

The Sophia Way

Shelter. Safety. Stability.

Dear Friends,

When I came to the Seattle area in early 2019, I had no idea how deeply I would fall for the people and mission of The Sophia Way, along with the beauty of the Northwest. As an interim executive director, I was able to take a deep dive, not only into The Sophia Way, but the community. In January 2020, the board of directors and I agreed that it would be in the best interest of the organization to provide consistent leadership and develop a detailed



succession plan. Just before the COVID outbreak, we agreed upon a 20-month contract. Now that my contract is coming to an end, my husband and I had to choose whether to stay here permanently or return to our home and family in Arizona. Ultimately, we have decided to return to Arizona at the end of October.

The Sophia Way is in a much better place than it was three years ago when I arrived. A \$1.4M capital campaign was completed to open Helen's Place, our 24/7 shelter – providing the women we serve both safety and stability, no longer having to move from church-to-church nightly. Our leadership team is the strongest it has ever been with our chief officers leading their staff with passion and clear goals tied to the mission. Because of increased number of women served and moving both shelters to 24/7, our staff has increased 50 percent. Staff continues to provide exemplary trauma-informed care, providing a welcoming and inclusive environment. And most importantly, the community stands behind us stronger than ever!

I cannot tell you how impressed I am with the individual, foundation, faith community, and government support The Sophia Way receives. When the pandemic began, the community came to the rescue! King County helped us move to a local hotel to provide enhanced safety and social distancing. It continues to provide essential support for many of our programs. Eastside cities were also lifesavers—uncovering federal and local monies to support our women during this time of uncertainty and great need. Individuals continued to give generously of their time, talent, and treasure, making sure we have PPE, cleaning supplies, nourishing food, daily supplies for the women, and so much more. Local foundations jumped in to help too, many adding to their “usual” grants to assure the health and stability of the women we serve. I have never seen support like this in any other community and am proud to have called the Eastside my home.

Having set the stage for my departure, we will begin a search for The Sophia Way's new Chief Executive Officer. While the process begins immediately it is likely to take the next three months or more. Community leaders and current staff are encouraged to apply once the position is posted in the coming days.

While I am sad to leave the organization and this community I will be able to take what I have learned to my next organization. I truly appreciate the kindness and respect that The Sophia Way community has given me over the last three years.

With sincere gratitude,



Alisa Chatinsky
Chief Executive Officer



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