



Dear Friends,

What a joyous celebration we had at our Caring Community Brunch! The outpouring of support from our community and the joy on the faces of the women we serve filled our hearts.

This year, we took a new approach to the brunch by inviting the community to support The Sophia Way through active participation, sponsorships, and donations. Unlike typical fundraisers, the event provided a unique chance for the community to walk alongside women and create an extraordinary community experience. The outcome exceeded expectations—women enjoyed shopping, makeovers, games, delicious food, and connecting with each other. Our community guests delighted in seeing the women savoring every moment of the festivities.

Our heartfelt thanks extend to the many individuals and groups who played a vital role in making this event a success. Special recognition goes to our dedicated team at The Sophia Way, with a shout-out to the exceptional efforts of **Megan Duncan and Jola Paliswiat**.

A resounding applause to our **extraordinary volunteers** for creating a welcoming space and atmosphere, with gratitude to **Shari Erickson** for the lovely decor. Special thanks to the **generous people** who shopped from our Amazon wish list, and to **Muslim Community Resource Center and Essentials First** for furnishing winter coats.

Gratitude to **Laura Taylor of Honest to Goodness Personal Chef Services** for the delicious breakfast burritos, **Assistance League of the Eastside** for the muffins and coffee, and **board members Sunita Shastri, Danielle Porter, and Viju McAllister** for their invaluable contributions.

Grateful thanks to **Nancy Kahn** for donation of makeup, **Ashley Kwaloff and Aphrodite Kourtis** for providing beautiful haircuts, **our staff** for expertly styling black hair, and **Claire Sumadiwirya** for the beautiful flower centerpieces. The generosity of our sponsors— **Bellden Café, Porchlight, Puget Sound Energy**—and our community partner, **Microsoft**, made a significant impact.



"I loved the sense of community, seeing old friends, and meeting new ones. And, no matter where you are in life's journey, The Sophia Way is always there to support you."

"My hair looks so nice after my haircut... I am trying not to cry."

"I liked everything about the event! The breakfast menu was delicious. The greatest experience was seeing & hugging Dietra, my forever friend."

"As a former guest of Helen's Place and now a drop-in participant, I was looking forward to returning to a place that kept me safe, fed, sheltered, and in community during COVID and through my sobriety journey out of homelessness. Despite arriving late, I was treated with love and care by the staff and volunteers. They

A special mention of our cherished guests — [Dr. Lynne Robinson](#), [Janice Zahn](#), [Dave Hamilton](#), [Mo Malakoutian](#), [Linda Hoffner](#), [Alexis Harden](#). Your presence made the day truly special, and your unwavering support empowers us to champion more women in need.

We aimed to raise \$55,000 from this event and your generosity has already brought us to \$48,500. [Please help us reach our goal with your gift today!](#)

We are committed to making this community-centric event a symbol of unity and care, filled with compassion and community spirit. We look forward to your participating in next year's brunch.

Thank you for making a difference!



Dietra Clayton
Managing Executive Director

pampered me, helped me shop, and even prepared a plate of desserts to take home. Thank you for the generous donations of goodies, beauty services & food. I am so happy to have warm clothing that fits me perfectly. I feel so seen!"

Community Voices



Thank you Dietra Clayton and the many volunteers who created a (free) department store for all the sheltered women. I got to be a personal shopper for someone with a job interview on Monday, helping her to select warm boots and a jacket. Please support The Sophia Way and make their dreams come true.

- Bellevue Mayor Lynne Robinson

What a treat to spend the morning volunteering at The Sophia Way spreading happiness at their Caring Community Brunch and helping women find warm pants and jeans for the season. This event was a huge success and the clients were an absolute JOY to serve!

-Linda Hoffner





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