



step by step

TRANSFORMING LIVES, ONE STEP AT A TIME



NOURISH

so that others can thrive

2023 Fall Newsletter

TO OUR STEP BY STEP FAMILY,

I've been a parent for 28 years and the CEO of Step By Step for 26 years. In order to do both roles well, I've needed to say no to many wonderful opportunities. This fall, I was asked to serve on the board of the Association of Washington Business (AWB). My first response was no, but then the President of AWB told me the childcare crisis was at the top of their list this year. Since childcare is at the top of my list, I agreed to serve on the board. Shortly after making this commitment, I attended a Policy Summit hosted by the AWB and there was a panel on the childcare crisis. Here are a few startling statistics showing the need for childcare slots:

- For every 10 babies, 8 toddlers and 4 preschoolers, there is only 1 slot available
- 66% of children under 6 have all available parents in the workforce
- In WA State, a family earning 25% of median household income with at least one child under 6, pays 72% of their income in childcare for every enrolled child
- 56% of parents report that childcare impacted their decision to access a job, 52% reduced their hours and 38% quit their jobs
- In a survey of 7 states, the childcare crisis resulted in a \$17.2 billion annual economic loss and \$14.3 billion for employers

As a working mother of seven, I find it imperative to be part of the solution to this broken system. Over the past two years, Step By Step has been tirelessly working towards building an early learning center, facing numerous challenges along the way. Despite the difficulties, we remain hopeful. At the beginning of this year, I adopted the mantra "Expect Miracles". We understood we had a heavy lift this year with fundraising for the early learning center and believed that by focusing on doing the next right thing, the pieces would fall into place at the right time. So, we devoted time to *nourishing* our moms, families, and our community. As a result, we've seen many wonders this year – many highlighted in this newsletter!

- Our Dreams Work Program will soon graduate its 3rd cohort of moms
- A retired Boeing Executive is volunteering his time to teach leadership courses to our Farm 12 managers
- Despite the downturn in the economy, our fundraising events have reached an all-time high in attendance
- We applied to become a licensed mental health agency
- We purchased six acres adjacent to our property for the outdoor, nature-based early learning program
- We received significant grants from Coordinated Care, The Gary Milgard Family, The Perigee Foundation, and UnitedHealthcare in support of the mission
- We've raised over half of the funds needed for the Early Learning Center with \$2M pending

It felt like a miracle when I received a call from a gentleman who oversees a trust. He'd heard great things about Step By Step and will be contributing a \$300,000 gift with the challenge to match this gift, dollar for dollar. His upbringing involved his parents caring for foster children, and he is eager to witness the early learning center up and running! He wants to support flexible childcare for children in foster care, parents who need non-traditional childcare hours, and a sliding fee or subsidized options. Between now and the end of the year, we are hoping to match his generous gift. If you have the means or know of someone who does, we hope that you will help us meet this challenge.

With Gratitude,

Krista Linden

Founder & CEO



Lets eat cake!

It's almost November and for us that means something pretty special!

Next month, Step By Step and Farm 12 will be celebrating their birthday's together! We are so excited to celebrate 26 years as a non-profit helping mothers and babies and four years as a social enterprise! Join us the week of November 13 in Farm 12 Restaurant and in Fika for some fun birthday celebrations!

FOLLOW OUR SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES FOR MORE DETAILS IN THE COMING WEEKS!

MONDAYS WITH MARISA

We are very excited to launch Mondays with Marisa! We have always wanted a way to

share resources, exciting opportunities and special events for the families we serve, both current and former. In addition, these are great resources and opportunities for the community in general.

Every Monday, on the Step By Step social media pages, a new resource, opportunity or event will be shared. Some items will cover all counties Step By Step services (Pierce, King and Snohomish). For events or resources that are for specific areas/locations, one will be listed for each county. Please follow Step By Step on Facebook or Instagram and "like" and "share" these posts to anyone you think could benefit from them. We are always looking for resources to share, so if you have one, please let us know!

MONDAYS WITH MARISA

Introduction

A new series focusing on education, opportunities and resources for our Step By Step families.



VOLUNTEERS HELP MEET THE NEEDS

This summer, volunteers engaged in a very special project to help meet the needs of our families. Step by Step was gifted a \$10,000 contribution from Nourishing Neighbors to utilize a team of volunteers to shop, prepare and deliver food bags with a focus on healthy



breakfast items. Our team knew that the success of this project would not be possible without the support of our loyal volunteers, especially Karen Miceli. Karen took time to visit many local grocery stores in search of the best-priced breakfast items along with hours of additional research. After her research, Karen then took on shopping for the items and organizing the groceries with the support of her husband, Tom. We are immensely grateful to Karen for all her hard work and dedication to getting this project off the ground.

From there, over the course of several weeks, a total of 15 volunteers prepared and delivered 100 summer food bags with over 40 hours of donated time. We were able to reach 100 families with a total of 440 individuals impacted!

We are beyond grateful to Nourishing Neighbors for the funds to serve our families and the countless hours put in by our volunteer team!

A REMARKABLE DONOR AND MENTOR

In 2018, Step By Step received a call from a couple eager to discuss providing a home for SBS. Krista, Step By Step Founder and CEO, immediately reached out and scheduled a meeting. Having recently sold their Seattle property, where their daughters attended SPU, they understood the importance of stable housing. They wanted to provide a home for a Step By Step mom, preferably one who would be working at the soon-to-be Farm 12. Shortly after, they invested in a duplex which a SBS mom and Farm 12 employee now call home.

Last year, Russ, the generous owner of the duplex, retired as an executive at Boeing. As a certified leadership coach, he graciously offered to impart his expertise in leadership and communication to Farm 12 employees. Our first class was for senior level leaders and we just finished a class for

managers of departments! Notably, one of these managers resides in the very duplex Russ made possible!

This story exemplifies the remarkable impact of giving back. Step By Step is honored to be a recipient of Russ's incredible generosity of time and talent!



EMPOWERING GENEROSITY: A RECAP OF OUR FUNDRAISING EVENTS



BOOTS & BLOOMS BBQ

On a beautiful summer evening, guests were welcomed into our family's "backyard" for our second annual Boots & Blooms fundraising BBQ. It was an unforgettable evening of delicious food, fun games, a silent auction and dancing.

Creating memories in this special place, built with love by the community, is truly a dream come true. Our sold-out event raised nearly \$50,000 and added 30 new monthly donors to our Step By Step family. These funds will be used to help support our programs from vital baby essentials to supporting moms in the job training program!

We'd like to give a special shoutout to Aaron Crawford for his amazing boot tapping performance, Puget Sound Cornhole for bringing the fun, Heritage Distilling for the bourbon tasting, Cindy McMichael for her line-dancing instruction and The Flower Barn for the gorgeous blooms. Thank you all for making the event a success!

Save the date. THURSDAY, AUGUST 15, 2024

LITTLE STEPS, BIG DREAMS RACE

Thank you to all those who got groovy with us on a Saturday morning for our 13th Annual Little Steps, Big Dreams Race! The record-breaking turnout helped us cross the finish line and exceed our fundraising goal of \$50,000!

A portion of the funds raised from this event go towards the Healthy Family Fund. This fund is used by the case managers to provide extra support to their clients. The case managers can't always provide for all their clients needs and



often leave visits wishing they could do more. The Healthy Family Fund allows them to do just that. It gives the case managers extra time to spend with their clients helping them to remove barriers that prevent them from reaching their full potential.

Save the date. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2024

CRISTINA'S INSPIRATIONAL JOURNEY

BY AMY MCVAY, PEER SUPPORT COUNSELOR

When Cristina was first presented with information about the Step By Step program, it sounded too good to be true. She initially called thinking maybe they could provide some diapers for her baby. Little did she know, this small first step was the beginning of a great journey that would lead her on a path toward a loving and supportive community.

Shannon, an RN with Step By Step, brought more than diapers to this mom in need. While providing Maternity Support Services, her listening ear and companionship were what Cristina needed most. Believing the best about this young mom and seeing her potential, Shannon and encouraged her to continue to press forward with her goals.

In 2022, she applied for a Step By Step Kiwanis Foundation Scholarship and received the award to get her CDL driver's license. She also enrolled in Dreams Work, Step By Step's job readiness program and was part of the first cohort to graduate!

Asked to reflect on Cristina's journey, Dreams Work Director Elizabeth Lambert says, "Cristina desires to be successful and she backs that desire up with concrete action. She pursued a job at one of our business partner



|| Cristina along with Amy, peer support counselor, and other Dreams Work graduates.

locations. Using the Interview 101 techniques, and other skills acquired at Dreams Work, she landed the job. I love her tenacity and resolve. This mom is truly taking one solid step at a time in her growth journey."

During her time in the job readiness program, she was also introduced to Peer Support. As part of Dreams Work's holistic approach, each week there is time carved out for moms to connect about life's struggles and share their stories in a safe environment. Peer Support helped Cristina get in touch with her emotions, something she wasn't taught growing up. At first, she was scared to open up to

others and share her story, but when she did she began experiencing a breakthrough, which grew into more compassion toward herself and others. Encouraged by the Dreams Work's Director, she returned to share her story with the next cohort of moms. It was a very

rewarding experience for her.

Cristina began building more momentum with each careful step. She received mental health counseling, where she gained helpful tools and support. She attended Mental Health Mondays to continue filling her own wellness toolbox. All while attending a book club for Dreams Work graduates on developing healthy habits. One of her most significant steps was participating in Peer Support for Dreams Work alumni, which gave her encouragement and space to continue using all that she learned with true community in her corner.

When asked about her own journey, Cristina says, "I had put my own grieving on pause. It feels like there is no time to grieve. When I am in Peer Support, I open up about that." Cristina continues to encourage other moms, "If you really want to learn about yourself and communicate with others, open up."

Inspired by the personal growth she was experiencing, Cristina decided to pursue training to become a Certified

Peer Counselor (CPC). She completed her training this past August and feels hopeful as she looks ahead. When asked why she chose this path she shared, "I want to help other people and get them connected to resources they don't know about. I hope to work in Peer Support through Step By Step, supporting grieving moms who have lost babies." Cristina recently started a brand new job as a driver for Southern Glazers, a local Puyallup company and one of our Dreams Work Business Partners.

Watching Cristina embark on a new path through the use of mental health services such as Peer Support reminds us just how important community is to supporting and equipping moms.

In 2024, Step By Step will be launching a Mental Health and Wellness community called RISE. Appropriately named, RISE emerged out of a fresh desire to empower mothers to rise up to new paths and opportunities through safe community spaces, one step at a time.



|| Cristina presenting in front of her peers during a Dreams Work workshop.

BUILDING DREAMS, BUILDING FUTURES

We have all heard it said, "It takes a village." The Dreams Work Village includes over 100 members, including business partners, community partners, participant sponsors, facilitators, mock interviewers, lunch team, childcare workers, peer support leaders, life coaches, term-end panel members, and event team members. The team continues to marvel at the collaboration that makes everything possible.

An important part of Dreams Work is childcare. Without it, mothers are unable to focus and apply themselves to learning. In June 2022, we welcomed our first cohort to Farm 12. To accommodate childcare needs, we set up several areas for the children to play, adjacent to the classroom where life skills and job skills were taught. This arrangement worked as a temporary solution, but to truly provide an enriched environment for the children and foster learning without distraction, we needed separate classrooms for the Dream Work participants and their children.

With the Step By Step Early Learning Center in the planning stages, to care for the children and provide a structured learning environment, we needed a home away from home for Dreams Work. Faith Covenant Church in Sumner, WA became a community partner and member of our village. Through their generosity, we have made use of secure childcare spaces and classrooms for learning. The change in location enables the Dreams Work moms to focus on learning the skills that will help transform their lives.

We are now halfway through our third cohort and the difference is tangible. It is rewarding for the team and the facilitators to witness moms applying themselves to learning each week. The level of their engagement and thoughtful questions about the material is a testament to the importance of providing a space that is designed for learning. Faith Covenant Church is a small church with a big heart. As Step by Step continues to use Dreams Work to plant seeds through job and life skills classes, we are grateful for our friends who come alongside us to fulfill the mission.

Examples of the remarkable impact of giving back

LAUNCHING NEW MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

There is something new happening at Farm 12! The restaurant and events leadership team recently implemented a new mentorship program called T.H.R.I.V.E. which stands for Teach, Help, Realize, Invest, Value and Encourage.

Leadership took special care in selecting and training several employees to be mentors for onboarding new hires. These employees have been observed as being a positive influence on others at work. To beta-test this program, Farm 12 is providing mentors to the Dreams Work trainees who do their 10-week job training at Farm 12.

The mentor's role is to act as a positive role model, provide guidance and advice and also suggest tools and support so others can become the best versions of themselves.

The purpose behind the program is to invest in new employees by giving them a connection beyond job task

training; providing a positive introduction to the company and creating a team atmosphere. This program also provides a bridge for mentors to become leaders in the future and gives them an opportunity to work on their professional development.

The restaurant is a fast-paced, busy environment. Those who are new to the team can sometimes feel a little overwhelmed as they learn their roles and positions. Implementing THRIVE with the Dreams Work trainees gives them an added layer of support. As Food and Beverage Director, Aaron Welch, said, "The mentor is like the first friend you meet at a new school." Farm 12 is not like other restaurants. There is a strong commitment to maintaining a culture where everyone from the Dreams Work trainee to the management team thrives because everyone matters. We look forward to seeing THRIVE implemented throughout the farm.



\$100,000 gift from UnitedHealthcare (UHC) and their Empowering Health Grant. UHC works to give back to the communities it serves by supporting initiatives that help communities improve their health and overall well-being.

Step By Step submitted a proposal to UHC to help increase home visits to high-risk clients, increase mental health visits for our moms and Farm 12 families and develop programming to address mental health issues within our community. Last month, UHC presented the check to us in support of these programs!

With the aid of this funding, we'll not only sustain our professional home visits but also extend our collaboration with Dr. Gretchen Gendreau, a Licensed Psychologist, to expand our mental health outreach initiatives.

Last year, we introduced Mental Health Mondays, a weekly evening dedicated to mental health, accessible to both SBS moms and the wider community. We're enthusiastic about carrying this initiative forward into 2024!

UNITED TOGETHER

This year, we've been fortunate to receive generous support from numerous foundations and corporations, all dedicated to giving back and championing Step By Step's mission. One gift in particular we'd love to spotlight is the

CAPTURING MOMENTS, SHARING WELLNESS



Last year, Aundrea (Dre) McAuley, a friend of one of our case managers and a Puyallup-based photographer, reached out to us offering her services to our Step By Step clients and Farm 12 families!

We know that bringing the family together to take pictures is a task often put to the side

due to time and money barriers. However, Dre has helped reduce those barriers to make it all possible. Since then,

dozens of our families have been blessed with beautiful galleries filled with pictures they will cherish forever. We've included one of her family photos towards the back!

Dre recently came to our team offering her husband's chiropractic resources to our employees and clients. Her husband, Dr. Patrick McAuley spoke to our team on Family Day about protecting your back and staying healthy while working in the service industry. He will also be opening his practice one day a month for our staff and clients to perform corrective exercises, x-rays, and other chiropractic needs.

We're so thankful for this family and the heart they have for Step By Step and Farm 12 families. Thank you!



TAKE A BOOK, LEAVE A BOOK

Have you visited our Little Free Library near Fika and the garden? This community book-sharing resource is a collaboration between a donor with an extra kitchen cabinet, a talented volunteer who transformed it into a charming library and the Puyallup Public Library who helps us keep it stocked.

This library is for you! Check it out next time you visit Farm 12 and take a book or bring one from home that you've read and are willing to share!



OUR HEARTFELT GRATITUDE

With gratitude, we acknowledge the members of our Super Baby Society, our monthly donor club!

Amazing Grace Church
 Aaron Thompson
 Aimee Perry
 Amy Mackey
 Arthur and Peggy Collins
 Audrey Kimball
 Austin and Emily Grandon
 Bill and Donna O'Ravez
 Bill and Lisa Gagnon
 Bob and Leeanne Gossman
 Bryce and Lara Miller
 Carl and Sharon Linden
 Charles and Karen Treneer
 Chris and Kim Cushing
 Chris and Sarah Brockes
 Christine Sammons
 Crystal Mann
 Curt and Heather Bartkowski
 Cynthia and Lawrence Blythe
 Dallas and Carolyn Chestnut
 Dan and Ann Bowling
 Dan and Dee Rey
 Dan and Robyn Wiebe
 Danny and Veronica Fehrenbach
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 John and Bernadette Powers
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 Loran and Natalie Inman
 Lori McGhee
 Luke and Katie Hemminger
 Mark and Melinda Allen
 Mary Caldwell
 Mary Fairchok
 Megan Burfeind
 Mike and Annmarie Mathews

Mike and Candi McQueen
 Mike and Patty Newman
 Milk and Honey Charcuterie
 Nate and Janice Wiggins
 Northshore Church
 Neil and Katrina Asay
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 Penny Howard
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 Robert and Barbara Skaggs
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 Sandra Campbell
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 Shawn Hess and Karin Burnside
 Shirley Lindquist
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 Steve and Joane Mocerri
 Steve and Teresa Babcock
 Steven and Julie Stroud
 Steven Butts
 Tawnia Mckenzie
 Thomas and Kimberly Patamia
 Thomas Broxson and Kelly White
 Thomas Schmitt M.D.
 Tina Folk
 Todd and Kim Van Cise
 Troy and Emily Seaboch
 Valerie Offenbecher
 Zach and Caitlin Martin

FOUNDATION & BUSINESS SUPPORT

FOUNDATION GIFTS GRATEFULLY RECEIVED THIS QUARTER:

CHI Franciscan Health, Daniel V. and Ida J. McEachern Charitable Trust, Dimmer Family Foundation, Garneau-Nicon Family Foundation, Helen Martha Schiff Foundation, Perigee Fund, Puyallup Tribe of Indians, The Gary Milgard Family, Tulalip Tribes Charitable Contributions and Veterans United Foundation

CORPORATE GIFTS GRATEFULLY RECEIVED THIS QUARTER:

Athena Hutt Homes, AME Aesthetic Institute, Brown & Brown Insurance, Chevrolet Buick GMC of Puyallup, Davies Pearson - Attorneys at Law, Independent Pest Solutions, Kanon Electric, Kroger, Korum Automotive, Momentum Chiropractic, Newell Hunt Furniture, Prospect Construction, ShowCase Media, UnitedHealthcare, Vie Athletics, Williams and Woodcreek Pediatrics

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR 2023 BUSINESS PARTNERS



Learn more about the Business Partner Program and be a part of doing incredible work with families, contact Janel at JanelTobar@Stepbystepfamily.org or call (253) 896-0903.

Photo Credit:
Aundrea McAuley

UPCOMING EVENTS AT FARM 12



FARM 12 HOLIDAY MARKET

Sunday, November 26th

Hours: 11 am – 4 pm

Local vendors, food trucks & more!

TOWNIE FEST 2023 CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Wednesday, December 20th

Two showtimes - TBD

SIGNATURE MOSS FLOWER BASKETS

Our flower baskets will go on sale in February. Subscribe for updates: stepbystepfamily.org/lovelandgreenhouse



WE BELIEVE A LIFE ROOTED IN PURPOSE FLOURISHES.

Photo Credit:
Samantha McFarlen Photography

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