



MULTI-SERVICE CENTER

HELP. HOPE. CHANGE.



**True Stories**

2023 FALL/WINTER NEWSLETTER



# COMMUNITY HELPING COMMUNITY



**Oct 19, 2023**  
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**Federal Way PAEC**

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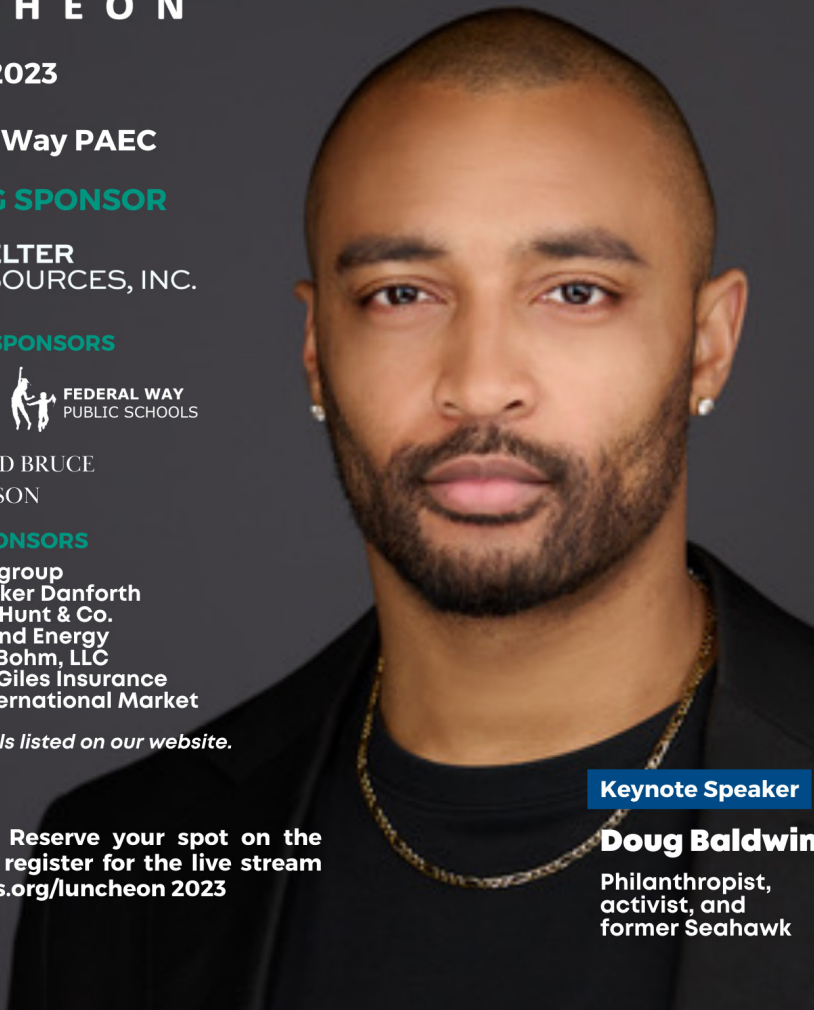
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**SOLD OUT!** Reserve your spot on the wait list or register for the live stream at [mschelps.org/luncheon2023](https://mschelps.org/luncheon2023)

## INSPIRE HOPE.



**Keynote Speaker**

**Doug Baldwin**

Philanthropist,  
activist, and  
former Seahawk

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## SAVE THE DATE!

**SATURDAY, MAY 18, 2024, 5:30-9PM**  
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## CONTACT US

### For services

253.838.6810 | WA Relay 711  
[www.mschelps.org](https://www.mschelps.org)  
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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

# GET TO KNOW MSC'S NEW CEO

Kirsten York joins MSC as our new CEO on October 2, 2023. We asked her a few questions before she started and here's what she shared.

## Why MSC?

MSC's mission of building a future without poverty by creating pathways to help, hope, and dignity for our neighbors is directly aligned with the values I hold as a leader and will work diligently to embody as the next CEO of MSC. By aligning our agency values with excellent client service, healthy and diverse teams, and a lens of equity, the future of MSC under my leadership is full of hope, joy and prosperity for our organization and community.

## Tell us about yourself.

I have worked in a similar agency for 15 years in a variety of roles and have learned community based organizations are my life's work. My roles have included working with a large range of programming, to include: energy assistance; weatherization;

homeless services; affordable housing maintenance and expansion; child abuse prevention and treatment; food distribution; and many others. I enjoy having a career aligned with my values to show up with a positive impact in my community. I have a Bachelors degree from Western Washington University and a Master in Public Administration from The Evergreen State College.

For fun, I enjoy being in the beautiful outdoors hiking, biking, and playing or watching soccer! I love spending quality time with my kids and partner, my family and friends, especially when we are able to share a meal.

## What are some opportunities you see for MSC in the future?

As I settle into this role, I will increase my knowledge of the opportunities the staff and community see for MSC's programs, client service models, and outcomes in order to find avenues to move the organization toward its best future. In conjunction with the Board of Directors, we can elevate the impact of MSC and increase collaborative partnerships to braid and blend funding to enhance services to clients.

## Any challenges?

As with most social service organizations, MSC will face a new normal post-COVID, rapid change in funding dynamics and regulations, as well as a shifting workforce. Challenges will be best addressed with a collective team effort, ensuring we have a strong foundation of values to move through difficult moments. I am certain we will meet those challenges head on and grow from them.

## What is your vision for MSC?

My vision for MSC is to continue to be a proactive advocate with established and potential partners, making certain they know the community value that MSC provides in their assistance to low-income individuals and families.

We will continue to ensure we reach those in our community who need our services most. As well as operationalizing equity within our organization on behalf of our staff, and also in our service delivery models on behalf of our clients.

I look forward to learning more from the staff, board, and community about their hopes for the vision of the organization and how we can move toward this vision together.

## Anything else you'd like to share?

Community action is my life's work; I am dedicated to representing this organization each day with integrity, passion, joy, innovation, honesty, patience, and strength. I strive to embody the values of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging, using these same tenants in establishing a workplace culture where we all have safety and belonging.





# HELPING IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

“No one likes to leave their home country,” shares Asad. “In addition to the cultural differences, it often comes with a lot of trauma. We help newly arrived immigrants and refugees to connect with the resources they need.”

Asad is referring to MSC’s new Immigrant and Refugee Community Education and Outreach program. Asad supervises this program that provides culturally and linguistically appropriate support to connect recent immigrants and refugees to community services and resources, giving them the tools to be successful in navigating their new environment and community.

“Adapting and assimilating into an entirely new culture can be difficult,” says Asad. “The language barrier is often the first thing that comes to mind, but many new immigrants and refugees also don’t yet understand the

steps or information they need to take to receive assistance or do everyday tasks like banking. Add to that the fact that many immigrants have left their home countries due to oppression, violence, and other reasons that made them feel unsafe, there are many barriers for them to overcome. We help them navigate and remove those barriers.”

Immigrants and refugees learn about this program primarily through outreach events and word of mouth. Outreach includes community resource fairs, but also going to places that immigrants and refugees may congregate, such as libraries, community centers, or markets. Community Outreach Specialists in the program currently speak three languages other than English; Spanish, Dari/Farsi, and Pashto, and use interpreters for other languages.

Asad is uniquely familiar with what new immigrants and refugees are experiencing in their new home. “When I came here as an immigrant

from Afghanistan in 2015, I didn’t know much and needed help,” he shares. “There were people that helped me find resources and feel welcomed. That inspires me to give back.”

Public service isn’t new to Asad. In Afghanistan he worked for an organization that provided aid to individuals and families, and he was involved in community mobilizing.

“When you can help others and see the relief they feel, it gives me relief as well,” shares Asad. “Helping people is basically my passion.”

MSC’s Immigrant and Refugee Community Education and Outreach program offers resource navigation, referrals, cultural orientation, and educational resources for immigrants and refugees that have arrived in the United States on or after July 1, 2021.

You can find out more about program eligibility and connect for services on our website at [mschelps.org/ir](https://mschelps.org/ir).







## FAREWELL FROM CEO ROBIN CORAK

Dear Friends,

It is with mixed emotions that I write my final letter for MSC's newsletter. It is difficult to put into words what the last 22 years at MSC have meant to me. I have had the opportunity to meet and partner with so many caring and compassionate people who amaze me with their commitment and dedication to economic stability for our neighbors.

I've been witness to many amazing stories of growth, change, and hope. During my tenure at MSC we have added over 150 units of affordable housing to our portfolio, with an additional 334 units currently under construction. MSC has grown as an organization, increasing its budget by 178% and employees to around 100, as we serve over 40,000 people throughout South King County annually. And we've implemented agency-wide diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts to ensure our clients and staff are welcomed with respect and dignity.

While much has been accomplished, there is still so much more to do.

Housing affordability and food insecurity remain as top concerns in our community. Many households still struggle to meet their basic needs. We need to focus on solutions to bridge these economic gaps so all in our community can thrive.

We have made strides towards removing the barriers that disproportionately impact economic stability among our BIPOC, immigrant, and LGBTQIA+ communities, but many barriers still exist. We still need to do more to create equitable opportunity for all.

However, I know that I am leaving MSC in capable hands that will be able to continue this work our community.

I am excited to welcome Kirsten York as MSC's next CEO who will lead MSC into the next chapter of help, hope, and change for our community. Under her leadership, MSC will continue to address and provide solutions for the most pressing needs of those in our community.

We also have an amazing staff, board of directors, and community that are committed to supporting MSC's mission and will continue do so.

Working to end poverty will always be close to my heart. I'm looking forward to being engaged with MSC as a community member during my retirement and seeing what the next chapter holds for MSC.

I know there are many great things that lay ahead as we continue to work together toward building a future without poverty.

Thank you for your support over the last two decades!

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robin R. Corak". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Robin" and last name "Corak" clearly legible.

Robin R. Corak  
Outgoing CEO





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, and food. We also provide statewide advocacy for elderly and disabled residents of long-term care facilities.

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

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# Help. Hope. Change.

Empowered individuals, thriving communities.

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## NOURISHING OUR NEIGHBORS

Providing nutritional, healthy options for our neighbors in a way that allows for access, choice, and dignity is a priority for MSC's Federal Way Food Bank.

Over the last several years, the number of neighbors MSC serves through our Federal Way Food Bank has increased to over 1,000 households a week.

Most of this increase is due to new programs we have implemented over the last few years. During the pandemic, we launched a delivery service in partnership with Door Dash and United Way that continues today to serve homebound households and those with limited transportation options.

This summer we launched our Food Bridge program which provides a mobile food bank onsite once a week at

several senior living facilities.

We anticipate serving even more households when our new satellite food bank opens at our Redondo Heights affordable housing development in 2024.

We know that choice matters and that our neighbors come from diverse backgrounds with diverse nutritional needs. Within the food bank we strive to offer culturally relevant food such as halal meat or food that meets dietary needs such as gluten-free options. We also offer options in our home delivery program, such as a Latinx box, to ensure our neighbors have food choices that are familiar to them.

Additionally, MSC's food bank is now open to serving anyone in Washington State who needs food. While some programs remain restricted to residents of Federal Way and NE Tacoma, such as our baby corner and holiday programs, no one needing nourishment is ever turned away from our food bank.

### HOLIDAY FOOD DISTRIBUTION

#### Thanksgiving

Monday, November 13, 10a-2p  
Wednesday, November 15, 10a-2p  
Friday, November 17, 10a-2p

#### Winter Holiday

Monday, December 18, 10a-2p  
Wednesday, December 20, 10a-2p  
Friday, December 22, 10a-2p

#### Want to help?

Shop our holiday food wish list on Amazon at <https://a.co/aenF0ah>



*Holiday food is provided in addition to regular food bank distribution; however, is only available to residents of the Federal Way School District.*