



Symetra Donation to The Sophia Way Will Help Keep Eastside Emergency Shelter for Women Open Year-Round Again in 2019

BELLEVUE, Wash. — (Feb. 8, 2019) — Symetra, a national provider of employee benefits, annuities and life insurance, has committed a second \$100,000 donation to The Sophia Way, a Bellevue, Washington-based nonprofit dedicated to helping end homelessness for single adult women in King County. Like the company's June 2018 gift, the funding will allow the Eastside Emergency Shelter for Women to remain open from mid-May through October. Symetra CEO Margaret Meister announced the donation last night during her keynote remarks at the Bellevue Downtown Association's 45th Annual Celebration at Meydenbauer Center.

"The Sophia Way provides a vital service to women experiencing homelessness in our Eastside community. As a Bellevue-headquartered company, Symetra is committed to being part of a broader solution to address this ongoing crisis and joining forces with our Eastside business peers to do so," said Ms. Meister. "Symetra's business as an insurance carrier is all about helping people during some of life's most challenging moments. The Sophia Way has a similar mission, serving some of our community's most vulnerable members. We feel fortunate to have played a role in supporting their much-needed work for many years."

Currently based at an interim location at Lakeside Christian Church in Kirkland, the shelter will ultimately become part of a new, permanent facility in Kirkland for women and families with children that is scheduled for groundbreaking this spring.

"For the second consecutive year, Symetra has made it possible to keep the emergency shelter for women open during the summer and early fall. Historically, we have only had funding to operate it during the coldest months, but come mid-May, the women we serve are without a stable and safe place to sleep until the shelter reopens in October," said Angela Murray, executive director, The Sophia Way. "Sleeping outside is a terrifying experience for even one night, but the cumulative impact of weeks on end without a safe place to sleep adds to the trauma these women carry with them every day. Symetra's generous gift again allows us to provide comfort and hope for the entire year."

Symetra's relationship with the Sophia Way began in 2009, when the organization operated its day center at the Bellevue First Congregational Church's former location across the street from Symetra headquarters at NE 8th and 108th Avenue NE. The company's support has expanded over the years to include sponsorship of The Sophia Way's annual fundraising luncheon event and volunteer support through the Symetra Week of Service. Last summer, Symetra employee-volunteer teams helped prepare the interim shelter location for its June re-opening by cleaning the facility and laundering bedding.

About Symetra

Symetra Financial Corporation is a diversified financial services company based in Bellevue, Washington. In business since 1957, Symetra provides employee benefits, annuities and life insurance through a national network of benefit consultants, financial institutions, and independent agents and advisors. For more information, visit www.symetra.com.

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About The Sophia Way

The Sophia Way is a vital Eastside program dedicated to supporting single adult women experiencing homelessness in King County move into housing. Founded in 2008 to address the lack of resources and services for the growing population of women seeking shelter and housing, The Sophia Way has served more than 4,000 women with a comprehensive array of support, the most important of which is help in exiting homelessness. The organization believes every woman is housing ready and works with the evidence-based Housing First approach to ensure the success of housing many more women. For more information, visit <https://sophiaway.org>

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The Sophia Way

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