Happy New Year Hilltop
May You Thrive & Grow In Your Community

By Jane Trancho

Hilltop Stories: Visual & Audio Reflections

Art by Dionne Bonner; Audio by Whitney Brady. On exhibit now at the Tacoma Public Libraries Handforth Virtual Gallery through February 6th.

HILLTOP STORIES, visual and audio reflections, is currently on exhibit through the Tacoma Public Libraries Handforth Virtual Gallery through February 6, 2021. With Art by Dionne Bonner and Audio by Whitney Brady, these artists celebrate the history and culture of the Hilltop Neighborhood in a show that focuses on the people and places that have made this such a special place to its residents. This duo of exceptional artists has joined forces to use their talent and creativity to continue a long history of people working together to make this community better.

The audio reflections are the work of the Hilltop Listening Project. In 2017 Whitney Brady recorded oral histories of 20 Hilltop residents, with memories from the 1930s through 2000. Each person was asked the same list of questions, and audio is edited to group responses by topics. They reflect the joy and passion for this community with multiple voices and perspectives.

The visuals in this exhibit are the work of Dionne Bonner. Dionne’s family has deep roots in the Hilltop, and her family is the inspiration for this exhibit. “Through this exhibit, I’m celebrating togetherness and remembering times when my family and the community were the closest.” Her nine oil paintings of family are executed with bold colors and brushstrokes. The remaining graphic images are visual representations of quotes from one-on-one interviews Dionne had with another set of people with roots in the Hilltop. While the interviews are with different people than the Listening Project and conducted later, they reinforce the continuity of feeling for this place.

The combination of these media provides a potent sense of what it means to be a part of this community. Whether you are a long-time resident of the Hilltop or a new addition, you will find joy and commonality in this exhibit. The Hilltop Spirit is alive in these images and voices. It is a show not to be missed.

Visit the virtual exhibit by clicking on this link or visiting https://www.tacomalibrary.org/handforth/gallery/.

Find out how to participate in the Hilltop Holiday Crawl on Page 3.
President’s Message

By Brendan Nelson

Hilltop Family,

The holidays are a festive time of year when we share special moments with our family, friends and loved ones, and look ahead to a new year filled with promise and opportunity. We reflect upon our many blessings, filled with promise and opportunity.

In the spirit of the season, I commend all those neighbors, community members, organizations and stakeholders who have made a special effort to give back to the community.

Meet Brendan Nelson, Alyssa Torrez, and Micheala Lemons, HAC Board Members and your Host for HAC Virtual Weekly Updates! Join us each Monday at 6:00 PM via Facebook Live during the COVID-19 pandemic. HAC Monthly Community Meetings will return once we can meet in person again.

In service,
Brendan Nelson
President, Hilltop Action Coalition

Join Us

Hilltop Action Coalition Virtual Weekly Updates

Mondays @ 6PM

Meet your neighbors and become part of the Hilltop Community.

Each week, we have presentations and information about community events, activities, policy, and important news.

Light refreshments and kid’s activities provided!

Hilltop Action Coalition

Hilltop Action Coalition is a community-based coalition and 501(c)3 nonprofit that is working to mobilize and empower diverse individuals, families, businesses and other public and community organizations to build a safe, clean, healthy resilient and united community.

President
Brendan Nelson

Vice-President/Treasurer
Greg Walker

Secretary
Jennifer Schaal

Board of Directors
Jo Davies
Alyssa Torrez
Micheala Lemons

Office Manager & Journal Editor
Kristine Coman

Community Engagement Liaison
Jasmin De’Armond

Hilltop Action Coalition is recruiting Board Members!
Email hacoffice15@gmail.com

Article Correction

Page 112
Black Mindfulness Club Little Library Hilltop at Fern and Foster

Please note the article was not written by Nicole Reed. The byline should have read: Information provided by Nicole Reed and the Black History Mindfulness Club website which was created by Tesa Morse. Tesa is the Black leader of Black History Mindfulness Club and creator of the website content. Photographs and video link were shared by Nicole Reed.

If you would like more information about the Black History Mindfulness Club, please visit their website at https://www.blackhistorymindfulnesscommunity.com or Facebook Page https://www.facebook.com/BlackHistoryMindfulnessClub. If you have questions or donation inquiries, please email Tesa Morse at blackhistorymindfulnessclub@gmail.com.

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Your Hosts will share community updates and local events for the Hilltop Neighborhood. They also have Special Guests each week that will provide you with empowering information that we hope will improve your quality of life.

Miss a meeting? No worries! All virtual meetings are recorded and available to view when you are ready to watch them - visit the HAC Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/HilltopActionCoalition and click on the Videos tab. On November 30th, we had Special Guest Klair Ethridge, Executive Director for Tacoma Urban Performing Arts Center - find out more about T.U.P.A.C on page 6!
Virtual Hilltop Holiday Crawl: Dec 14th - 20th
Support Local Businesses this Holiday Season and help your community THRIVE! Brought to you by HAC and Tacoma Housing Authority!

Virtual Marketplace & Crawl Passport
Providing Safe Ways to Participate!

Originally, HAC and Tacoma Housing Authority (THA) intended to replicate the Business Crawl for a weekend holiday experience. Gov. Inslee’s COVID-19 safety guidelines called for improvements that can guarantee a germ free shopping experience. THA developed a Virtual Marketplace and Passport that will help us shop at our local businesses and restaurants for gifts that will show you double care - for your gift receiver and the community. Keeping your spending dollars in the neighborhood keeps Hilltop thriving! A HUGE Thank You to Crawl Sponsors for supporting community outreach: Sound Transit, The Community Marketplace, Downtown on the Go, and Safestreets!

Virtual Marketplace
Shop at Hilltop retail shops and restaurants between December 14th and 20th at the Virtual Marketplace. You may also shop in person - please wear a face mask and maintain social distancing guidelines.

Visit www.hilltopcrawl.com to easily find holiday gifts! You can also order food from your favorite spot for pick up or delivery. You’ll also find micro-vendors at the Virtual Marketplace for locally made products and specialty items.

Here is a list of Hilltop Virtual Marketplace shops and restaurants (please note this list is not complete - new businesses are being added daily):

- Ascent Fitness
- Bob’s Bar-B-Q Pit
- Clockwork Wireless
- Eleven Eleven
- Fish House Cafe
- Fulcrum Gallery
- Grit City Ciderworks
- Hilltop Action Coalition
- Hilltop Loans Pawn Shop
- Johnson’s Candy Company
- Lavonne’s Room
- Mr. Mac Ltd
- Red Elm Cafe
- Sam & Terry’s Barbershop
- SPUN
- Tacoma’s #1 Fried Rice
- TSM Shop
- 1120 Hilltop
- Micro-Businesses
- Cocoa Loves Grey
- FUKU Activism Apparel
- Grit City Co-op
- Lilia Vintage
- Sage & Onyx Soapery
- Strong Family Bonds LLC
- SWASH
- Urban Business Support
- YBMW1080

Virtual Passport
Complete a Virtual Passport at www.hilltopcrawl.com; or, come by HAC at 1116 Earnest S. Brazill ST. Dec 14-20, 10am to 4pm, to pick up a Passport. Collect 5 Stamps to enter a fantastic Business Raffle and vote for the People’s Choice Award for the best decorated storefront! Tune in Dec 21 HAC Virtual Weekly Update for the Raffle Drawing & People’s Choice Award Announcement!

Virtual Hilltop Holiday Crawl...is going VIRTUAL!

ONE WEEK! December 14th-20th
In stores and ONLINE
Visit HILLTOPCRAWL.COM for business information and map
- Explore local businesses and vendors to purchase holiday treats while observing state COVID-19 guidelines
- Order ahead! Call-in, shop online or pick up goods from local businesses
- Mark your virtual passports, win prizes and vote for best holiday decorations.
- Appropriate social distancing and wearing of facial masks will be required in all Crawl locations.

SHOP PARTICIPATING BUSINESSES AND FILL OUT YOUR VIRTUAL PASSPORT AT HILLTOPCRAWL.COM

Join your HAC hosts to share holiday greetings at the HAC Holiday Gathering!

Wear your Ugly Holiday Sweater, drink your favorite beverage, and sit back and have some holiday fun.

Please RSVP at https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZIld-2haDiO6FH3KmKXhW-q7c257gEzNIg to reserve your spot.

Visit with Santa and our HAC roving reporter to watch the Hilltop Tree light up the night.

Share Seasons Greetings with your HAC friends!
Since I Been Down, WINS the 2020 Social Justice Film Festival’s Feature Documentary Gold Prize!

A social justice documentary by award-winning filmmaker Gilda Sheppard, a Professor at Evergreen State College Tacoma.

By Jennifer Schaud

Since I Been Down is a social justice documentary by award-winning filmmaker Gilda Sheppard. The film takes Tacoma, WA— with a particular focus on the Hilltop— as subject, chronicling how gangs, fear, racism and power arrested the development of one American community.

Gilda Sheppard’s excellent documentary film Since I Been Down was a stellar choice for this year’s Tacoma Film Festival. The film, based on interviews with imprisoned men and women from the Hilltop area, looks at the prison system as a general failure of society to do anything with those who are locked up other than let them waste away year after year. The strength of the film is its ability to show how systemic racism and fear leave so many young people of color so powerless to have choices in life that lead anywhere other than to be locked up.

Currently over two million men and women are warehoused in institutions throughout the United States. Unlike European models, which are located close to urban centers and allow prisoners to work and support themselves while serving their sentences, prisons in the U.S. are mostly rural and offer inmates little to nothing in the way of employment, education or other rehabilitation services that might provide a path to re-integration into society.

The Tacoma Film Festival, now in its fifteenth year, chose Since I Been Down as a key documentary feature film for the 2020 screenings. The film, in conjunction with its host The Grand Cinema, arranged an outdoor screening of the film November 8th at the Patio at Alma Mater and included a panel discussion following the film. For those who couldn’t brave the evening cold or the socially-distanced and masked gathering, a free virtual discussion following the film was located indoors at Alma Mater and included a Q&A with director Gilda Sheppard.

The film was located indoors at Alma Mater’s theater and “televised” to the audience outside. Discussions were moderated by the City of Tacoma’s Tanisha Jumper and included a Q&A segment by telephone with one of the imprisoned men interviewed in the film.

Dr. Sheppard, a professor at the Evergreen University Tacoma campus, was inspired to make Since I Been Down when she began teaching at the local prison and hearing the inmate stories. Another inspiration was seeing the powerful effects of the Black Prisoners Caucus, an organization that provides a medium for Black prisoners to work collectively to improve family relationships, the facilities they live in, and the communities they are absent from but still very much belong to. “We’re socialized to believe prison and death are a normality,” says Dr. Sheppard. “we don’t believe that prisoners have answers.” The Black Prisoners Caucus offers prisoners the possibilities of finding their answers, and the solutions that can lead to restorative justice.

The message of Since I Been Down is especially poignant right now, as gentrification threatens to erase the presence and culture of the families and businesses that built the Hilltop. We have a responsibility to the communities we move to, Dr. Sheppard believes. We need the political will to change our system of institutionalization and move toward true justice, a transformative justice.

Read more film reviews at:
Washington Post: https://redefinemag.net/2020 sociales-love-brilliant-minds-locked-up- other-than-let-them-waste-away/?v=768847013696714&ref=watch permalink
Seattle Times article: https://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/articles/watch-director-gilda-sheppard/Panel-With-Angela-Davis: https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=76887013696714&ref=watch permalink
Redefine Magazine: https://redefinemag.net/2020/since-i-been-down-documentary-interview-director-gilda-sheppard/

To follow SINCE I BEEN DOWN, you can find it on social media here: website at: https://www.jimmielewispro.com/https://www.facebook.com/sinceibeendown/Instagram at https://www.instagram.com/sinceibeendown/

Since I Been Down documentary by award-winning filmmaker Gilda Sheppard, a Professor at Evergreen State College Tacoma.

Since I Been Down expanded to festivals world wide.

12 years in the making, the SINCE I BEEN DOWN, spotlights Kimonti Carter, education activist imprisoned for life without parole, as it chronicles the consequences of one Community’s decision to discard at-risk youth behind bars.

November 30, 2020, Tacoma/Seattle, WA – Award-winning Filmmaker Gilda Sheppard’s critical documentary, SINCE I BEEN DOWN, which has just finished screening at DOC NYC, America’s largest documentary festival, will now expand to festivals around the world. The film, covering a turning point in Tacoma, WA history, most recently was the centerpiece film at the Tacoma Film Festival.

In 1993, Washington State voters passed the three-strikes law and sent children considered irredeemable super-predators to prison for life without parole. Sheppard, a Professor of Sociology and Cultural Studies at Evergreen State College (Tacoma) also volunteer teaches in the Washington State prison system. Kimonti Carter member of the Black Prisoners’ Caucus without parole. “Sheppard, a Professor at the Evergreen University Tacoma campus, was inspired to make Since I Been Down when she began teaching at the local prison and hearing the inmate stories. Another inspiration was seeing the powerful effects of the Black Prisoners Caucus, an organization that provides a medium for Black prisoners to work collectively to improve family relationships, the facilities they live in, and the communities they are absent from but still very much belong to. “We’re socialized to believe prison and death are a normality,” says Dr. Sheppard. “we don’t believe that prisoners have answers.” The Black Prisoners Caucus offers prisoners the possibilities of finding their answers, and the solutions that can lead to restorative justice.

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Seattle Times article: https://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/articles/watch-director-gilda-sheppard/Panel-With-Angela-Davis: https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=76887013696714&ref=watch permalink
Redefine Magazine: https://redefinemag.net/2020/since-i-been-down-documentary-interview-director-gilda-sheppard/

To follow SINCE I BEEN DOWN, you can find it on social media here: website at: https://www.jimmielewispro.com/https://www.facebook.com/sinceibeendown/Instagram at https://www.instagram.com/sinceibeendown/

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Welcome To Hilltop Core Of The City

A new temporary mural, by artist Katie Dean, is currently on the fence next to SPUN Clay Arts Studio, located at 1307 MLK Jr. Way.

Hilltop is Beautiful

Designed to serve Tacomans as a ‘One Stop Shop’.

By Alyssa Torrez

For those of us who live, work or play here, we know this to be true. As part of the Tacoma First 311 mobilization grant, the City of Tacoma and the Tacoma Housing Authority know this and want everyone who visits here to know this, too.

Part of this includes letting people know how they can be a part of making and keeping the Hilltop beautiful. One of the ways that residents and community members can do that is by calling Tacoma First 311. This is a free city service that community members can use to get answers to questions, make requests and get support from additional city services.

By calling in, going online or using the mobile app, you can access more than 700 answers to commonly asked city related questions and services.

THA has worked to help let people know how they can utilize this service through a series of posters that highlight the things they can do that is by calling Tacoma First 311 and Hilltop is Beautiful. And what better way to show people that the Hilltop is beautiful than showcasing the people that live here? The mural features face cutouts for community members to pop their faces in and become part of the artwork. You can also spot Hilltop landmarks and well-known businesses that we know and love.

Sean Alexander, a Hilltop resident, artist and designer, created the mural for the Tacoma Housing Authority and it made its debut at the Hilltop Business Crawl. You can now see it in the window of Grit City Ciderworks on MLK (and snap a photo if you’re picking up a growler of cider). This mural will continue to pop up in different spaces in the Hilltop, so you have a chance to experience the beauty for yourself. Fun fact about the mural and posters, Sean hands draws all the art! Take a look at the posters and art at ActivateHilltop.org and learn more about the Tacoma First 311 services and remember that Hilltop is Beautiful!

For “Welcome to Hilltop, Core of the City”, artist Katie Dean included the facades of fourteen iconic Hilltop businesses and wove branches of apple blossoms between the letters.

Address: 802 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Tacoma, WA 98405

Construction is well underway on Mercy Housing Northwest’s newest development in Tacoma, WA and we want your help to come up with a new name! The project, known currently as MLK Senior Housing, will bring 60 new affordable apartments for seniors to the Hilltop neighborhood along the route of the Tacoma Link Light Rail, which is currently being expanded along Martin Luther King Jr. Way.

You may suggest more than one name - please submit your ideas by December 23rd. Suggestions will be reviewed following the criteria below:

1. Shall be consistent with Mercy’s mission and values. Any person, place or organization to be honored through naming must not be or have been engaged in or be associated with activities that are at odds with Mercy’s mission and values.

2. Shall reflect the context of the project by referencing or reflecting:
   • The geography or other natural features relevant to the site
   • Cultural, civic, economic or natural history of the site
   • The vision for and/or purpose of the project
   • The identity of an individual, living or deceased, who has made a significant contribution to the project, who has contributed outstanding civic service, or who has been an integral and significant part of the history of the site

3. Shall avoid commercialization of the development.

4. Shall avoid confusion with the names of other buildings, businesses or features of the community at large.

You can submit name suggestions anonymously by following this link (https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=ed6516mmXUDYwk5Su_uflsmz51HezzOGiSzGINBgagic3PeW4FtPp5P0F5UzF5U2V5Me02NS4y), or you can email your name suggestions to: mlkseniorname@gmail.com.
 Tacoma Urban Performing Arts Center is located on the Hilltop at 1301 Martin Luther King Jr. Way and is a place “where classical ballet legends are trained!” With a mission to provide our most deserving racially and socioeconomically diverse youth with world class opportunities to achieve Artistic Excellence in the performing arts, T.U.P.A.C. offers classical ballet and multicultural dance instruction for children and teens ages 4-18 that aims to provide dance instruction for children and performing arts. Photographs courtesy of T.U.P.A.C website.

**What Is Poetry?**

“Power 2 The Poetry” By Bethany ’B.Lyte’ Montgomery Instagram @b.lyte222 - More poems at power2thepoetry

- Poetry is what you think quietly out loud
- Or written down
- Emotions within screamed out
- Questions
- Solutions
- The release of energy
- Whether negative or positive
- Where you digest
- Will be what you emit
- Poetry is the truth
- You are willing to admit
- Facing your fears
- Creating something so beautiful
- You will never forget
- Feelings being expressed through words
- Poetry is not only said
- But also heard
- Poetry is not just nouns
- Adjectives and verbs
- Poetry are more than letters
- Put together to form metaphors
- It is witnessed through vision
- Poetry is feeling
- All revealing
- A transparent art form
- Exposing insecurities
- Poetry is intimacy
- Vulnerability
- Letting your guard down
- To be judged
- Poetry is soft
- Poetry is rough
- Poetry is a platform
- Voicing your aggression
- Revealing your confessions
- Whatever you digest
- Whatever you eat
- The release of energy
- Whatever you think
- You are willing to admit

**A New Hilltop Holiday Tradition: THE URBAN NUTCRACKER!**

**Viewing Schedule**

- **Thursday’s December 3rd, 10th, 17th and 24th from 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm**
- **Friday’s December 4th, 11th, 18th - 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm**

Get your limited edition Hilltop Business Crawl 2020 T-Shirt for $10 at HAC during the Holiday Crawl! This quality T-Shirt will make a great Hilltop holiday gift! All proceeds go toward community outreach and events like the Crawl that make Hilltop thrive. Happy Holidays!
The goal is simply to have them all up in time for the annual Carol Sing event on Monday, December 21st, at 5:30 pm. This year, for covid-19 safety reasons, neighbors will gather at a safe social distance in the park and sing together. All are welcome!”

“Alicia, who has been hanging lights for 5 years at Neighbor’s Park, says the lights help brighten people’s days through the cold meticulously counting and measuring strands, he’s underscoring the significance of blight and crime. Surrounding neighborhoods, some who still live in the area today, came together in 1992 to lease the land from an attorney for $1 a year, then approached the City of Tacoma about making the park a reality. The park was installed a year later by a group of volunteers. In 2000, the park was expanded across South 8th to create the very walkway that Joe lights up today. During a monthly neighborhood council meeting in 2016, one that Joe wasn’t able to attend due to work travel, he was tagged as the man to do the job.

“We bought our house about 12 years ago and were intrigued by the Chrismas lights just because I like putting up Christmas lights, and every year you just end up putting more up,” said Joe. “It’s more. Then at our monthly meeting, Emily Rozen (8th and I) actually said, ‘Hey Joe, do you have the money available, an up to $200 grant to do the holiday light display?’ I said, ‘Sure,’ and we put lights up in the park. Everyone said ‘I’m sure Joe will do it since he always puts up lights anyway.’ I heard some of the neighborhood just buys more lights, which is how we’ve gotten to where we are. It’s a pretty main event. It’s just keeping the lights on and keeping them well-maintained.”

The money came from Innovative Grant from the New Tacoma Neighborhood Council, the annual mi-grants ranging from $150-$200. “Each year the neighborhood just buys more lights, which is how we’ve gotten to where we are. It’s a pretty main event. It’s just keeping the lights on and keeping them well-maintained.”

Alicia Pugh Mathurin & Krista Perez, Co-founders

“By Jenni Prange Boran

Jo Cooper has been hanging lights for 5 years at Neighbor’s Park.

Jo Cooper hangs 4,000 lights for community enjoyment, and because it’s fun! Photographs courtesy of Jenni Boran Prange.

The Community Market is to foster entrepreneurial growth and sustainable, diverse economies within our businesses and community building within our Communities of Color.

El propósito del Mercado Comunitario es impulsar el crecimiento empresarial y la sostenibilidad, la diversidad y la equidad entre las empresas, el multiculturalismo y la construcción comunitaria dentro de nuestras Comunidades de Color.

The Community Market values: Locavore + Local Economies, Community, Multiculturalism, Diversity + Equity, Economic + Social Sustainability, Sostenibilidad económica + sostenibilidad de las pequeñas empresas.

Visit The Community Market Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/CommunityBuiltByUs.
The City of Tacoma has launched the Home In Tacoma Project.

This training is aimed at high-paying tech jobs in the digital economy. From now through March 2021, access free resources to achieve certification in some of Microsoft’s most marketable skills, coaching and support to build a resume, connection to valuable networks and interview practice.

* Candidate may certify for the 2016 or 2019 versions for most Microsoft software listed
* Candidates qualify for free test voucher by passing a practice exam with score of 8% or better

Contact the library for more information on how to get started, or see TPL’s free software certification testing page (https://www.tacomalibrary.org/services/current_initiatives_and_projects/free_software_certification) for current information on how to proceed.

Get involved in the housing conversation!

The City of Tacoma has launched the Home In Tacoma Project.

The City of Tacoma needs to adjust its zoning to increase the choice of housing types through infill development and mixed-use zoning.

With the Governor’s recent order that limits business activity due to pandemic-related concerns, it is critical that we support our local businesses more than ever which provide needed products and services, create and sustain jobs, and add vitality to our community.

The City of Tacoma just launched Celebrate Tacoma, an interactive database of businesses that sell desirable products and services, create and sustain jobs, and add vitality to our community.

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Hiłtop Tacoma Link construction crews are installing track on the east side of MLK Jr. Way from S. 17th Street to S. 19th Street. Crews will excavate, bring rail into place, pour concrete around the rail, and pave. MLK Jr. Way is closed to traffic from S. 19th Street to S. 17th Street through mid-December.

To access The Fish House Cafe and enjoy their fabulous food, please park at the Speedy Mart parking lot along the fence. (see map below) Thank you for being Loyal to the Local during construction! Do you have questions or comments for Sound Transit? Contact Liz Ellis, Community Engagement Specialist at liz.ellis@soundtransit.org or by calling 253-208-0586.

*After-hours construction hotline: 888-296-2395

Access Fish House Cafe During Hiłtop Tacoma Link Construction

Martin Luther King Jr. Way from South 17th Street to South 19th Street – street closure and intersection closures thru mid-December.

Celebrate Tacoma’s NEW Interactive Database is Live!

A great way to support local businesses and help your community thrive!

Microsoft, LinkedIn and GitHub Skills

Discover new career paths, learn relevant skills, find jobs that are in-demand and get the job that is right for you!

Free Software Certification Testing with Exams from Home

Free certification in these Microsoft Office and other products is currently available from Tacoma Public Library.

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**HILLTOP ACTION JOURNAL**

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**Foster Adoption Clinic Now Open at Community Health Care!**

Desirée White, ARNP, the primary care provider at the Community Health Care Foster Adoption Clinic, knows that foster/adoption parenting can be a beautiful experience when the right supportive resources are in place.

At least one-third of children enter foster care with physical health issues, such as asthma, and up to 80 percent enter in need of services for significant mental health issues, according to “Health Care Issues for Children and Adolescents in Foster Care and Kinship Care,” an October 2015 policy statement from the American Academy of Pediatrics. Health care for children in the foster/adoption system often slips through the cracks due to changes in host families or locations. Community Health Care is changing that by providing a permanent health care home for these children and their families.

Most children in foster care or the adoption system have histories rooted in trauma. Whether that trauma is parental substance abuse, sexual/child abuse, neglect, or homelessness, the effects can remain with that child forever. Untreated health and mental health conditions in children can lead to long-term consequences such as failure in school, underemployment, unemployment, and risky behaviors such as substance use. Community Health Care’s Foster Adoption Clinic wants to give all children a fighting chance by offering full-service, full-spectrum health care home, approaching treatment from a trauma-based perspective.

Desirée White, ARNP, the primary care provider at the Community Health Care Foster Adoption Clinic, is herself an adoptive mom. Despite the many barriers and after the adoption process, she found herself running into barriers when trying to get care and answers for her children. She realized that if an experienced nurse-practitioner had this kind of difficulty navigating the system, she could not imagine how difficult it must be for foster parents or adoptive parents not in the health care field. From there came the seed of an idea for a clinic specifically for children in the foster/adoption system.

Community Health Care provides a “one-stop shopping” health care home for an entire family. The Foster Adoption Clinic is located inside the Hilltop Regional Health Center along with medical, dental, behavioral health and other specialty clinics. The Hilltop location is also home to Community Health Care’s inter-disciplinary resident program. Ms. White is already teaching the residents how to care for their patients in a trauma-based perspective, adding to their skills, to either remain at Community Health Care or take to their next endeavor.

Facilities prioritizing health care specifically for Foster and adoptive children are rare. Facilities offering a health care home to an entire family are rarer still. Ms. White wants the Hilltop Regional Health Care, Foster Adoption Clinic to be the first thought when an ER technician or other medical provider needs a resource for a child in trouble, needing that specialized care that Community Health Care can provide.

Being a foster parent or an adoptive parent can be a challenge. Ms. White wants to remove any roadblocks that might prevent a prospective parent from fostering or adopting a child. She knows, from personal experience, that foster/adoption parenting can be a beautiful experience when the right supportive resources are in place. At Community Health Care no one is denied care due to inability to pay. The staff provides more than medical or dental care, additionally, they act as a connection to other safety net services for those that need it. To learn more about this or other Community Health Care programs go to www.commhealth.org, click on the Services tab, then click on Foster Adoption Clinic. You may also reach out for more information or to make an appointment at (233) 722-1711.

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**Coping with COVID: Coloring Outside the Box**

Partnering with Tacoma Public Schools, Metro Parks keeps kids active and engaged.

By Jo Davies

In October, several Hilltop neighbors shipped pies to due to distancing and an alternative National Night Out which was postponed from the usual August event. I subsequently asked Conner Schultz, for some general observations. "We agreed that if there’s anything the enthusiastic participants for Hilltop Business Crawl, National Night Out and the Halloween events demonstrated, it’s that people really want a reason to celebrate is something we really do something again. Having a reason to be out, socialize, and want a reason to celebrate if we are willing to adapt and keep each other in mind.”

Cancelling thanksgiving get-togethers has been a difficult decision for many. "There won’t be much travel to grandma’s house but there will be lots of Zoom and Facetime gatherings and sealed down meals. My mother I know usually bakes a variety of pies for the feast, this year she is leaving them on the doorsteps of her adult children. Lucky kids! Another family has arranged with family near and far to play Bingo virtually, during how different groups came up with their own ideas, showed us that the Hilltop community will still celebrate if we are willing to adapt and keep each other in mind.”

Hilltop Action Journal is shared with those experiencing homelessness.

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**Warming Bags Make & Take:**

Thank You Volunteers & Donors! An outpouring of love from the community is shared with those experiencing homelessness.

HAC received 110 times the amount of donations this year! Thank you so much for your outpouring of love! HAC received more than enough items to fill 150+ Warming Bags!

Kristine took a carload of Warming Bags to Comprehensive Life Resources for their Homeless Outreach Team (HOT). They told her they were running low on items to hand out and were very appreciative for the Warming Bags.

90 Warming Bags were also provided to Tacoma Community College Black Student Union for their monthly Personal Item Drive. While loading up VoIs-Nu’s vehicle, a passing gentleman connected with her for a donation. HAC loves facilitating community connections that help Hilltop thrive!
Six years ago, Tacoma-raised Cecily Croskey founded Girls Hearts on Fire with the goal of helping young girls learn more about themselves on their own terms. As a dedicated community member of Tacoma, her name may ring a bell for you. She has been involved in multiple community programs and serves as a board member for Impact Schools and Under His Cover.

If you are a woman from the Tacoma area, you are aware of the lack of programs geared towards us, and there’s even more of a gap as a Hit-POC woman. Most youth programs are either geared towards younger boys or athletics. Cecily is closing that gap. Girls Hearts on Fire allows girls increased access to leadership, mentors, leadership, vision, scholarships, sisterhood, entrepreneurship, and skills. And at this moment the program focuses in life skills, entrepreneurship, community leadership, and are virtual at this moment in time.

On November 14, 2020, Stephanie Graves and I (both IAC interns) visited the Girls on Fire office on A-street in Downtown Tacoma to interview Cecily. As soon as we ar-

As a sense of community growing with her. For me, this felt like more of a heart-to-heart rather than an in-

Read the interview below (condensed for clarity):

Tell us about yourself and why you started Girls Hearts on Fire?

“In my early twenties, I knew I was wanting to be able to do something for this community like I would just see, you know, there’s tons of community centers right but guys can go to basketball, they have that camaraderie that they’re building and the girls are more hanging out, watching the guys play basketball. There were other programs that I wanted to really catch that group, and who who weren’t utilizing those other opportuni-

The hope was to just kind of create a space for young women to learn more about themselves, about others and to figure out ways to support our community through, and some com-

You website talks about creating an equitable world. How do you hope it can you build a foundation with rela-

We’re really just looking at what roadblocks that have come the last couple of years, what’s heading us towards, an internship program, and mentor opportunities for our high schoolers to come down to our elementary schoo-

I started doing more grant research, I did a lot of fun stuff. I think that it’s a cool way to allow them to think about themselves. I always say this is your time to be selfish right now, and there is such a negative connotation with that word. I don’t necessarily think that certain spac-

Keep Up-To-Date with Hilltop Tacoma Light Rail Link Construction

Get the latest Hilltop Link construction updates by visiting Tacoma Link Extension Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/groups/505666596540406.

After-hours construction hotline: 888-298-2395

Tacoma Public Library: Remote Resources

Jamie Gilmore, TPL Main Branch Librarian, loves to work with organizations that are looking for support with Remote Learning Events. She was recently contacted at a HAC Virtual Weekly Update...read on to find out more.

Jamie Gilmore, Tacoma Public Library Outreach Coordinator, was recently contacted at the October 19th, 2020 HAC Virtu-

Jamie has a special place in her heart for girls and has connected with local organizations over the years. She is passionate about empowering girls and young women to be leaders in their communities.

If you have general questions about borrowing, renewing, library cards, electronic resources, student and Family Resources, TPL To, locations, or Get Help, visit https://www.tpl.org or call (253) 280-2800.

Get a card online at https://www.tpl.org/register or call (253) 280-2800.

See https://www.groups.yahoo.com/group/TPLto公顷

Have questions for Jamie? Email her at jlomax@tacomalibrary.org, or call a card at 253.292.2001 x1312. She would love to work with people or organizations that are looking for support for virtual programming. Jamie has participated in Remote Learn-

Jamie shared how HAL (Have A Look at Coding) STEM technology training for kids and teens - visit the Tacoma Public Library also offers some-

HILLTOP ACTION JOURNAL PAGE 10

HILLTOP ACTION JOURNAL PAGE 10

By Jessica Lathu

We have all different gifts and each one is essential to our community’s forward movement.

– Cecily Croskey

Photo Courtesy of Stephen Graves.

come show them these things. I want them to get away from hop-

ing and waiting for someone to make you feel loved and special and begin that work on yourself and so that was the first love yourself Gala. It will be our fourth year, so fingers crossed we will be able to get through this win-

ter, and things can pipe down. We’ve partnered with Ali’s prom project, and they’re able to supply dresses, shoes, and accessories for our girls at no cost. So if they receive free or re-

duced lunch they’re able to go shop-

ing at her boutique that family, about those things. They get to walk the red carpet, we have a DJ, a catered din-

er, and a buffet dinner that looks screened this world. The first year, we had Miss Teen Washington out and we had a panel – we do a lot of fun stuff. I think that it’s a cool way to allow them to think about themselves. I always say this is your time to be selfish right now, and there is such a negative connotation with that word. I don’t necessarily think that certain spaces allow that; we deserve to do that, it’s not selfish, it’s called self care. I want to make sure that our girls know about that and you know take the time to get involved.

Visit http://girlsheartsonfire.org/ Learn about the HOA Fundraiser on Face-

book.com/groups/505066506854906/. For questions, email girlsheartsonfire@gmail.com. Connect Cecily Croskey at girlsheartsonfire.org or Lacey Barker at Lacey@girlsheartsonfire.org.

Jamie also has Certifications you can purchase at home, like Microsoft Office Speci-

If you would like to watch the Oct 19th 2020 update, Jamie talk-

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Hilltop Action Journal: "The Oct 19th Weekly Update. Jamie talk -

Jamie has participated in Remote Learn-

"In 2020-2021 Creative Kits include Welcome to Winter, Fun & Games, Black Women Heroes, and More! Don’t forget, TPL also offers DVDs, video cassettes, and streaming videos to help you ke-

Keep Up-To-Date with Hilltop Tacoma Light Rail Link Construction

For questions, email girlsheartsonfire@gmail.com. For questions, email girlsheartsonfire@gmail.com. For questions, email girlsheartsonfire@gmail.com.

Jamie has participated in Remote Learn-

What is the Girls Hearts on Fire Gala about?

The Girls Gala was started in 2018 with the idea that we should reward young women who are already doing amazing things. We wanted to show the girls that we see them, that we acknowledge their hard work, and that it’s important to give them recognition and support. We wanted to create a space where young women could feel seen, heard, and validated for their achievements.

The event is a night that celebrates the girls who are making a difference in their communities. It is a time for them to feel appreciated and recognized for their hard work and dedication to making positive changes in the world.

What is the purpose of the Girls Hearts on Fire Gala?

The purpose of the Girls Hearts on Fire Gala is to raise awareness and funds for the organization to continue its important work. The money raised at the event helps to support the programs and services offered by Girls Hearts on Fire.

The Gala aims to inspire young women to continue pursuing their passions and to encourage them to become leaders in their communities. The event also serves as a platform to celebrate the achievements of girls and young women who have made a positive impact.

What kind of events or programs does Girls Hearts on Fire offer?

Girls Hearts on Fire offers a range of programs and services for young girls and women. These include mentorship, leadership training, business development, and personal development workshops. The organization also provides a safe space for girls to connect with others, share their experiences, and support each other.

In addition to these programs, Girls Hearts on Fire organizes events such as the annual Gala, where girls are celebrated for their accomplishments. The organization also works with schools and community partners to provide resources and support for girls and young women.

What can people expect to see at the Girls Hearts on Fire Gala?

At the Girls Hearts on Fire Gala, guests can expect to see a fun and exciting evening filled with recognition, celebration, and networking. The event includes keynote speeches, award presentations, and live entertainment. Attendees will also have the opportunity to meet and connect with other girls and women who are making a difference.

The Gala is a night to celebrate the accomplishments of young women and to inspire others to follow in their footsteps. It is a time for girls and young women to feel seen, heard, and valued for their contributions to the community.

Girls Hearts on Fire aims to empower girls and young women to become leaders in their communities. Through its programs and services, the organization helps girls and young women develop the skills and confidence they need to succeed in life.

Girls Hearts on Fire is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for girls and young women. The organization works to create a community where girls feel respected, heard, and valued.

Girls Hearts on Fire is a community-based organization that focuses on empowering girls and young women. Through its programs and services, the organization helps girls and young women develop the skills and confidence they need to succeed in life.
HAC, Tacoma Housing Authority, Safe Streets and other community organizations came together to provide a safe, fun space for kids to enjoy Halloween. The need was great - vehicles lined up around the parking lot for entry into the Tacoma Community Houses parking lot. Candy was handed out with social distancing techniques that were inventive using candy shoots and arm extender poles. Families who came by were told to head on over to Evergreen State College Tacoma for another Drive-Thru Trick or Treat! Thank you everyone who helped put this event together!

Kristine, HAC's Office Manager, turned into a pumpkin and had Jack-O-Lanterns and candy to offer happy faces! Tacoma Housing Authority found 'Where’s Waldo' to hand out candy and pencils to Trick-OR-Treaters driving by!

HAC and local businesses use social distancing guidelines to make sure kids (and parents!) could have a little fun outdoors for Halloween on the Hill! This offered a more traditional way to Trick or Treat and provided some exercise to work off candy calories. The TSM Shop handed out Halloween Totes for gathering candy. What a Special Treat to see families and friends out having a good time...smiling with their eyes!

Everyone was happy, laughing, and staying in their family groups for Halloween on the Hill! Transformers, comic heroes, dinosaurs, princesses and fireman took over MLK Jr. Way for a few hours on a sunny afternoon. For a brief moment, we forgot about COVID-19...our face masks reminded us about the pandemic, but the friendly faces underneath spread warmth and camaraderie!

This amazing group of women brought the Halloween jams! We got to hear the new songs and the classics like, The Monster Mash. Thank you!
Hilltop Action Journal

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