

Annual Impact Report

*Keeping
Dreams
Alive!*

am ASSOCIATED
MINISTRIES



Board President's Report: What does interfaith mean to our work?

It has been an exciting year of change for Associated Ministries!

In August 2015 we welcomed Mike Yoder as our new Executive Director. We were overjoyed to have someone of his caliber join us to take the lead in our community service programs and essential funding efforts.

It was obvious from the start that Mike is passionate about our unique mission to unify people of all backgrounds and faiths around the vital needs of our marginalized neighbors in Pierce County. **AM is not simply a haven for talking together at the same table; with Mike in the lead, this becomes an interfaith table dedicated to action.** That is essential



for AM and Pierce County moving into the future!

The most common question for AM these days is, "What does interfaith mean to our work?"

Interfaith is not a religion – it is meant to accompany and walk among the religions. Interfaith emphasizes the universal principles and compassion taught by all schools of spiritual growth.

There are increasing needs in our community that require us to embrace the Divine together. We are learning that the only way to solve the seemingly overwhelming problems we face is through unity and the strengths we get when we are inclusive and nurture our diversity in all of its wondrous forms!

We're excited to be in partnership with so many others who desire to invest in community transformation. Thank you for being on the journey with us!

Dr. Christopher Gilbert
Board President

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Executive Director's Report: Transformation is possible when we dare to believe

It has been a genuine blessing for me to join the Associated Ministries' team at this important time in the evolution of our mission of "uniting people of faith to build stronger communities."

My predecessors faithfully shepherded AM over the years, and we are all the beneficiaries of their commitment. As just the fourth Executive Director in this organization's 47 years of history, I am very mindful, and very humbled, by the responsibility of guiding Associated Ministries in this next season as we fully live into our vision of being a center for interfaith relations that is deeply engaged in transforming communities.

Associated Ministries is a partnership founded on a commitment to the common

good – bridging theological differences to put love into action. AM has worked long and hard to unite people from different faiths and backgrounds in order to meet fundamental needs for the vulnerable: food, shelter, employment... hope.

Over the years we've made a real difference as we've journeyed with people of faith AND people of good will on a mission to bring about community transformation. And we have witnessed social, physical and spiritual healing for those suffering from poverty.

True transformation is possible when we dare to believe. And then act.

In the pages of this Impact Report you'll learn about the specific progress we

achieved in 2015, and hear the stories of some of the lives we touched; I believe you'll be encouraged and inspired. But even more, I hope and pray you'll be motivated to strengthen your commitment to care for the vulnerable in partnership with AM.

Seeking the common good through a commitment to justice for the marginalized is what I'm personally passionate about... and what I'm committed that Associated Ministries will continue to be about in our next chapter.

Thank you for standing with us in this life-changing calling!

Mike Yoder
Executive Director



Mike Yoder and AM staff (left) present a Community Pillar Award to BCI Property Management for helping house families experiencing homelessness.

Partner Profile: Windermere Realty gives back!

For the past 27 years, the Windermere Foundation has gathered a portion of the proceeds from every home purchased or sold, a portion of agent commissions, and gifts donated over and above agent commissions and used that fund to support low-income and homeless families in our communities. To date, they have raised over \$30 million for programs and organizations that provide shelter, food, children's programs, emergency assistance, and other services to those most in need of help.

In 2015, the Foundation awarded more than \$10,000 to Associated Ministries' Family Permanent Housing Program. Windermere volunteers also joined Paint Tacoma-Pierce Beautiful to paint the homes of low-income families.

AM has a vision for this community: that Pierce County will be a place where everyone has access to opportunities to satisfy their essential needs, to advance their well-being and to achieve their full potential. Thank you, **Windermere Professional Partners**, for embracing this vision and joining us in a bold mission to free the vulnerable in our community from the ravages of poverty. Your generosity ignites a spirit of kindness and compassion across our community!



Windermere agents celebrate their support with AM staff.

Thank You To Our Corporate Supporters

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Cascade Regional Blood
Services
CHI Franciscan
Columbia Bank
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Habitat for Humanity
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KeyBank
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Paint, LLC
LeMay Enterprises, Inc.
LeRoy Jewelers
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Safeco Insurance
Sherwin-Williams Paint
Stadium Thriftway
State Farm Insurance
Tamarack Cellars
The Exchange Club of
Tacoma
The News Tribune
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Toyota
Tucci & Sons
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Umpqua Bank
Walla Walla Vintners
Windermere Professional
Partners

A Personal Journey: Now it's our turn to help those in need

Key to achieving the incredible goal of ending chronic homelessness is forming creative new partnerships with faith communities, service agencies, businesses, housing providers, and individuals.

An especially inspiring example of such a partnership is the story of **Shelly Hu** and **Mark Jiang**, married real estate agents from Bellevue, WA.

They bought commercial property on Fife Street in Tacoma with the initial idea to use the building as a senior care home. Abandoned for several years, the building was in bad condition. They made a huge investment in renovating it but concluded that their plans for the building would cost more than they had. They put it back on the market.

In November 2015, they were showing the building to a potential buyer and Mark saw an older couple who had pitched a tent next to their building. Mark approached them and learned that the couple was homeless... and that there were at least three groups of homeless seniors in the area. He was shocked.

Back home, Mark and Shelly

had a long discussion about what to do.

Their own personal journey weighed heavily on their hearts. In 1993 Mark was a teacher in China when he made the decision to study abroad and moved to Canada, sadly leaving his wife and son behind. Arriving with only \$500 in his pocket, life was very hard.

The family was finally reunited in 1995, but there were still many difficulties to overcome: language, jobs, education, and so much more. Fortunately the couple met many people who befriended them and helped them through the difficult times.

Mark and Shelly knew they needed to help the vulnerable seniors they met in Tacoma and they could put their building to use to that end.

Mark visited the AM office, met the housing team and took them to see the building. Since those initial meetings AM helped plan, organize and cooperate in many ways to move this project forward, including connecting Mark and Shelly with the ideal property management company. BCI Properties helped to further

renovate the building to meet codes and obtain the permits needed to get the building into operation.

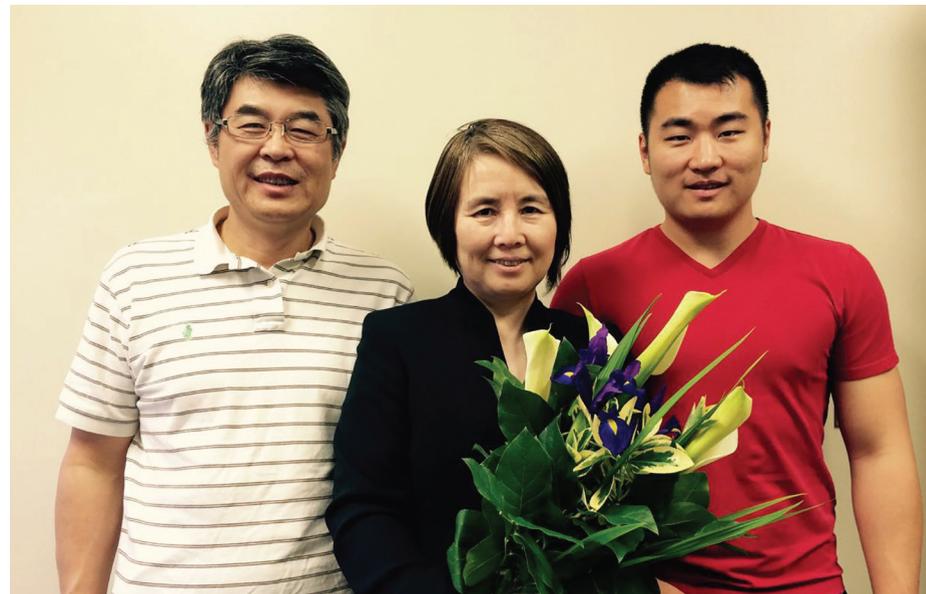
“Without Associated Ministries’ help, their tremendous input and contribution, we could never have achieved all that we have today with this project.” Mark said.

Shelly shared, “We realized that this is a good time for us to help those who need it. **It’s time for us to contribute, work together with all people to make better neighborhoods, better societies, and a better country!** We knew we could help by providing affordable

housing for low-income seniors so they can improve their quality of life.”

Not many of us would be able to buy a building and renovate it to provide permanent housing for 50 vulnerable seniors. But we believe most would do something just as significant if they could. That’s the heart of the people who are called to be part of Associated Ministries: making sacrificial investments to help achieve the vision of ending chronic homelessness in our community.

Thanks for your part in making that dream a reality!



Mark Jiang, Shelly Hu and their son Longfei

Indicators of Impact

More than 19,600 households received services through Associated Ministries in 2015
Because of your support, we've helped people make big changes in their lives!

1,672

households successfully secured permanent and stable housing through AM housing programs. 2,040 members of these households were children.



416

individuals were able to resolve their homeless crisis with the immediate problem-solving support we provided through our Diversion Program.

760,000
meals served



Last year AM raised over \$130,000 through the Pierce County Hunger Walk. We have been leading our community in the fight against hunger for 35 years.

\$2 million +
claimed in refunds & tax credits



Tax refunds provide a chance to catch up on bills and pay for basic needs. In 2015, **Vounteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)** volunteers filed 1,659 free tax returns on behalf of low-income workers.

2,175

homes painted since 1985



In 2015, Paint Tacoma-Pierce Beautiful organized 32 crews of 405 volunteers to paint the homes of 24 low-income seniors, families, and people with disabilities.

400

homeowners avoided losing their homes to foreclosure



Our certified housing counselors help those behind on their mortgage payments get back on track and save their homes.

441

households received emergency financial support



Low-income families and vulnerable seniors receive financial assistance through our Family and Senior Emergency Funds.

Rapid-Rehousing: Homeless no more!

Latasha and her son came to Access Point 4 Housing seeking resources when they were experiencing homelessness. They received a referral to Associated Ministries' Family Permanent Housing Program. Latasha met with a case manager and talked about her goals of having a home of her own and the ability to pursue her education.

"I worked very hard and looked tirelessly for a landlord who was willing to rent to me," said Latasha. "I want everyone to know that you have to do the work it takes to get where you want to go. Just enrolling in a program to help you is not enough."

Latasha's hard work paid off and she was able to find a private landlord willing to work with her and our rapid-rehousing program. In no time Latasha moved into a 2-bedroom apartment of her own!

Continuing to work on her goals, everything began to come together. Latasha was able to get furnishings for her entire home through a referral to Northwest Furniture Bank. Latasha's son is excelling in school and she is pursuing her own education. Latasha worked together with her case manager every step of the way and her family is now off the streets and in stable permanent housing!



Latasha and her son

Get Involved & Make a Difference

Volunteer

Paint Tacoma-Pierce Beautiful: Volunteers paint houses of low-income, senior and disabled homeowners.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance: Help lift hard-working families out of poverty by claiming eligible tax credits.

Disaster Care Teams: Provide emotional, spiritual and practical support to survivors of local disasters.

Hunger Walk: Be a team captain, fundraise, and help on the day of the Pierce County Hunger Walk.

Donate

Join the AM Leadership Giving Circle – annual support of \$500 or more

Become an AM monthly giving partner – pledge a monthly gift of any amount

Talk with your employer about matching your gift

Include AM in your Will

Upcoming Events

August 7 – Faith Communities Night with Tacoma Rainiers

October 2 – Pierce County Hunger Walk

November 3 – Lead the Way Home Breakfast

November 22 – Interfaith Thanksgiving Gathering

April 29, 2017 – Spring Gala

Youth Advancement & Housing: “Don’t give up. Take a chance!”

After the death of her mother, **Tiffany** started couch-surfing as a way of adapting to homelessness. But then she came to AM’s **Youth Advancement & Housing (YAH)** program. “Without YAH, I could have been dead, on the streets or in jail. I’ve experienced a friend’s suicide attempt. I know God allowed that experience to teach me and allow me to bond with others in the YAH home. My relationships are better. I love the whole program!”

Tiffany gives this advice: “Life is a long road that is broken and rocky but don’t give up! You have people on your side who will help you set goals and continue to work on yourself so that you can pull through. Don’t give up!”



Counterclockwise from left: YAH residents Tiffany and Linnea and Resident Coordinators Sam and Sara

Linnea left Wisconsin and came to live with her aunt in Tacoma late in 2013. When her aunt passed away unexpectedly Linnea moved from host home to host home, then to a shelter and eventually she came to Youth Advancement & Housing.

“I was afraid I didn’t have a place to go and then I got a call that I have a place in the YAH home,” said Linnea. “I’ve felt stable and YAH gave me hope. I know I was placed in the YAH home for a reason.”

Linnea’s challenge has been the ability to talk with others more often and find support. She has been encouraged to speak with others and share ideas. “My ideas were never bashed! In YAH we genuinely listen to each other with respect,”

“Take a chance!” says Linnea. “Take a step, a leap. Choose the path that is right for you and know that you will inspire others! I left Wisconsin because I wasn’t living in a safe environment and I lost my job because my father and I couldn’t reconcile. I know I did the right thing! “

Linnea plans to graduate from high school, focus on improving herself and gaining independent living skills. She wants to continue on to college with the goal of becoming a kindergarten teacher.

Youth Advancement & Housing provides transitional housing for young adults continuing their education. Staff work directly with each resident to ensure that they are well-prepared to enter permanent, stable housing when they leave the program. A few of the supportive services include developing a better understanding of credit, budgeting, understanding a lease, effective communications and much more.

Moments of Blessing: Building community that is humane, compassionate and just

Steven Speakman often took morning walks around his neighborhood. But the morning of November 3rd, Steven's morning walk ended tragically. A random drive-by shooting took his life too soon, at the age of 26. As the community moved from shock into grief, Associated Ministries began arranging a Moment of Blessing, a service that Associated Ministries has brought to the Pierce County community since 1998.

Associated Ministries has conducted over 375 Moment of Blessings at the sites of homicides in Pierce County. The brief prayer service and blessing is designed to offer support to the victim's family, friends, and the neighboring community while helping to bring closure to the traumatic event. The service includes shared prayer, brief readings, a sprinkling rite and an opportunity for all those present to share their memories and reflections.

Rev. Tandi Rogers of the Tahoma Unitarian Universalist Church shares, "Moments of Blessing is about acknowledging a profound loss in our community, a person, a soul, our innocence, or illusion of safety – unless we are willing to work harder to create a future that is humane, compassionate and just, starting with us showing up."

Officers from local police departments will often attend these blessings, not only as a way to show their community support but in bringing closure for themselves around horrific homicides. Additionally, the presence of police officers at this reclamation gathering is felt to be comforting and unifying by many attendees.

"I would say that community members view the area where a homicide occurred as a place to stay away from," said Loretta Cool, Public Information Officer for the Tacoma Police Department. "They avoid being near the area because of the violent act that occurred there. They witness or participate in a Moment of Blessing and they realize that the area is a place to remember the person who died. I have seen where after a Moment of Blessing community members choose that spot to

come together and celebrate life, holding picnics or just meeting there. I think without the Moment of Blessing that spot would be desolate and feared."

Moments of Blessing is an important and necessary program for our communities during their healing process, in helping to mend the tear in the community fabric.

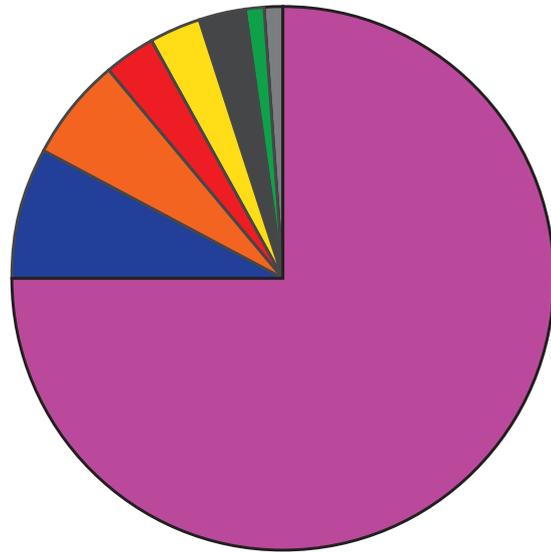
Karin Van Vlack, community member, sums it up: "I try to attend [Moments of Blessing] whenever possible now to bear witness to the lives lost to violence. As I stand alongside those gathered--family, friends, neighbors, business owners, law enforcement, religious leaders--I am reminded that these acts of violence emerge again and again from poverty, substance abuse, gang rivalry, domestic abuse, aimlessness, hatred, and hopelessness. My faith encourages me to see not only the discrete action that resulted in the loss of life but also the vast web of causes and conditions at the heart of these systemic problems. I am grateful that each Moment of Blessing offers me the opportunity to recommit myself, as the service guides us, to building a community that is humane, compassionate, and just."



Community members are led by Rev. Frances Lorenz during a Moment of Blessing in the Tacoma Hilltop after the shooting death of Steven Speakman.

Associated Ministries' 2015 Financial Overview

Total Revenue: \$2,726,108

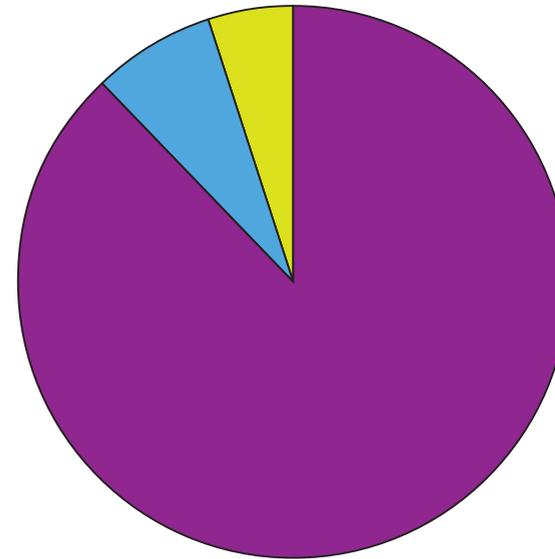


Sources of Revenue

Government	75%
Individuals	8%
Foundations	6%
Organizations	3%
Client Fees	3%
Special Events	3%
Congregations	1%
Businesses	1%

How We Used Our Resources

Programs	88%
Administration	7%
Fundraising	5%



For more information, visit www.associatedministries.org/financials

Leadership Giving Circle

Members of the Leadership Circle make a significant personal investment of \$500 or more in families who need our assistance, guidance and encouragement to help change the course of their lives.

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Molly & Harry Archer
Joseph & Bonnie Atwood
Julian & Stephanie Ayer
Dr. William &
Mrs. Carol Baarsma
Presiding Elder Spencer &
Mary Barrett
Dr. Al & Linda Bird
Frank & Cindy Bonaro
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