young people experiencing homelessness for the better.

You can apply here: [Campaign to Prevent and End Youth and Young Adult Homelessness: Director Opportunity](#)

Dawn Chirwa of The Giving Practice is the primary point of contact for this search. She can be reached at TGPsearch@philanthropynw.org if you have questions or any issues with submitting your application.

You may also recommend individuals for this position by submitting names and any supporting materials to Dawn Chirwa at the email address above.

We'll review people's material on a rolling basis until at least **October 30, 2020 for priority consideration**. The position will remain open until filled.

In looking for the person for this role, we are committed to serving the wide-ranging diversity of our Pierce County community, including the diversity of our multiple identities, including age, color, race and ethnicity, gender identity or expression, language, physical ability, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status and veteran status. We strongly encourage those who share these values, particularly candidates of color and those from other underrepresented groups, to apply.