

Voters, Citizens, Neighbors

The faces of affordable housing belong to Feng Li, Jennifer, Jessica and many others. Faces that belong not only to young teachers in our children's classrooms, but the folks who fix the grid when the power is out; the people who deliver top service at our favorite retail outlets; retirees on fixed incomes; returning members of the military; and skilled new immigrants eager to take part in the American Dream.

In another area, they could have bought homes, built ties to their neighbors, and begun to take advantage of the chain of wealth building that home ownership affords. Yet, our new century, with its unprecedented demand and skyrocketing costs, has created a housing market that excludes a growing and important number of our society.

People who contribute every day to the greater good. People who give back in important ways. Voters, citizens, neighbors. Folks who deserve the benefits that only home ownership brings.



ARCH Members

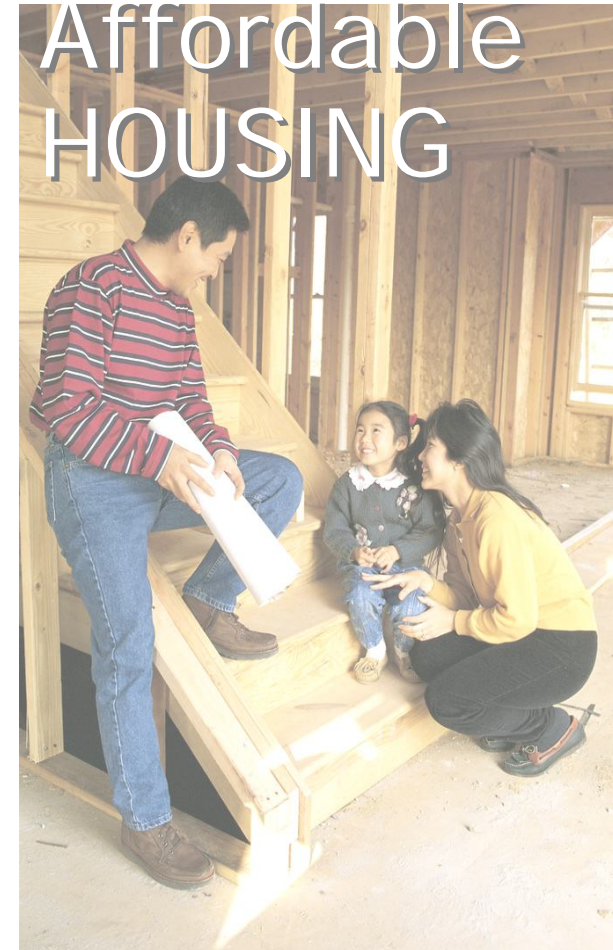
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The Faces of Affordable HOUSING



ARCH
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“Safety and Security shouldn’t be a privilege”

Jennifer is a problem solver with passion and drive. She’s also a veteran juggler; as a single mom and teacher working at four different schools she has to be. One of her classroom roles is ‘para educator’ to a group of disabled students. She works with them, their families and employers to reinforce the skills they need to live a full, satisfying life.

Managing complexity comes naturally. So finding a home for her family—on a teacher’s salary—was just another challenge. Jennifer noticed the ARCH website, applied for a Habitat for Humanity home, and, after much hard work, moved in.

Now, the college educated, goal-driven young mother has begun to build a secure future for herself and her family. As Jennifer says, “Safety and security shouldn’t be a privilege.”



Feng and Zuying continue to give back

Feng Li and his wife Zuying live on Mercer Island at Ellsworth House, a senior apartment complex of St. Andrew’s Housing Group, partially funded from ARCH. They are from Manchuria where Feng had a long career as an aeronautical engineer. But family ties to the Northwest run deep; their daughters live here, one works at Microsoft, another at Boeing.

So when their son-in-law was diagnosed with terminal cancer they moved halfway around the world to support the family through a very difficult time. Feng, with limited English skills and, at age 73, little prospects to restart an engineering career, lived with his wife and extended family until the time was right to find their own place.

Their new apartment is perfect—close to a bus line that takes him to his many volunteer jobs sharing his language skills as a translator: the Social Security office, King County elections, and as a Health Benefits Advisor of SHIBA. With a snug apartment as their new home base, Feng and Zuying are continuing to give back to their new hometown.

“I can’t wait to get home.”

Two years ago, Jessica was living in a beautiful home on the Eastside with her husband and young son and things appeared ideal.

However, when her son was only two years old, her husband became extremely abusive and Jessica was forced to take her son and seek safe and affordable housing apart from her husband. They ended up in a shelter where they were partnered with a case manager who then placed them in a transitional housing unit for two years. She spent the two years working with her case manager who helped sort out the legal issues relating to her husband, helped her process the emotional trauma of abuse, and ultimately led Jessica to secure permanent rental housing through St Andrew’s Housing in Issaquah. She and her son are so thankful for St. Andrew’s Housing Group, as well as Hopelink and the YWCA, who have made it possible for them to live in a two bedroom apartment with a view looking out at the mountains.



Jessica has started her own house cleaning business and is able to work during the days while her son is at pre-K through the Issaquah school district. Her son, now 4 years old, is often heard saying, “I love my house” or “I can’t wait to get home.”

She says that she is extremely content and very grateful. Looking toward the future, Jessica is considering becoming a case manager herself so that she might be able to help others who have experienced hardship and just need a helping hand to make it through a difficult time.