

2023 Friend of Housing Awards honor state's housing champions

October 17, 2023— The Washington State Housing Finance Commission has recognized eight individuals and organizations as 2023 “Friends of Housing” as part of the annual [Housing Washington Conference](#) in Tacoma.

"These eight awardees are driving positive change across our state and in their local communities," said Steve Walker, executive director of the Housing Finance Commission. "We take great pride in recognizing their extraordinary commitment to affordable housing."

2023 Friend of Housing Awardees (and Categories):

- **Lucy Lepinski (Margaret M. Sevy Lifetime Achievement Award):** Currently chief operating officer at Spokane Neighborhood Action Partners (SNAP), Lucy Lepinski has over three decades of impact in affordable housing development, asset management, and nonprofit leadership in the Spokane area. Her career has shown great dedication to equity and community involvement, including her role in founding the Human Rights Education Institute (HREI).
- **Bao Nguyen (Emerging Leader):** After growing up as a resident of Seattle Housing Authority's Rainier Vista, Nguyen now shines as manager of the property as well as Lake City Court. His leadership fosters collaboration, problem-solving, and trust among staff and residents alike.
- **Gomer Roseman (Unsung Hero):** A 17-year veteran at Tacoma/Pierce County Habitat for Humanity, Gomer Roseman has overseen the creation of 190 new Habitat homes and rehabilitation of 20 more. Gomer's leadership as Habitat's construction director drives innovation in energy-efficient, affordable housing through sustainable construction techniques.
- **Suzanne Wyatt-Forester (Unsung Hero):** Compassion personified, Suzanne serves homeless veterans and individuals across rural Yakima, Benton, Franklin, and Skamania counties on behalf of OIC of Washington. She provides street outreach, screens veterans for support, and fosters connections with local agencies.
- **Liz Prince (Unsung Hero):** Liz Prince, a true Unsung Hero, transforms lives through her dedication at DSHS's Aging and Long Term Supports Administration. She lobbied for state-funded subsidies, enabling over 1,100 people to transition from institutions to independent housing.
- **Black Home Initiative (Racial Initiative):** Comprising 78 partner organizations, the Black Home Initiative (BHI) tackles housing supply, buyer readiness, and systemic change in order to empower 1,500 new Black homeowners within five years. Its policy group also played a pivotal role in passing the historic Covenant Homeownership Act, creating new avenues for addressing housing discrimination.
- **HopeSource (Sustainable Housing):** HopeSource, serving central Washington since 1963, provides over 900 affordable housing units while prioritizing environmental sustainability. Their commitment to energy efficiency is exemplified by Spurling Court in Ellensburg, featuring a 101-kilowatt solar array, reducing electric bills for tenants by up to 22% and powering the community center.
- **Korean Women's Association KWA (Housing Intersection):** Originally founded 50 years ago to protect victims of domestic violence, KWA now serves 14 counties with diverse services. With five affordable housing properties and plans for 88 new senior housing units in downtown Tacoma, KWA continues to foster inclusivity, dignity, and belonging for all.

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The [Washington State Housing Finance Commission](#) is a self-supporting state agency that brings private investment dollars to create affordable housing and achieve public goals throughout Washington.