



# cornerstone

A PUBLICATION OF THE **DOWNTOWN EMERGENCY SERVICE CENTER**

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## CONNECTIONS CELEBRATES 5 YEARS AND 1,000 JOBS!

A PROGRAM UNIQUE TO DESC, Connections is an employment support program for homeless men and women trying to re-enter the job market. Unlike our most vulnerable clients, Connections clients battle fewer disabilities, often have previous work history, and are better able to manage their daily lives and full time employment. Open daily from 7am-7pm, this program “connects” people with services they need to prepare for, seek, and achieve employment. From laundry and showers to computer access and basic education classes, staff work in new and innovative ways to help Connections clients break their cycle of homelessness. The result has been over 1,000 job placements in the first 5 years of operations and over 500 persons transitioned into stable housing. For more info: [www.desc.org/connections.html](http://www.desc.org/connections.html)

5 years ago, before DESC launched Connections you may have seen Adam selling drugs in the area. Addicted to drugs himself, he was hard to miss – Adam is 6’2”, tattooed and missing his front teeth. DESC staff knew him as a troublesome character, often

shooing him off the block. He was kicked out of school for aggressive behavior as a kid, a coping mechanism he learned at the hands of his abusive father. After that he floated from one low paying job to another with no direction in life. Then in his late teens, he fell in love. Wanting to provide for his girlfriend but lacking any marketable job skills, he began to deal drugs. First just weed, but then crystal meth.

As so often happens, Adam lost his day job, lost his girl, and ended up in jail. When he finished his sentence, Adam wanted to start fresh, but it was difficult with a past like his. Homeless, hungry, and dejected, Adam spent his days complaining to others on the street about how he had no future. Joe, from DESC’s HOST outreach team, found Adam sleeping in the park one spring day and approached him about DESC’s Connections program.

Through the Connections Program, Adam worked with a case manager who helped him stay off of drugs, draft a resume, and taught him how to use the computer lab to search for jobs. Adam came to Connections every day to follow up on job leads. While there he

joined other clients for a nutritious breakfast and grabbed a sack lunch. He used the hygiene center to shower and change into donated clothing before his job interviews. Soon he landed a job as a dishwasher. His case manager helped him manage his finances and find a stable, affordable apartment of his own. He also reconnected with his girlfriend.

Five years later, Adam is still clean, sober, working and living with his wife. He is very proud of his success, and often stops by Connections to let staff know how he’s doing. Recently, he stopped by and shared that he and his wife are moving to a new larger apartment and that he is now working one full time job instead of several part time jobs. A new Connections client asked Adam if this program really works. Adam looked him straight in the eye and said, “It works if you work it. They are here to help you, but you have to do the work.” With the support of the DESC Connections Program, Adam is a living example of hope for all who are living on the streets and dreaming of a safe and productive future.

FIND US ONLINE ON  AND  @DESCSeattle AND [WWW.DESC.ORG](http://WWW.DESC.ORG)

### DESC

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DESC works to end the homelessness of vulnerable people, particularly those living with serious mental or addictive illnesses. Through partnerships and an integrated array of comprehensive services, treatment and housing, we give people the opportunity to reach their highest potential. At DESC, uncommon efforts produce uncommon results that eliminate homelessness, one person at a time.

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### SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

1811 Eastlake	The Morrison
Canaday House	Rainier House
Evans House	The Union Hotel
Kerner-Scott House	Scattered Site Housing
Lyon Building	

### CLINICAL SERVICES

Chemical Dependency Services  
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### EMERGENCY AND ENTRY SERVICES

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NIMBY(not in my backyard). It's an increasingly common problem in Seattle and King County neighborhoods and will likely become more prevalent as DESC and other organizations increase our efforts to end homelessness.



Bill Hobson

Because leaving disabled homeless adults on the streets costs taxpayers more money than providing supportive housing, local public policy encourages organizations like DESC to expand our services. For the past 20 years, most of this expansion has occurred in the downtown area, but that is changing. Today, developing affordable, practical sites have become too expensive downtown. Furthermore, residential

neighborhoods provide greater clinical and social stabilization for our residents than high density areas. But, as organizations look to outlying neighborhoods we find opposition.

Four years ago, DESC encountered strong opposition in Rainier Valley to the development of Rainier House. More recently, the YWCA and Compass Housing Alliance have experienced similar opposition. And now, DESC is encountering vigorous opposition to the development of a residential treatment program in Seattle's Jackson Place neighborhood.

All of this opposition tends to follow a template. Opponents contend that bringing disabled and homeless people into their community threatens the safety of the neighborhood and causes a decline in property values. And, they contend they have had no opportunity for public input. In Seattle, where most citizens consider themselves to be progressive, there is an added element. Opponents will acknowledge the worthiness of the proposed project and proclaim the good works of the sponsoring organization, but then proceed to argue that it shouldn't go into their neighborhood for one or all of the reasons above.

At best, NIMBY arguments are built on misinformation, and at worst on prejudice. Misinformation is easy to correct. Ample research exists showing that people living with mental illnesses and addictions are no more violent than the rest of us, and that supportive housing sites do not degrade property values and in many cases stimulate economic revitalization. As to site selection, the public has input: multiple, clearly advertised, public hearings precede adoption of all the codes.

From my perspective, the surest way to overcome NIMBYism is responsible management of housing programs. Organizations such as

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## FISHING AS THERAPY

When the Washington Fly Fishing Club (WFFC) began in 1939, fly fishing education was one of its aims and purposes. Today that mission is being fulfilled at DESC's Canaday House, where 83 residents are learning about community support, friendship, and personal growth through the art of fly fishing.



Originally, this Seattle based fly fishing club taught fly tying to veterans of WWII as a form of therapy following their battle field trauma. Realizing that in our modern

community, people living on the streets shared many of the same challenges as war veterans including fear, distrust, and isolation, the members of WFFC approached DESC staff at Canaday House and offered their unique brand of therapy to our residents.

Stop by Canaday House on any Thursday evening and you'll witness residents quickly downing their dinner so they can prepare the community room for the WFFC members and their next fly tying class. Through patience and dedication, these volunteers help clients who were previously isolated and reserved to open up. WFFC calls the program "Casting Forward" and Canaday

House is the first place in the country to try such a program. "So far," remarks Canaday House's Residential Counselor, Jeremy Lernoine, "it's our most popular activity offered at Canaday House."

Jeremy notes that when clients move into permanent housing after years of living on the streets or in shelters, they are met with a series of dramatic changes: neighbors, behavioral expectations, on-site support staff, and daily routines to be established. Although these are all positive changes, for many new residents it is overwhelming and intimidating to go through so much radical change in such a short time period. WFFC's "Casting Forward" program brings residents together where they can discuss their fears and concerns while learning a new skill.

Anticipation for the quarterly fishing trip, which takes the residents out of the downtown area and into nature, is the highlight of Casting Forward. "When you have very little income," notes Erica, "it is a rare luxury to commune with nature. It's even a rarer treat to catch and eat your own fish." Following the outing, WFFC members smoke the trout the residents catch and share them at the next meeting. All costs for the trip are paid by the WFFC's education budget.

Canaday House staff and residents agree that the effects of Casting Forward have been amazing. Staff recognize that a supportive

environment, peer support and rewarding activity lead to longer housing stability and confidence to tackle other challenges. Residents find that Casting Forward has helped them rebuild relationships they had lost while they were homeless. One resident who had spent 3 years living in a Pioneer Square park sent a photo of her "catch" to her long estranged father. Within days he wrote back "I'm so proud of you." Another resident broke out in a big smile when he realized, "I think I could learn to do this and then teach my nephews to tie flies and I could take them fishing."



DESC is grateful for all the volunteers who offer their time and energy to projects like this. For more information about volunteering, please visit [www.desc.org/volunteer.html](http://www.desc.org/volunteer.html)

## NOT IN MY BACKYARD (con't)

DESC must be responsive to residents' needs, as well as to neighborhood needs. We have a stake in neighborhood integrity because we, above all, want our residents to live in safe neighborhoods that promote their stability and recovery.

DESC is committed to working collaboratively with neighbors to address concerns as long as the primary goals of our programs are not undermined. In fact, DESC has been at the forefront of responding to neighbors' interests by becoming active in community councils, and by enforcing program rules that promote the livability of the surrounding neighborhood.

But I believe neighborhoods also have a responsibility. They are part of a broader civic fabric and have a responsibility to participate in the resolution of these problems. NIMBYism is a denial of that responsibility.

## COMPASSIONATE PRAGMATISM: MOURNING THE LOSS OF A VISIONARY

Dr. Alan Marlatt, the founder and director of the Addictive Behaviors Research Center (ABRC) at the University of Washington, died on March 14, 2011. He was 69. A friend and mentor to many at DESC, Dr. Marlatt was a true visionary in the field of addiction treatment and research.

Dr. Marlatt questioned conventional wisdom about addiction and how to best address it. He strongly advocated for a harm reduction approach to addiction therapy. His pioneering research demonstrated that “compassionate pragmatism instead of moralistic idealism” actually works to reduce substance use and improve the quality of life for people struggling with addiction. Harm reduction meets the individual where he or she is, instead of holding unrealistic expectations of an abstinence-only approach. It seeks to lessen the problems associated with drug and alcohol use through policies and strategies that recognize the dignity and human rights of an addicted individual. This more humane approach to treating addiction is a guiding principle at DESC, and the foundation of much of our work, including our own pioneering implementation of Housing First in this region.

For Dr. Marlatt, Housing First was a natural extension of his life’s work, and he was a great supporter of DESC’s efforts to assist people who experienced homelessness, and often, lifelong addiction. We were fortunate to work closely with Dr. Marlatt, Dr. Mary Larimer and the entire research team at ABRC in a robust evaluation of 1811 Eastlake, which culminated in a landmark article published in the Journal of the American Medical Association in 2009. We continue to work with this team to implement and research innovative approaches to assist our clients.

Like many of DESC’s programs, Dr. Marlatt’s teachings were quite controversial, even heretical when he first introduced them in the late 1970s. Counselors once shunned discussion of relapses when talking with alcoholics, believing it would only encourage further drinking. Dr. Marlatt challenged that as unrealistic. His research showed it was more effective to acknowledge the likelihood of relapses and help patients cope with them. Similarly, 1811 Eastlake was derided early on for permitting its residents to drink in their apartments. However, both Dr. Marlatt and 1811 Eastlake have proven how Harm Reduction is more humane and effective for the individual, and the community at large.

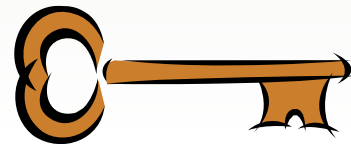
## DESC’S KEY CLUB: MAKING A DIFFERENCE EVERY MONTH

The Key Club is DESC’s monthly giving club where donors take the opportunity to make a difference every month. Monthly giving helps DESC ensure that services are available year round to the people we serve.

The Key Club is an easy way to make a big impact on our community and the lives of chronically homeless men and women. To learn more and to sign up, contact Donor Stewardship Officer Kathy Ulrich at [kulrich@desc.org](mailto:kulrich@desc.org) or 206-515-1518. You can also sign up on our website: [www.desc.org](http://www.desc.org) and going to our Donate Now button, then choosing “monthly giving” as your giving option.

Being a member of the Key Club comes with certain benefits and distinctions:

- consistent donations spread throughout the year
- easy giving through direct debit or credit card
- invitations to VIP events
- special donor recognition
- annual Key Club Behind the Scenes Tour
- satisfaction of helping people all year round



Dr. Marlatt was an internationally respected researcher who wrote and edited more than 20 books and received major awards for his contributions to the fields of alcoholism and substance abuse. Margaret King, DESC’s Manager of Supportive Housing, remembers Dr. Marlatt in this way: “He was a giant in the field, but what I will most remember is the concern and respect with which he approached everyone he knew. He made me, and many at DESC, feel like a valued partner.”

We are saddened by the loss of our friend and colleague, Dr. Alan Marlatt. He was a true visionary and an inspiration to DESC.

## WELLS FARGO INVESTS IN ITS COMMUNITY THROUGH DESC

Our sincere thanks to the Wells Fargo Foundation for their recent investment in DESC of \$25,000. Wells Fargo is committed to responsible business practices, social responsibility, and giving back to the community, which they have demonstrated through 10 years of supporting DESC. This generous gift will be used to fund DESC's supportive housing and clinical care programs for our community's most vulnerable citizens.

"Everyone has been touched in some way by the current economic challenges, so I couldn't be more proud of our company and the generosity of our team members," said John Stumpf, chairman, president and CEO of Wells Fargo. "Our company continues to

be committed to using our financial resources and expertise, working closely with non profits and other stakeholders, to create long-term economic growth and quality of life for everyone in the communities we serve."

For over 30 years DESC has relied on the support of corporate donors like Wells Fargo who understand that homelessness and mental illness are not choices but afflictions from which people can recover.

To learn more about Wells Fargo Bank's services, go to [www.wellsfargo.com](http://www.wellsfargo.com).



Mark Dederer, Christine Rush, Bill Hobson, Dwight Prevo  
photo by Maria Jacinto

## GIMME SHELTER ROCKS THE HOUSE: MUSIC SHOWDOWN AT THE SHOWBOX

Ignoring freezing temperatures and snow-packed streets, 400 Seattle music lovers and DESC supporters attended DESC's annual benefit concert, Gimme Shelter, on February 24th at The Showbox at The Market. \$20,000 was raised to support DESC's mission to end homelessness.

This was the third year for the annual Gimme Shelter event, with each year growing in size, popularity and caliber over the last. Event host, Billy Joe Huels of The Dusty 45s, brought together ten of Seattle's hottest, up & coming bands to bring attention to the hundreds of people living with mental illness on downtown streets. "Gimme Shelter provides a rare opportunity for music lovers to experience an extravaganza of local talent all in one evening" stated guest speaker, Dominic Holden, News Editor of The Stranger and homeless advocate.

The event was sponsored by Key Bank and Wells Fargo. For pictures and more information about the bands which provided support for this event, go to the Events page on our website: [www.desc.org](http://www.desc.org).



Star Anna rocking it



The Stranger's Dominic Holden



Billy Joe introduces Real Change vendor Robert  
photography by Christopher Daniel and Brad Curran



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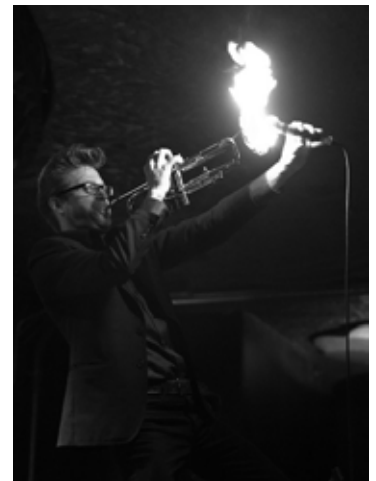
**GIMME SHELTER ROCKING THE SHOWBOX**  
*(story on page 5)*



*Kristen Ward*



*Massy Ferguson*



*Billy Joe Huels*



*Mark Pickerel*



*Zoe Muth*



*Billy Joe Huels and sister Diane Lovejoy*

*photography by Christopher Daniel and Brad Curran*

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