

Stories of growth,
creating safety,
& new beginnings.

Program Highlights

As virtual programming persists, our program staff are not only overcoming barriers, but are even launching new programs and initiatives! At right are a few that we're excited to share.



Big Homie Initiative

Hope's new Youth Program Specialist, Nakara White, launched the Big Homie initiative earlier this year. The initiative was created to increase connectivity, visibility, and a stronger sense of sisterhood in our new virtual reality. It is essentially small teams within the cohort, led by the older youth who are the "Big Homies." It's also a unique opportunity to recognize that all our youth, ranging in age from 15-19, bear different levels of wisdom and responsibility. Nakara wanted to honor the younger by giving them an additional touch point and honor the elder by allowing them the opportunity to lead.

Community Ownership Cohort

Our Community Ownership project pilot was launched in 2020, with an objective to train and support renter households to become small scale, owner-occupant landlords of existing small multi-unit buildings that currently provide affordable housing. Following the success of the pilot, we launched our second cohort in March 2021. Our Community Ownership Project Coordinator, Malyun Yahye, engaged 19 new participants with the cohort, and after the 5-week training, they will all have know-how to become owner-occupant landlords. The goal of this new cohort is to build community stability and resilience. We are excited to continue growing this project with the support of our partners and other contributors.

Power of Vision Mural

POV's 2021 mural project will be about housing justice. POV is collaborating with Inquilinx Unidx (United Renters) and Colectivo Cielo Sin Limites (Sky Without Limits Cooperative), a visionary housing collective who fought for and won ownership of their 5 buildings in 2021. Since summer of 2020, POV lead artists have worked with resident collective members to design a large public mural to be painted on Lake Street in summer 2021, and a mini-mural for each of their five buildings. The murals highlight the struggle, power, and dignity of their collective experiences. Look for updates this summer on our social media pages, coming soon! You can also read more about Inquilinx Unidx Por Justicia or Colectivo Cielo Sin Limites on their websites or social media pages.

Creating Sanctuary

"To begin, we were just little. We were temporary shelter—an oasis. Sanctuary for women and kids who were homeless."

—Char Madigan on Hope Community's beginning

Since day one, Hope has created sanctuary space in our buildings, neighborhood, and community. Providing safe housing is our foundation, and through the years we've added programs and have created spaces to continuously be a sanctuary. Today, we are intentionally focusing on increasing and improving our sanctuary work.

We define Sanctuary as, "Community continually working to create protection and move toward safety for anyone facing racism, sexism, transphobia and homophobia and other oppression. This includes those targeted by threats of deportation and police violence. We strive, by our actions and our policies, to create spaces as free from these threats as possible, to allow for healing from trauma inflicted by systems of oppression"

Threats in our society are growing, especially for our BIPOC community, people experiencing unsheltered homelessness, the

LGBTQ+ community, and folks threatened with deportation. In order to protect these groups that are too often marginalized, we are further engaging our staff and our community in sanctuary work, and intend to pass along the knowledge and tools to promote and create widespread safety, spaces for healing, sustainable policies, and preparedness for response situations.

We ask you to join us in considering what safety looks like and for whom, in imagining safety beyond policing in situations where police force is not needed, working to create policy in community to protect folks without shelter, protecting folks engaging in safe spaces like our gardens or at our mural sites, and ultimately working as a community to keep each other free from harm.

Community can expect to continue seeing our efforts in creating safety and sanctuary moving forward. Every community member has the right to feel, and be, safe; whether it be in our properties, on our grounds, walking in our neighborhoods, in parks, or just living in this community. To build power in community, we must first reimagine what safety looks like and for whom. These questions will guide how we build, define, and implement moving forward.

Staff Highlights - New faces of Hope *Meet the newest staff members who joined our team in 2020.*



Nakara White

Youth Program Specialist

"I work specifically with Black, female youth; encouraging and empowering them to think critically about their futures and how it may relate to technology.

I enjoy working at Hope because it allows me to thrive in my purpose while truly, intentionally bringing my whole self to the work, alongside folks who value building community."



Ryana Holt

Community Engagement Program Administrative Assistant

"I consider myself a little bit like the community engagement teams' octopus with my arms in each program, supporting administrative needs so they can more fully focus on their work in community, and being a central point of information to create cohesion.

It brings me joy to work with coworkers who are skilled, brilliant, kind, and give generously of themselves to empower community and work for a more just and equitable society."



Nichole Thomas

Manager of Human Resources and Organizational Culture

"The HR side of my job supports individual staff members as well as teams with everything from collaborating on a job description to discussing the market salary of a particular job, whereas the organizational culture side of my job is responsible for making sure that all staff remain engaged in their work and engaged in the mission here at Hope.

Thus, I enjoy working here at Hope, because it just feels right to me, it feels right to support a staff that is concerned about community, and it feels good to wake up on a Monday morning, not regretting starting my day here at Hope."



Mandy Rueckheim

Donor Relations Associate

"My two main roles are: overseeing our individual giving—connecting with and supporting all of the wonderful people who choose to invest in Hope's mission; and communications—telling our stories through our communication channels to highlight our programming and connect with our community.

At Hope, I feel whole and happy to be where I am; I get to do what I love at a place that aligns with my personal values, surrounded by passionate, remarkable individuals doing really impactful work."





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