

Enhancing Financial Stability for Housing Nonprofits in Idaho

Idaho Housing and Finance Association
Special Achievement

HFA Staff Contact

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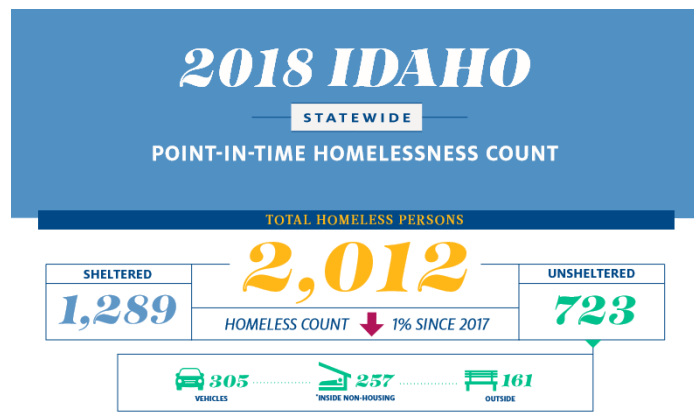
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Enhancing Financial Stability for Housing Nonprofits in Idaho

An Important Statewide Housing Need

Combating homelessness and enhancing affordable housing opportunities requires a broad network of nonprofit service providers capable of responding to the unique needs of each community. Many nonprofits heavily rely on federal funds to support their homeless service programs and housing operations. With minimal administrative staff and funding for overhead activities, many service providers have limited experience or capacity in philanthropic fundraising. The need to create more stable and diverse funding for homelessness and affordable housing services was a natural fit for Idaho Housing and Finance Association to help address statewide.

The needs were apparent because Idaho Housing administers federal U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development funding as well as houses the Housing Management Information System and Point-in-Time count data. It was determined that many of the needs must be addressed with charitable funding since Idaho is one of only a few states without a “funded” housing trust fund to fill these gaps. Medicaid expansion has also not yet been enacted in Idaho, putting additional stress on the nonprofit community.



Idaho Housing initially responded by creating a 501c3 nonprofit entity in 2005 to administer charitable funds from an active network of partners in the housing sector (financial institutions, the real estate industry, local businesses, and charitable foundations). The nonprofit, known as The Home Partnership Foundation, now administers nearly \$1 million annually, including its signature initiative, the Avenues for Hope Housing Challenge. Avenues for Hope is held for three weeks each December as an online fundraising campaign to build philanthropic networks to enhance resources for nonprofit service providers with housing-related missions throughout Idaho.

An Innovative Approach

Online fundraising platforms are not anything new. However, using one to connect statewide homeless service providers in a coordinated effort to prevent and respond to homelessness and affordable housing needs is unique. The campaign provides nonprofit participants the software platform along with social media tools, advertising materials, video promotions, and valuable financial incentives to stimulate philanthropic giving, which is an innovative and game-changing step toward building broader community support. Matching a portion of local donor gifts not only encouraged new donors to step forward, but also encouraged corporate sponsors who saw

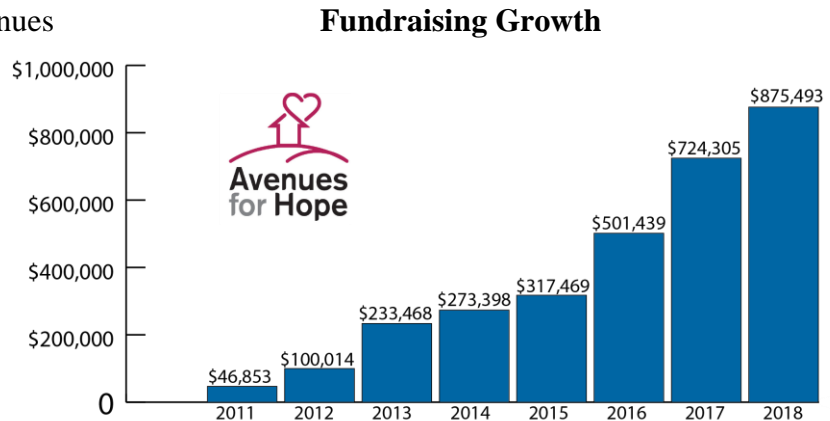
their contributions leveraged at the local level with positive social, community, and brand exposure.

Achieve Intended Results with a Proven Track Record of Success

Since inception in 2011, the Avenues for Hope Housing Challenge has continuously increased community donations, corporate sponsorships and nonprofit beneficiaries.

The cumulative benefits include:

- \$3.1 million awarded to support critical housing programs and services.
- Financial diversification for more than 60 nonprofit providers.
- Involvement of 40 sponsors.
- Thousands of homeless served.



Benefits Outweigh Costs through an Effective Use of Resources

Last year, \$875,493 was raised through donations, challenge grants and sponsorship funds. Nearly 4,400 gifts were made, totaling \$596,656 during the three-week campaign through an easy to use, online donation platform (www.avenuesforhope.org). All proceeds directly support the nonprofit designated by each donor. In addition, campaign sponsors and Idaho Housing provide the funding for 233 prizes and matching funds that amounted to \$278,837 in 2018, or 32 percent of the total funds awarded to participating nonprofits.

There is no charge to participating nonprofits; the administration, technology and marketing expenses are covered by Idaho Housing. The software platform costs Idaho Housing less than \$4,000 per year and other costs are picked up as part of Idaho Housing's overall marketing and promotions budget. Proceeds are unrestricted for the nonprofits to use, allowing them to build operational capacity and help meet the greatest housing needs in their community. The visibility of this campaign also raised general awareness of homelessness housing needs.

Replicable

According to Giving USA, a third of all online giving occurs in December, with 22 percent occurring in the last two days of the year. The Avenues for Hope campaign was designed to take advantage of this trend and runs every December. Idaho Housing invested in a software service provider to create a dedicated website for the Avenues for Hope Housing Challenge. The technology behind Avenues for Hope allows participating nonprofits to track donations, matching funds and prizes on a real-time leaderboard as well as have a uniquely branded, secure donation site for its organization. Donations are deposited directly into each nonprofit's bank account so proceeds can be put to immediate use in their community.

This campaign is replicable through the online fundraising platform that can be customized for various types of online fundraising campaigns. Idaho Housing created the branding for the campaign, as well as training and a tool kit that includes rules, questions and answers, graphics, posters, flyers, and sample messaging for emails and social media posts, which can serve as a model for other campaigns.

Effectively Employ Partnerships

Many partners make this campaign possible. The nonprofit participants, the technology vendor, the corporate sponsors, community leaders, local media, thousands of donors, and the Idaho Housing team that helps manage the campaign all have an important role in effectively raising funds.

Unlike traditional fundraising events, such as in-person galas or golf tournaments, the online nature of the donation platform makes it easy for partners statewide to participate and promote this opportunity to their constituents.

The online campaign not only receives donations from Idaho, but all across the United States, with 25 percent coming from 45 states. This past year's campaign even received donations from some international locations. Avenues for Hope not only raises awareness of the funding needs, but also provides an opportunity for nonprofits to share stories of the important housing services they provide in their community.

Achieve Strategic Objectives

The goal of the Avenues for Hope Housing Challenge is to help diversify and stabilize critical funding for Idaho's housing service providers and ensure that new funding is used in a manner that strategically strengthens our statewide homeless services network.

Before the campaign was launched, many partners had limited social media presence, lacked online donation processing capabilities and typically did not have the staffing or expertise to seek new fundraising approaches.

The feedback and coaching provided to partners achieved greater visibility for their agencies by showcasing the important work they're doing in their communities. The campaign also encouraged staff members, volunteers, and board members to engage in advancing the missions of their organizations. As Idaho's leader in homelessness interventions and strategies, Idaho Housing has granted tens of millions of dollars to over 60 housing and service providers over many years. Many of these funds and programs have limited activities and stringent regulations. Now, through Avenues for Hope, these providers have benefited from over \$3.1 million in unrestricted funds to meet the needs of Idaho's most disadvantaged.



A Safety Net for Idaho Nonprofits

“Avenues for Hope is our safety net, which allows us to be a safety net for our families. This campaign raises more than half of our annual budget which helps us know our families are going to get the help and services they need.”

- *Katti Carlson, Executive Director,
Family Promise of the Palouse in
Moscow, Idaho*

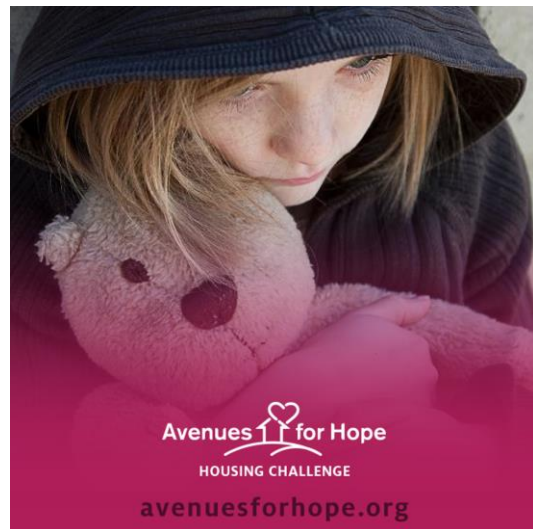
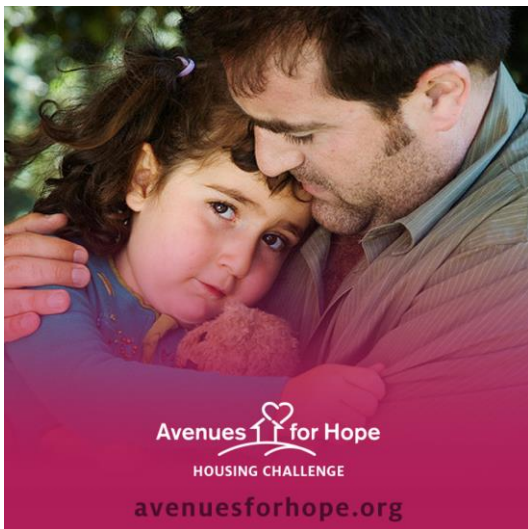
VISUAL AIDS

Campaign Website Header:

LEADING IDAHOANS
HOME
MAKE YOUR DONATION GO FURTHER.



Social Media Graphics:



Campaign Website Leaderboard:

Leaderboards

Most Raised		Most Donors	
1. Family Promise of the Palouse	\$86,763.58	1. Family Promise of the Palouse	418
2. Sojourners' Alliance	\$74,160.00	2. NeighborWorks Pocatello	233
3. LEAP Charities	\$63,949.99	3. CATCH	191
4. CATCH	\$54,587.58	4. Society of St Vincent de Paul, SW Idaho Council, Inc	182
5. Corpus Christi House	\$53,550.00	5. Corpus Christi House	152
6. Bonner County Homeless Task Force, Inc	\$47,612.00	6. Sojourners' Alliance	148
7. Society of St Vincent de Paul, SW Idaho Council, Inc	\$37,395.00	7. Family Promise of North Idaho	137
8. Community Resource Center of Teton Valley	\$34,220.00	8. The House Next Door	112
9. The Jesse Tree of Idaho	\$29,840.00	9. LEAP Charities	108
10. NeighborWorks Pocatello	\$29,525.00	10. Bonner County Homeless Task Force, Inc	100

[View More](#)

Prize Winners Announced!

Congratulations to all Avenues for Hope prize winners and a huge thanks to those who helped each nonprofit earn them!

[Click here to see who won.](#)

Campaign Sponsors:



Videos:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G_AUGNsTUok

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FNG9nR6ULj4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UfGkwo8K1wo&t=1s>

Media Coverage:

<https://www.ktvb.com/video/news/local/avenues-for-hope-fundraising-campaign-for-homeless-begins/277-cb588e79-82f6-4830-9cb6-d310b2fabdc0>

<https://www.kivitv.com/news/avenues-for-hope-housing-challenge-aids-idaho-homeless-population>

<https://www.facebook.com/CBS2Boise/videos/vb.117923841552664/305882830284927/?type=2&theater>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dDowBhi-Sig>