



Housing Group Press



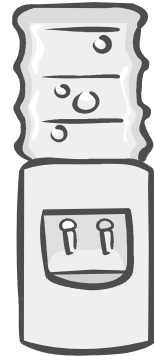
Water Coolers, Volunteers, and How It All Began

One Wednesday, back in 1987, **two women from St. Andrew's Lutheran Church** went to a conference on homelessness in Seattle. After congratulating Seattle's affordable housing efforts, Steve Clagett, the Executive Director of Common Ground, made an impassioned plea for affordable housing work to begin on the Eastside. He asked if there might be a congregation willing to rise to the challenge. **Darcy Johnson** and **Trudy Thorleifson**, the two women from St. Andrew's, volunteered.



Darcy Johnson
Breaking Ground
at Andrew's Arms

On Sunday, Darcy and Trudy literally stood over the **church's water cooler** and hammered out ideas for a new organization. They decided to gather a skilled team and made a list of candidates for five volunteer positions—one each for Construction, Finances, Permitting, Organizational Structure, and Human Services. For each position they identified a first, second, and third choice . . . and then started making phone calls. Their first choice for each position immediately said, **"Yes!"** Encouraged by such strong support they moved forward.



That was the beginning of St. Andrew's Housing Group!

St. Andrew's Housing Group became independently incorporated in 1989 as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. Until 1993, the Housing Group was completely **volunteer-run**. The volunteers learned the business of developing affordable housing, established the organization within the market, and built a solid community reputation as a trustworthy developer of affordable housing. In 1992, St. Andrew's Housing Group opened its first housing development, **Andrew's Arms**, offering 14 units of affordable housing in Issaquah, Washington. In 1993, our first Executive Director Eric Brown was hired and the groundbreaking work of the volunteers began to pay off as we entered into a period of dramatic growth and accomplishment.

Where We Are Today

Today, thanks to continued community support and investment, St. Andrew's Housing Group is an affordable housing industry leader, managing assets worth more than \$20 million, and providing 208 units of affordable housing on King County's Eastside that serve **more than 546 individuals and families each year**. We provide affordable housing in Mercer Island, Issaquah, Factoria, Redmond, Bellevue, and Kirkland. Currently SAHG is in the process of acquiring 60 units of existing housing and building 50 units of new housing that will give enough capacity to nearly double our resident population.



Ellsworth House
50 Units of Senior Housing on
Mercer Island



Want more information? Visit us at **sahg.org!**

