

# HOME Success Stories

Tenant-Based Rental Assistance



The HOME Coalition  
2015

## CONTACT

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## PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

**Location:** Hayward

**Project:** Tenant-Based Rental Assistance For Emancipated Foster Youth

**HOME:** \$12,370

**District:** CA-15

# HOME SUCCESS STORY

## California

### Abode Services

Abode Services was founded in 1989 when a small group of people came together to address a growing problem with family homelessness in Alameda County, California. Its mission is to end homelessness by helping low-income, un-housed people, including those with special needs, to secure stable, supportive housing and to advocate for the end of the causes of homelessness. Abode Services does this by developing and implementing innovative programs to end homelessness using a "Housing First" philosophy.

Since 1989, Abode Services has expanded its impact throughout the Bay Area, serving more than 4,400 adults and children in Alameda, Santa Clara, and Santa Cruz Counties. It is proud to be a double-bottom-line agency with a commitment to effective financial management that is transparent to donors and funders and ensures the long-term stability of its programs.

### Project Independence

When Lani first entered Abode Services' Project Independence program in 2012, she was a 22-year old, single mother with two boys. The family was homeless and couch surfed for at least eight months. When Lani could afford it, she took her family to a motel so they could have a night alone and sleep on a bed. With average rents soaring as high as \$2,078 in Alameda County, California, Lani couldn't afford an apartment. She worked part-time, but could barely pay for her family's basic needs, including groceries, clothing, diapers, and transportation.

Project Independence uses HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) funds to help secure supportive housing for emancipated foster youth, like Lani. Under the program, residents live in affordable rental housing and participate in case management, education, vocational training, employment placement, financial literacy training, mental and physical healthcare, and other supportive programs.

With the help of \$12,370 in HOME funds over 10 months, Project Independence was able to help Lani build a solid foundation, allowing her to provide a more stable future for her family. Instead of focusing on where she would sleep for the night, Lani could focus on her career and finding childcare for her sons. Having a stable home allowed Lani to overcome significant challenges, including the violent death of her brother.

Lani now works for Tesla Motors in a secure, well-paying job. Most importantly, Lani is self-sufficient and rents a two-bedroom apartment in Hayward, California where she lives with her two sons. "I just can't believe how far I've come and what I've accomplished for myself and my kids!"



## CONTACT

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## PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

**Location:** Portland

**Project:** Tenant-Based Rental Assistance

**HOME:** \$800

**Total Cost:** \$800

**Other Federal:** N/A

**District:** ME-01

# HOME SUCCESS STORY

*Maine*

## City of Portland

The City of Portland, Maine strives to enhance the health and well-being of the residents of Portland in collaboration with community, state, and federal partners to develop, preserve, and administer affordable housing programs and projects for low-income households. This includes new affordable rental housing for seniors, families, and special-needs populations, as well as repair and rehabilitation of owner-occupied residential properties. In addition, the city operates two of the state's largest homeless shelters: the Oxford Street Shelter and the Family Shelter.

The city uses HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) funds to bolster the impact of its housing programs and to provide rental assistance to those who need it.

## The Wakefield Family

Ms. Patricia Wakefield is a 24-year old, single mother living in Portland, Maine with her 18-month old son. Ms. Wakefield suffers from significant mental health challenges and has faced several barriers to accessing safe, decent, and affordable housing.

In 2014, the Wakefields were evicted from their apartment for non-payment of rent and moved into the City of Portland's Family Shelter. Ms. Wakefield was soon connected with the city's Home To Stay (HTS) program and was awarded a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Housing Choice Voucher to help her successfully find an affordable place to raise her son.

Unfortunately, after finding an affordable apartment in Saco, Maine, Ms. Wakefield experienced a job change, unexpected transportation costs, and an increase in childcare expenses. As a consequence, Ms. Wakefield fell behind in her rent and was served with a seven-day notice to quit the premises. She worried that she and her son would become homeless again.

Thankfully, the Wakefields turned to the City of Portland and its HOME-funded Tenant-Based Rental Assistance program. With just \$800 in HOME funds, the Wakefield's rent was brought current, the notice to quit was rescinded, and she was able to get back on track with her rent payments.

One year later, Ms. Wakefield remains successfully housed in the same unit.



## CONTACT

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## PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

**Location:** Vancouver

**Project:** Tenant-Based Rental Assistance

**HOME:** \$15,000

**Total Cost:** \$15,000

**Other Federal:** N/A

**District:** WA-03

# HOME SUCCESS STORY

## *Washington*

### Share Vancouver

Share Vancouver's (Share) mission is to lead the hungry and homeless to self-sufficiency by providing food, shelter, housing, education, advocacy, and compassion through the strength of the Vancouver, Washington community.

Share operates three shelters for the homeless, a transitional housing program, a street outreach program, a Housing & Essential Needs (HEN) program, and case management. The organization provides daily meals for the homeless and low-income members of the community, in addition to operating a summer meals program for low-income children. Additionally, Share offers financial education courses and matched savings accounts to help families improve their credit scores and financial management.

### The Blanchard Family

Before Ms. Amber Blanchard learned about Share in 2013, she had been in and out of jail and struggled to provide for her young daughter. Now, she credits the organization and its ASPIRE program with helping her break the destructive cycle in her life.

Share's ASPIRE program provides a coordinated system of case management, housing, and connection to supportive services in Vancouver, Washington for homeless families and individuals. This includes resource education for employment training, family counseling, debt reduction, budgeting, drug and alcohol abuse domestic violence counseling, mental health, parenting, life skills, childcare referral, and transportation.

Under the ASPIRE program, Ms. Blanchard took classes to help her learn how to stay on budget and prioritize spending. "I learned the first thing I always need to do is pay rent." Over time, she built a rapport with her landlord and learned how to communicate quickly when issues arose. Moreover, she has been committed to maintaining her sobriety and has participated in a Return-To-Work trial period under her social security benefit.

With the help of \$15,000 in HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) funds, Share was able to provide Ms. Blanchard with rental assistance so that she could afford to live in a safe and decent home with her daughter and continue her journey to becoming self-sufficient.

"I can't thank Share enough. I'm a totally different person today, and I'll always be grateful for the support, classes, and caring that Share gave to me."

