



Tenants Union of Washington State

2013 Annual Report



The mission of the Tenants Union is to create housing justice through empowerment-based education, outreach, leadership development, organizing, and advocacy. Founded in 1977, the TU carries on a proud legacy of work to create concrete improvements in tenants' living conditions and challenge and transform unjust housing policies and practices. As a membership organization, the TU's work is grounded in the strong conviction that tenants must be the leaders of efforts to transform our housing conditions and communities.

Tenants Union of Washington State

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Where We've



- **Fair Tenant Screening Act:** Organized across the state to win crucial protections for domestic violence survivors.
- **STOP Expansion:** Section 8 Tenants Organizing Project expanded to Spokane and hired Organizer **Terri Anderson**.
- **Operations Coordinator: Elaine Agoot** joined the TU staff in July to provide administrative and fundraising support.
- **New Board Chair:** Tenant leader **Corey Snelson** joined the TU Board of Directors and was voted in as the new Chair.
- **Affordable Housing in South Lake Union :** Tenants and TU staff supported the passage of an incentive zoning package that brings more moderate income housing to the South Lake Union neighborhood.
- **Jobs Assistance in Seattle:** The TU advocated in favor of this City legislation that offers legal protections against discrimination for ex-offenders who are seeking jobs. We hope to be a part of expanding this protection to housing in the future.
- **Multilingual Tenant Education:** The TU expanded our Education Program services to provide direct tenant counseling in Spanish, as well as interpreted counseling in all languages. Our website now features Spanish, Vietnamese, and Somali sections.
- **Expanded Source of Income Discrimination Protection:** The TU organized tenants to tell their stories to support the passage of discrimination protection for Section 8 and other low income tenants in Redmond and Kirkland.
- **Website Expansion:** The TU's encyclopedic website was optimized for mobile users to increase accessibility for the many low income tenants who depend on cell phones for internet access.
- **Membership & Campaign Planning Process:** A core of tenant leaders and TU staff dedicated months to a long-term planning process to shape the direction of the TU's organizing and membership outreach in the future.
- **National Tenant Engagement & Advocacy:** STOP tenants attended the National Association of HUD Tenants (NAHT) conference in Washington DC.

Been This Year...

- **Activists Mobilizing for Power:** TU leaders attended this Western States Center conference to build their skills and network with other NW activists.
- **Housing & Homelessness Advocacy Day:** Tenants and staff attended meetings with legislators and rallied to advocate for more funding for housing and better rights for tenants.
- **Partnering with Got Green:** The TU collaborated with Got Green to hold a summer BBQ and workshop series on Healthy Housing in the Rainier Valley.
- **TU Funders:** The TU received support from the Ben & Jerry's Foundation, Stoneleigh Fund, Ellis Foundation, Social Justice Fund, Catholic Campaign for Human Development, Legal Foundation of WA, among hundreds of generous members and donors who have given to support the TU. **THANK YOU!**



TU By the Numbers

- **1,845** tenants counseled Jan-Sept
- **92** new and renewing members
- **368** total active members
- **9** buildings organized in
- **3** tenant associations in the process of forming
- **37** workshops provided
- **9** cities organized in
- **185** one-on-one meetings with tenants
- **4** tenants on membership committee
- **18** tenants who testified or told their story to the media
- **25** organizations researched as a part of the membership process
- **5** former TU Organizers interviewed
- **25** grassroots organizations interviewed
- **15** active TU members surveyed
- **3** new staff members added
- **Countless** connections for housing justice!

Where We're Going

- **STOP Program Expansion:** The Section 8 Tenants Organizing Project will be hiring three Vista Volunteers to organize in buildings all across Washington State. As we grow, STOP will be facilitating regional conference calls for Section 8 Tenants to support each other and impact Federal policy. Some of the buildings STOP has been working in will need YOUR support in the next year as tenants organize to preserve affordability! Stay tuned to your emails and calls for more details.



- **Healthy Housing in South King County:** The membership spoke loud and clear that the TU should prioritize addressing substandard housing and negligent landlords in South King County. We are excited to soon launch a new Healthy Housing Campaign in South King County. Would you like to get involved? Contact Stina at stinaj@tenantsunion.org or (206) 722-6848 x 102.
- **Membership Program Revamp:** The TU will focus on improving connection and engagement of our membership. The TU will work to increase the involvement and organizing skills of members through clearer steps into powerful leadership.
- **Board Recruitment:** The TU is looking to expand our Board of Directors with the energy, commitment, and skills of some new members. Would you like to add your talents to a part of a dedicated team of TU board leaders? Please contact Jonathan Grant at jonathang@tenantsunion.org or (206) 722-6848 x 112 for more info.



- **Seattle Tenant Education and Organizing:** Do you have a story about how education and outreach helped in your situation? Help us encourage the City of Seattle to invest in tenant education! Email Jon at jonathang@tenantsunion.org.
- **Join our Volunteer Base!** Volunteers make our work happen! Can you volunteer with the Tenants Union? Find out about our volunteer opportunities by contacting Elaine at elainea@tenantsunion.org or (206) 722-6848 ext. 102 or visiting tenantsunion.org.

Thank you for your dedicated support of the work of the Tenants Union!