

****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****

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KING COUNTY PARTNERS JOIN TOGETHER TO LAUNCH ‘WE ARE IN’ CAMPAIGN TO END HOMELESSNESS

We Are In is a diverse collective of partners in nonprofit work and services, business, philanthropy, and people who have experienced homelessness.

SEATTLE, November 18, 2019 – Today, advocates with local service providers, businesses, philanthropic organizations, academia and people who have personal experience with homelessness, partnered together to declare, ‘[We Are In](#).’ We Are In is a campaign to raise awareness and generate momentum for smart, common sense solutions to ending homelessness in King County.

All Home’s Count Us In [survey](#) of January 2019 reported over 11,000 people experiencing homelessness in King County. Nearly half of the population experiencing homelessness were unsheltered, living on the street, or in parks, tents, vehicles, or other places not meant for human habitation. According to the latest regional homelessness [data](#) from All Home, 12,318 households experiencing homelessness received services in the homeless response system as of August 31, 2019.

The campaign and the efforts to revamp King County’s regional approach to homelessness are unique in prioritizing the voices of those who have experienced homelessness themselves. Their role reflects King County’s effort to uniquely and deeply involve people who know first-hand what it’s like to be homeless and what needs to change to get to more effective solutions.

“We urgently need real solutions to homelessness, informed by those who have lived it,” said Dr. LaMont Green of the Lived Experience Coalition. “Community must include all of us, and everyone has a role to play in making sure that our region is a place where we can all thrive.”

The We Are In campaign launched with over a dozen organizations signing on as partners and supporters, including service providers and philanthropies committed to supporting a regional response.

“We need to remember that people experiencing homelessness are our neighbors, veterans, students, and friends, people escaping domestic violence, turned away from families, or living with disabilities,” said Gordon McHenry Jr., CEO of United Way of King County, one of the founding partners of We Are In. “In the Pacific Northwest – a place filled with brilliant, innovative problem-solvers and compassionate people who care about their neighbors – we have the ability and the drive to solve this problem. Today, service providers, businesses, philanthropists, academics, and voices from every corner of King County stand together to say: We Are In, and we are ready to act.”

“Along with the dedicated service providers and nonprofits that work to address homelessness every day, our friends and neighbors want to see the progress that is being made right now, and show their support for the progress that we know we can make together. Our region is innovative and creative in so many ways—that is the spirit of We Are In and we are proud to support it,” said David Bley, Director of the Pacific Northwest Initiative at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Homelessness in King County affects everyone but some communities are impacted more than others. African Americans [make up](#) 6% of King County’s general population but 32% of people experiencing homelessness. Ten percent of people experiencing homelessness [identified](#) as Native or of Indigenous descent, despite being less than 1% of the population.

“We all agree that housing is a human right, but the fact is, not all have been extended that right in our community,” said Colleen Echohawk, Executive Director of Chief Seattle Club. “By following the lead of those most impacted by this issue, we can champion solutions that respond to all needs and address persisting racial inequities in our communities.”

We Are In recognizes that homelessness is a regional issue that impacts every city and community across King County and requires all of us to work together on a solution. The campaign will engage the public in support of a collaborative, innovative, and coordinated approach to ending homelessness and center conversations around those disproportionately impacted, from people of color to young adults to veterans.

The current list of organizations who have signed on to the We Are In campaign are:

- United Way of King County
- Chief Seattle Club
- A Way Home Washington
- Housing Development Consortium
- Plymouth Housing
- Statewide Poverty Action Network
- Wellspring Family Services
- LifeWire
- Downtown Emergency Service Center
- The Mockingbird Society
- RISE Together

- Capitol Hill Housing
- Seattle University Project on Family Homelessness
- Ballard Food Bank
- YMCA of Greater Seattle
- Building Changes
- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- Ballmer Group
- Champion Advocacy Fund
- Raikes Foundation
- Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce
- Vulcan

To learn more about We Are In, visit WeAreIn.org, where you can access the full list of our partners, a video featuring a few key voices, and more information on the issue and how to get involved.

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About We Are In:

We Are In advocates for smart, proven and common sense solutions to ending homelessness in King County. The We Are In coalition is made up of service providers, nonprofits, businesses, philanthropic organizations, and people who have experienced homelessness. To learn more and to get involved, please visit WeAreIn.org.