



2016/2017 ISSUE

Companis works in the face of income disparity

We are a region of much wealth, but also much need.

Amid the towering construction cranes, new restaurants and flourishing boutiques is another Seattle reality: growing income inequality that means more of our neighbors need basic services despite an economic boom.

Companis operates in this widening gap between rich and poor, matching skilled volunteers with nonprofit partner agencies delivering vital services to our neighbors in need. Companis Workers are a doctor treating homeless women, medical case-workers opening doors for low income or uninsured patients, a companion to the chronically homeless, a social worker

supporting treatment of addicted, mentally ill and homeless people, a friendly face helping at-risk families stay in their homes.

As wages climb past \$250,000 for the top 20% of Seattle residents, wages for the bottom 20% are stagnating at \$13,000. With housing costs booming, our neighbors in the lower income brackets risk losing their homes, health insurance and more. That's the gap where Companis Workers stand. And that's where they make a difference every day, in 65 volunteer placements with 42 agencies in the past year.

Companis' top placement areas are homeless and health care access programs, with addiction treatment and mental

health issues emerging as strong areas of service. Recent placements at Harborview Community Mental Health Center, the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Seattle, Evergreen Treatment Services and Recovery Café speak to the epidemic of addiction that contributes to long term homelessness and other problems.

The Companis solution is efficient and effective – matching skilled professionals with nonprofits in need of staffing assistance. And we support our volunteers with an extensive professional and personal development program that ensures they arrive committed and remain inspired as they step up to meet the great need we see all around us.

*Your Investment =
Companis Impact*

Since 2011, Companis Workers have provided more than **\$5 million** in vital community services, extending a helping hand to thousands of our neighbors. **Companis does what would otherwise go undone.**

Many needs, many ways to help



Debbie Aylott



Shawn LaPlant



Cindy Wang



Abid Bhatti

Companis Workers are launching careers, finding their passion, igniting their spirit, and serving their communities in retirement. They range in age from 24 to 88. Some work full time in their placements; others one day a week.

They are inspired, and inspiring.

Companis Worker Shawn LaPlant volunteers with Northwest Harvest's Cherry Street Food Bank while employed full-time in his job as a concierge at an upscale downtown building.

"By helping other people you help yourself," says Shawn, who repackages bulk food and

performs other tasks during his 3-hour, weekly shift. Shawn sees a "huge divide" of wealth and poverty. "We have the biggest homeless crisis we've ever had, while this city is the wealthiest it has ever been."

Companis Worker Abid Bhatti, with experience in teaching and banking, is on his second Companis placement of 2016; his first was a leave replacement with a nonprofit that addresses unmet mental health needs and his second is a full-time position bringing his financial expertise to a nonprofit aimed at improving dental health in our region. Companis Worker Debbie Aylott, with 35

years as a graphic designer at Boeing, now finds her joy training puppies as guide dogs.

Companis Workers Cindy Wang and Peter Merritt are recent college graduates placed in full-time roles helping low income patients get affordable dental and medical care. Cindy plans on a career in public health, and her Chinese language skills are a big asset in her Companis placement.

Companis Worker Dr. Muriel Jones is a retired physician who volunteers regularly at Mary's Place treating homeless women. Companis Worker Tom Tiberio is an antiques appraiser who helps St. Vincent de Paul increase store revenue that goes to assisting homeless families.

"Companis takes peoples' skills and puts them into places where those skills are needed, where maybe they wouldn't be otherwise available," Tom says.

There are many in need, and many ways to serve.

“The people who sell **Real Change** are doing something to help themselves. It’s a pathway for them.”



Merry Nye
Retired newspaper editor Merry Nye contributes her expertise to Real Change, the newspaper by and for those struggling with shelter. A lifelong volunteer, Merry feels a special affinity to people who lack stable homes. “There have been a couple of points in my life where that could have been me,” she says. “I think about how fortunate I’ve been.”



Patrick Tomkins
“Doing my small part to help people feels good.”
Companis Worker Patrick Tomkins, a barista who is enrolled in a registered nursing degree program, staffs the computer lab at **Harborview Community Mental Health**. He is a friendly face for clients who drop by to write resumes, conduct job searches or play computer games.
“I’ve been a consumer of out-patient mental health care, and I know this place is a remarkable facility. It’s a safe place to be.”

“It really appeals to me to help an organization that gives people what they need to move forward on their own.”



Beto Yarce Jon Moran
Companis Worker Jon Moran advises **Ventures**, a nonprofit organization training low-income entrepreneurs. He provides HR expertise to Executive Director Beto Yarce and the board, guidance that if provided in the open market would cost thousands. He loves the mission and the staff’s passion to help women, immigrants and other low income entrepreneurs launch their own businesses.

Companis by the numbers in 2015-2016

COMPANIS HAS MADE **65** PLACEMENTS OF **42** PARTNER SKILLED PROFESSIONALS IN **42** PARTNER AGENCIES PROVIDING VITAL SERVICES TO OUR NEIGHBORS IN NEED*

*In the 12-months ending third quarter 2016

19 Companis Workers **SERVE OUR** homeless neighbors

10 Companis Workers **PROVIDE IMPROVED** health care access

7 Companis Workers support **THOSE STRUGGLING WITH** BEHAVIORAL HEALTH & ADDICTION

5 COMPANIS WORKERS SERVE **youth in educational** AND ARTS PROGRAMS

6 Companis Workers are **placed in programs** **SERVING SENIORS**

22 COMPANIS WORKERS **ARE GIVING BACK** **after retirement**

92% of our budget is spent directly on our program

To donate, please visit www.companis.org/donate or call **206-328-6155** for more information on legacy gifts.



Joan Benner

“The clients are beautiful human beings and the work here is absolutely critical.”

Companis Worker Joan Benner is a social worker with a commitment to the “forgotten people,” our mentally ill, homeless and addicted neighbors. She loves the mission at **Evergreen Treatment Service’s REACH Project**, where she spent a year in administrative support and later helped supervise the social work interns who assist clients in the program. “It’s wonderful to see the care and concern and dedication of this staff, and to feel like I’ve been a little bit helpful.”

“For the homeless men and women I work with, to be seen and understood as lives that matter makes all the difference in the world.”



Atit Marmer

Companis Worker Atit Marmer serves as a companion to people using meal and hygiene programs through **Immanuel Community Services**. A retired therapist, he chats over a meal in a church basement or shelter, a friendly face in the crowd. He does the same at the downtown hygiene center where people who are homeless can take a shower and do laundry. “I am there as a presence, to sit with them, to share myself with them.”



Joan O'Brien

“It makes so much sense to provide a helping hand before unforeseen events cause life to spiral out of control.”

Companis Worker Joan O'Brien is placed with West Seattle Help Line, which provides assistance with rent, utility and other needs. She manages the volunteer staff that helps run the clothing bank and other client programs. Joan, a documentary producer, is the second Companis Worker supporting the small non-profit. She provides vital staffing assistance that Executive Director Chris Langeler says allows his agency to dedicate 50% more staff hours to client services.

Financial Highlights

COMPANIS REVENUE SOURCES	2016
Individual Donors	30%
Agency Donations	33%
Foundations	29%
Seattle First Baptist Church	8%
2016 budget is \$529,000	100%

Your individual donations change lives and are a major source of support for Companis

- Companis is grateful to these foundations for their support:
- The Stuart & Benjamin Abelson Foundation Trust
 - The Stuart & Jesse Abelson Foundation Trust
 - The John C. and Karyl Kay Hughes Foundation
 - Moccasin Lake Foundation
 - M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust
 - The Norcliffe Foundation

OVER 22 YEARS COMPANIS HAS MADE MORE THAN 800 PLACEMENTS WITH 131 NONPROFIT AGENCIES

Why We Donate



Ervin Herness Jane Herness

“We believe in the purpose of Companis, the wonderful work you do for the people in Seattle, and the professionalism and caring with which you do it.”

– Jane & Ervin Herness



Paul Mesarchik Frank Couch

“We’re inspired by Companis’ effectiveness in matching volunteers and nonprofit organizations to strengthen our community’s safety nets. That’s powerful!”

– Paul Mesarchik & Frank Couch

'Companis Connects' volunteers with training and enrichment programs

The front lines of community service can be a challenging place to be. Companis Workers serve side-by-side with our neighbors as they struggle with loss of shelter and employment, hunger, access to health care, and addiction.

Integral to our program of "inspired service, delivered," is "Companis Connects," a robust program of quarterly professional and personal development offerings that ensure our volunteers arrive committed and remain inspired.

"Being able to offer these educational and training opportunities as a 'value added' for our volunteers is Companis' unique spot," says Executive Director Gary Davis. "It's part of the way we support our volunteers as well as the staffs of the partner agencies where they are placed."

The free trainings have presented information on access to health care and housing, nonviolent communication techniques, creating a personal safety net, supporting our transgender neighbors, and self-care for workers and volunteers who experience secondary trauma from repeated exposure to clients immersed in harmful situations.

Staffs of partner agencies also are encouraged to attend the events, an additional benefit for nonprofit agencies with limited training budgets.

Companis Worker Carole Tovar compiled



92% of Companis Workers complete THEIR 1-YEAR PLACEMENT

and regularly updates a thick resource book focused on the special needs of aging homeless people. Copies of the book are made available to volunteers and partner agencies. Carole began her project while volunteering at **Mary's Place** in a role aimed at senior women.

Other volunteer enrichment offerings include regular peer support group meetings, day-long and multi-day retreats, and attendance at lectures, concerts and readings.

While volunteer support and agency outreach has been an important component of Companis since inception, we look forward

to expanding and deepening these programs thanks to a 3-year grant from the **M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust**. The grant funds the addition of a Worker Engagement Director position to our staff, and we are excited to welcome Jennie Moore in this role.

"As a result of the deep program of volunteer support, many of our Companis Workers serve in multiple placements," Gary observes. "In this way, Companis creates a growing and sustainable service corps in our larger community."

Visionary who helped launch Companis 22 years ago is honored by board.



How do you turn a truckload of surplus potatoes into a thriving organization that has placed more than 800 skilled professionals in 131 nonprofits in the Puget Sound region?

Just ask Renna Pierce, the 2016 recipient of the Janet G. Newell Award for Community Service, presented by the Companis Board

of Directors in recognition of her role in organizing and launching Companis 22 years ago.

Renna, now an active 92 years old, recalls that Seattle First Baptist Church was operating a food bank, bagging up surplus potatoes and distributing them to those in need, and running afoul of church neighbors in the process. "We were a well-intentioned bunch of volunteers who didn't know how to run a food bank without disturbing the neighborhood," she said. "We had the idea that it would be better to be a support church for the nonprofits that were already out there doing good work, and to help them perform better by supplying skilled

professional volunteers."

Companis was founded in 1994, becoming a secular nonprofit in 1997. As president of the SFBC congregation, Renna recruited and hired founding Companis Executive Director Craig Darling. Now a retired college educator, her community service involvement also includes 6 years on the King County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

Renna reflects on those early years and concludes it was work well done.

"Companis has served the community very well, and it's also given people the opportunity to use their skills in a way that is very useful and productive."

Companis Staff & Board

Administration

Gary Davis, *Executive Director*
Rita Hibbard, *Associate Executive Director*
Jennie Moore, *Worker Engagement*
Phil Mervin, *Office Manager*
Peter Jabin, *Special Projects*

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Craig Darling

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Don Weston

Our Mission

Companis connects volunteer professionals with nonprofit agencies that need staffing assistance. Our worker support program creates an engaged community service corps and expands the capacity of Seattle area nonprofits.

www.companis.org (206) 328-6155

Contact us at info@companis.org



Like us on Facebook and discover more about our work in the community!