



MULTI-SERVICE CENTER

HELP. HOPE. CHANGE.



# True Stories

2022 FALL/WINTER NEWSLETTER



# COMMUNITY HELPING COMMUNITY



Thursday, October 20, 2022  
11:30am - 1pm  
at the Federal Way PAEC

The MSC Helps Luncheon raises funds to benefit Multi-Service Center's programs and services that aim to eliminate poverty by creating pathways to help, hope, and dignity for our neighbors throughout South King County. You will be inspired by keynote speaker, actor Ernie Hudson, as he shares his personal story of growing up in poverty and facing racism in Hollywood. You will also hear first hand how MSC makes a difference in our community.

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Free with a suggested donation of \$100.  
Register soon as seats are limited, or join us  
for the livestream on Facebook!

Scan the code to register or visit  
[mschelps.org/luncheon2022](https://mschelps.org/luncheon2022).



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*Premier Business Partners are  
businesses that support MSC  
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## CONTACT US

### For services

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### To support

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## MISSION

MSC is building a future without poverty by creating pathways to help, hope, and dignity for our neighbors.

## VISION

Empowered individuals. Thriving communities.

## VALUES

TEAMWORK  
PASSION  
RESPECT

INTEGRITY  
DIVERSITY & INCLUSION



# THERE EVERY STEP

“We’re not just pointing someone in the right direction of the appropriate resource, we’re checking in with them if they need someone to call with them or help them complete application forms,” shares Carolina.

Carolina is MSC’s Community Access Coordinator. MSC created this role in April of 2021 to help people access and navigate services at MSC and throughout the community. During the last year, Carolina was able to directly assist 326 individuals with requests for energy assistance, rent assistance, shelter, COVID19 vaccine information, legal resources, and tenants’ rights and education.

People can have difficulty accessing the services they need for a variety of reasons. It may be difficult for someone to gather all the documentation needed to obtain assistance. Sometimes people are not aware of the help available or are overwhelmed by the different options and how to access each of them. There may be a language barrier or a lack of trust due to past experiences or mental health issues. And sometimes, it is systemic racism that has historically created barriers. Over 67% of the individuals assisted by Carolina last year identified as Black, Latinx, or a person of color.

Each person Carolina has worked with over the last year has come with unique needs. For some, it is as simple as helping them connect with the right services and guide them through the process. For others, it is a deeper relationship as they may need ongoing support and a trusted ally they can rely on.

“I’m building an authentic relationship with our clients and am someone they can turn to for anything,” shares Carolina. “Sometimes people just need someone to talk to. I am also familiar with how the system works and can help relieve some of the anxiety people feel when accessing

services. Sometimes it can take a while for help to come through. I can share with them what is normal and what to expect.”

“I’ve been helping people navigate resources all my life,” shares Carolina. “I am familiar with all the ins and outs of the system.”

At the age of six, Carolina moved to the United States from Mexico with her family. “I am the youngest of four children and my siblings are all quite a bit older than me. Likely due to my young age, my brain was like a sponge and picked up things much more quickly than anyone else in my immediate family.” Carolina became an interpreter and resource navigator for her parents and her siblings, and honed her advocacy skills throughout her youth.

“I spoke up and said what my family and I needed,” she shares. “I remember when I was in eighth grade there was an opportunity to sign up for a College Bound Scholarship. I didn’t really understand or know much about it but I thought to myself, I may need this someday, so I filled out all the paperwork on my own and brought it home for my parents to sign. When I was nearing the end of high school, I was wondering how I was going to pay for college. I met with my guidance counselor and the financial aid office and then I realized I had signed up for this program. I was eligible to receive grants and scholarships that got me through college completely debt-free.”

Being this resource and advocate for her family instilled a deep desire in Carolina to help others as well as to be a leader in inspiring others to do so as well.

“Being able to help people brings me satisfaction and joy that is hard to describe, and this role at MSC gives me the tools and support to do that,” says Carolina, “The best part of it all is that I get to work with a great team that has that same interest and inspiration.”







## A HOUSED VETERAN

“I’m glad I’m not a homeless veteran, but a housed veteran and moving forward with my life,” shares Elle. “It’s been a journey that brought me to William J. Wood.”

At 18 years old, Elle joined the United States Navy. She had traumatic experiences during her seven years of service. After leaving the Navy, Elle found herself homeless and suffering from PTSD, anxiety, and depression. Six months ago, 52-year-old Elle finally found stability at William J. Wood (WJW) Veterans House. “I love being at WJW and would encourage any vet to move here,” she shares. “The staff is immaculate, hospitable, and helpful; and my experience has

been nothing but positive.”

Since coming to WJW, Elle’s case manager has helped her to connect with resources, find furniture, and make sure that she is able to get her medications. Like many of the veterans at WJW, the structure the staff provides is welcome. “They post consistent times for errands and visits to the store and provide transportation. They also plan activities and community meetings, and make sure we have all the resources we need,” shares Elle.

“Besides my horrific experiences, serving in the Navy was the best thing I could do, and I would do it again,” shares Elle.

*\*Name and stock photo have been used to protect identity.*

## HOLIDAY FOOD

MSC’s Federal Way Food Bank will be providing holiday food distribution during the following days and times:

### Thanksgiving Distribution:

Friday, November 18, 10a-2p  
Monday, November 21, 10a-2p  
Wednesday, November 23, 10a-2p

### Winter Holiday Distribution:

Friday, December 16, 10a-2p  
Monday, December 19, 10a-2p  
Wednesday, December 21, 10-2p

*The food bank will be closed  
December 23, 2022 through  
January 3, 2023.*

### How you can help:

- Donate frozen turkeys! Turkeys may be dropped off during our the donation acceptance times listed below.
- Volunteer to distribute food! Applications are available on our website at [mschelps.org/volunteer](https://mschelps.org/volunteer).
- Hold a holiday food drive! Collect holiday favorites such as stuffing, cranberry sauce, potatoes, green beans, and gravy. Drop off at our warehouse, or if it’s a large load, contact the food bank in advance of your drive to coordinate pick-up.
- Make a donation online at [mschelps.org/donate](https://mschelps.org/donate).

*The food bank accepts food donations Monday through Friday at our warehouse located in the alley behind our building in Federal Way. Please call (253) 838-6810 for best delivery times.*





# GETTING THROUGH TOUGH TIMES

“We would have been in debt and would not have a house to live in,” shares Gyna.

Gyna and her family live in Burien and recently received emergency rent assistance through MSC.

Gyna’s husband had always been the main source of income for their family. When he started losing his eyesight and had difficulty working, the family began to fall behind on their bills. Gyna and her husband knew that they needed to find help to pay their rent. Without

it, their family including four children ages 16, 14, 8, and 5, would be facing homelessness.

Gyna’s first step to seeking help was calling 211. Washington 211 provides information on available resources and connects people in need of assistance to the organizations that can provide it. Through 211, Gyna learned about MSC’s rent assistance program. MSC’s rent assistance team works with families and individuals to prevent homelessness by paying past due rent when a customer faces an economic hardship. The team members also work with customers to develop a plan to be

able to pay their own rent in the future.

Gyna said that the MSC team “was really comprehensive and took their time helping us through the paperwork and were overall very pleasant people to talk to.” Gyna continues to work with a case manager at MSC to achieve her goals of meeting her children’s needs and recovering from their current economic situation so they can have a bright and stable future.

“Muchas Gracias,” Gyna says to the staff she works with at MSC and everyone who makes their work possible.







1200 S. 336th St.  
Federal Way, WA 98003

MSC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit agency that offers people pathways out of poverty through support and resources in education, employment, housing, energy assistance, food, and clothing. We also provide statewide advocacy for elderly and disabled residents of long-term care facilities.

Learn More: Call (253) 838-6810, online at [www.mschepls.org](http://www.mschepls.org), or on social media @mschepls

# Help. Hope. Change.

Empowered individuals, thriving communities.



## TRUE STORIES ABOUT MAKING A DIFFERENCE.

Dear Friends,

Fall is upon us, my favorite time of year! The leaves will be turning, kids will be dressing up for Halloween, and families will be gathering during the holidays.

Unfortunately, colder weather may also bring more challenges for our neighbors as energy bills rise and it becomes harder for those facing housing stability to find a safe, warm place to stay.

As you will read in this newsletter, MSC is working hard to connect people with the resources and support they need. You'll hear from Elle, a resident at William J Wood Veterans House, and Gyna, who's family received rent assistance. Our Community Access Coordinator will share how that program is helping people navigate resources to find the help they need.

The stories shared in this newsletter are just a small portion of the work the dedicated staff is continuing to provide in the community.

Our Redondo Heights affordable housing project in Federal Way is moving along and we hope to break ground in the next few months. Once complete, this project will bring over 200 new units of affordable housing to the area.

MSC is helping to connect immigrant families with the support they need through the Washington Immigrant Relief Fund.

We are also working on building a safer community. Our Community Safety Collaboration project brings youth, community, and law enforcement together to build a trusting and peaceful community.

We thank your continued partnership with MSC in bringing help, hope, and change to our community!



Best wishes,

*Robin R. Corak*

Robin R. Corak  
Chief Executive Officer

