

Irvington Living

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A SOCIAL PUBLICATION FOR
RESIDENTS OF IRVINGTON
& DOLPH PARK



Meet The Richards Family:
Leo, Joey, Liz and Joe.

Your stories.
Your photos.
Your community.



COMMUNITY WAREHOUSE

By Rena Satre Meloy



The Strength Of Our Community Begins At Home. Join Irvington Neighbors Like Stephanie Sameh In Putting Used Goods To Good Use At Community Warehouse.

More often than not, our household goods and furnishings are camouflaged into the fabric of our everyday experience. Our brimming cupboards and our favorite mug, our dining room table and our comfy sofawe appreciate these items, yes, but we may not fully recognize the powerful role they play in our well-being, happiness and self-sufficiency.

For a moment, picture your home completely empty: no bed to rest upon, no pots or utensils to make home-cooked meals, no towels to dry off with after a shower, no lamps to light your evenings. For many people in our community, this is their physical existence every day. They are striving to get back on their feet and create solid home foundations for their children, yet they can barely make ends meet. For these families, household furnishings can make a world of difference.

Meet Community Warehouse, your local furniture bank. This nonprofit organization is built on a simple, yet compelling concept: household goods you no longer need could help create a home for someone else in your community. As the only full-

service furniture bank serving Oregon and SW Washington, Community Warehouse collects and redistributes donated furnishings to over 7,000 neighbors in need each year.

Agencies throughout Portland are working tirelessly to provide struggling families with food, warm clothing, safe housing and healthcare. Community Warehouse works in partnership with nearly 200 of these agencies, public schools and faith communities to provide that next critical layer of support – the comfort and dignity of home. With this foundation, people can devote their time and resources to meet other needs such as employment assistance, healthcare or food. Their quality of life is strongly improved and they are more likely to become self-sufficient community members.

In the words of one family who visited the Warehouse, “A place of your own is important, but so are the small things like a decent bed and dishes. Those are the things that make a house a home. When you are broke and starting your life again, those things can make the difference.”

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Relying On The Irvington Community

Currently, 50+ families visit the Warehouse each week to receive furniture. We rely solely on donations from our community to meet this need. The Irvington neighborhood is full of donors and volunteers who help keep our shelves full. Warehouse volunteer Stephanie Sameh has lived in Irvington for over 10 years and is a perfect example of this Irvington's giving nature. Serving marginalized populations has been at the forefront of her career as a nurse at Providence Health, and throughout her many volunteer experiences.



Stephanie explains, "Before I signed up to volunteer at the Warehouse, I studied their mission. It was clear right away how critical their work is in our community." Stephanie primarily volunteers in the Estate Store, an antique/collectibles/thrift shop connected to the Warehouse that raises important funds for the organization. "I love working in the store," she says. "I get to interact with people face to face, I'm an avid antiquer and a firm believer in recycling. The inventory is remarkable... I often find myself thinking, 'Woah – this is a find!'" Stephanie shared how much she appreciates Irvington and enjoys walking to and from public transportation, and visiting her favorite book store Broadway Books.



Another wonderful pillar of generosity in NE Portland are business owners Michael and Ruth Hanna. They run The Mattress Lot, a family-owned small business that values sustainability and respect for community. Year after year, the Hannas donate mattresses to local families on a weekly basis, and they always come to the rescue when we are completely out of twin mattresses.

In the words of Erik Heise, Warehouse Program Director, "If you've never met the Hannas, we can assure you they are some of the most kind-hearted, generous citizens in Portland." Development Director Anna Kurnizki explains, "We are continually humbled by how selflessly this small, family-run business



gives....and with such joy. It really is an exceptional partnership, and they are exceptional people." Alongside the Hannas, Kitchen Kaboodle, Minuteman Press and OnPoint Community Credit Union all contribute generously to the Warehouse and enjoy connecting Irvington neighbors to the Warehouse.

Dunetchka Otero-Serrano, Executive Director of Community Warehouse, lives just a few blocks north of Irvington, and explains how the neighborhood is part of her daily living: "My kids go to school in Irvington and I walk the streets and shop there often – I always feel warm and welcomed." She further explains, "Many of the residents in Irvington already know our



mission and support us. We are grateful for this community partnership, and we always look forward to reaching new donors who may have extra furnishings to give."

In this supportive spirit, if you could peek in your cupboards or closets for any extra household goods or furnishings – we will gladly put your used goods to good use! We just ask that they are gently-used and in clean, working condition. Items can be dropped off at either of our Warehouse locations (Portland or Tualatin), or a pick-up can be requested at communitywarehouse.org.

Here at Community Warehouse, we are grateful each day for work that so directly and positively impacts our community – work that is made possible because of generous donors like you, volunteers like Stephanie and business owners like the Hannas. Thank you! Teamwork, respect and what it really means to be there for your neighbors – this is what community is all about.

- MOST NEEDED ITEMS**

 - Pots & Pans
 - Silverware, Dishes
 - Can Openers
 - Toasters
 - Alarm Clocks
- Kitchen Tables, Chairs
 - Clean Mattresses (especially twins)
 - Dressers
 - Lamps
 - Pillows
 - Blankets/Comforters
- continued...*

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You can also help in other ways!

1. Donate, Shop and Support at our on-site Estate Store.

If you have treasures you no longer treasure (higher value items or antiques), you can donate them to our Estate Store, where they will be sold to support the Warehouse's mission. You can also shop at our Estate Stores anytime! Learn more at estatestore.org.

2. Volunteer. We have fun, flexible, meaningful opportunities in both Warehouse's and our Estate Stores. We'd love to have you join us. Contact Jessica Thompson: Jessica@communitywarehouse.org; 503.891.7400.

3. Spread the Word! Our biggest challenge is letting people know that we exist. If you can tell your next-door neighbor, or perhaps your walking pal, or a co-worker or friend, you would help us tremendously.



Do you know someone making a difference in our community? Email submissions and nominations to irvingtonliving@gmail.com.

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