

MAY 2024



Compass
Affordable
Housing

compassaffordablehousing.org

The mission of Compass Affordable Housing is to improve the quality of family and community life through low-cost housing, support services and advocacy. Our vision is an engaged community working together to increase housing that is affordable at local, state and national levels.

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Building Healthy Households with Your Healthy Home Market

“Where flowers bloom, so does hope.”

- Lady Bird Johnson

Spring is quickly turning into summer, and Compass Affordable Housing has just finished planting and cultivating our Community Garden at Alvard Court Apartments. Access to nutritious food is essential for the health and well-being of our tenants and participants.



That’s why our Community Garden and Your Healthy Home Market (YHHM) were created—to help the households we work with address food insecurity and the health issues associated with poor eating habits. Through our Community Garden and Your Healthy Home Market, we provide fresh produce, grains, vitamins, and healthy foods to individuals and families to grow hope and sustain healthy families.



Your Healthy Home Market grew from a collaboration of our staff and volunteers from AmeriCorps and continues to grow because of partners like GAP Ministries and the Garden Kitchen. Every week, tenants and program participants shop for various nutritious foods at no charge. YHHM also delivers the same produce to community partners like Casa Maria-Tucson, Pima County homeless outreach, Sister Jose’s Women’s Center, and the Tucson Preparatory High School for at-risk youth.

YHHM is set up to empower the people we work with to make healthier choices for themselves and their families. In addition to providing food, participants learn how to develop healthier lifestyles through nutrition workshops, cooking demonstrations, healthy recipes, and budgeting tips. Through our Community Garden at Alvard Court, our tenants can grow fresh, seasonal veggies, fruit, and herbs that support their neighbors. Both opportunities give people the food, knowledge, and skills they need to nourish their bodies and minds.

The impact of Your Healthy Home Market extends far beyond putting food on the table. Families stretch limited budgets further by removing barriers to accessing healthy food, freeing up resources for other essentials like rent, utilities, and medical expenses. YHHM builds community and social engagement and fosters a sense of belonging and support.

Perhaps most importantly, Your Healthy Home Market grows hope and resiliency. Like the plants in our Community Garden, people grow and flourish when nurtured. It’s a testament to the power of community collaboration and collective action, demonstrating what’s possible when we unite to lift each other.

Together, we nourish bodies, minds, and spirits and make the dream of a stable, secure, hunger-free community a reality. Learn more about Your Healthy Home Market and how you can get involved on our website: <https://compassaffordablehousing.org>





Compass Affordable Housing Board President Richard Mullen, presenting at the 2023 Compass Affordable Housing Home for the Holidays event at the Tucson Racquet and Fitness Club.

Compass Affordable Housing Board Spotlight: Richard Mullen, Board President



Met Richard Mullen, our new Board President. Richard has served on many boards, including Compass Health Care’s Board of Directors, who played a crucial role in developing Glenstone Village Apartments, which was the seed for Compass Affordable Housing, Inc.

In 2016, Richard was invited to attend his first Compass Affordable Housing Inc. board meeting as a guest of his good friend, Sam Woods, a founding Board Member of CAH, and Richard left that meeting as the Treasurer. In 2024, when his friend and longtime fellow board member Laurel Parker stepped down as Board President, Richard stepped into the leadership role.

Richard’s parents moved to Tucson in the 1970s. He is a proud CDO High School graduate and an alumnus of Northern AZ University, where he studied business and skiing—there was no snow in Tucson. Throughout high school, Richard worked for his neighborhood Safeway, and transferred with the grocery chain during college to continue working for them. After college, Richard returned to Tucson and soon began his 37+ year career in banking.

For Richard, “helping people succeed in their business and watching them grow and succeed” is very gratifying.

Looking to the future, Richard’s focus is on sharing our mission and message with the community through what we do. “As a larger population wants to partake in society, we need the public to better understand what affordable housing organizations do.” He believes “Tenant service is critical to providing affordable housing—our services enable people to become self-sufficient.”

Compass Affordable Housing Success Spotlight: Irma & Joseph’s Story



Irma and Joseph’s story is one of resiliency. Before being referred to Compass Affordable Housing, the couple had struggled with homelessness and health issues like diabetes and high blood pressure. Irma had survived four heart attacks. It was their unwavering commitment to each other that sustained them.

Once they received assistance to find housing through the Community Housing Program, they settled into their new home, and Irma immediately began working with CAH Get AHEAD staff to find a job. “It’s hard to have confidence when you can’t shower and wear clean clothes to an interview.” Shortly after moving in, the couple’s newfound stability was shaken when Irma suffered another heart attack. Having a stable home and Joseph’s support allowed Irma to recover fully.

Soon, Irma’s perseverance paid off when she secured a full-time job at Goodwill Industries. Her job provides financial stability and a sense of pride and accomplishment. Irma has now been promoted and is working on her GED. Her supervisors ask Irma if they can clone her because she is a valuable team member.

Irma and Joseph found support to secure housing and reach their goals with CAH. Irma reflected on their journey: “(CAH) has helped me find work, save money, and build my self-esteem.” The proud couple just purchased a car and are saving to buy a house.

Irma and Joseph believe their journey with Compass Affordable Housing helped their dreams come true through their determination to improve their situation and the support they received.

Building a Better Tomorrow Together— The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints



Maryann Beerling and the team at Compass Affordable Housing celebrate the generous donation made by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints: “What a Blessing! This one truck can do the work of five cars so that we can serve more people.” -Maryann Beerling, CEO



We were jumping for joy, thanks to our new community partners at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Tucson AZ Stake, for their unparalleled generosity. Their support transforms the lives of the households we serve, building better tomorrows for them and our community.

Because of the generosity of our friends at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Compass Affordable Housing, Inc. can deliver more fresh produce and household goods to the many people we work with who are stabilizing from homelessness.

We have already delivered healthy produce to hundreds of households in our communities, and we now provide access to the Deseret Industries Thrift

Store, where participants can select clothes, furnishings, and household supplies to set up their new homes. This support from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints is crucial to creating a stable environment for CAH participants and their families to flourish.

Tucson Stake President A.J. Busby shares, “Compass Housing strives to provide opportunities for stability and self-reliance for families in our community. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints is grateful to assist in these worthy endeavors.” The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints instills hope and reaffirms the belief that when we work together, we can create a world that uplifts everyone.



Why Invest in Affordable Housing?

- **Businesses** benefit when workers can afford to live near their workplace, strengthening Tucson’s competitive position in attracting and retaining businesses.
- **Families** benefit when relatives have options to live closer for stronger relationships, mutual support, and the ability to support aging family members.
- **Children** benefit by living in a safe and stable environment with access to school, nutrition, and healthcare.
- **Neighborhoods** benefit when fewer low-wage workers must drive long distances to work, decreasing traffic congestion.
- **Schools** benefit when children can have easy access to their neighborhood schools. Schools can count on stable average daily attendance to create an effective budget.
- **The Local Economy** benefits when households can purchase additional goods and services instead of just paying bills. Affordable housing, which includes support services, is the most cost-effective way to help highly vulnerable populations of our community.
- **The Environment** benefits because affordable home developments use land more efficiently and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from added travel miles and pressure on open spaces.
- **The Healthcare System** benefits because people in affordable housing with support services can live healthier lifestyles, reducing demands on the healthcare system, such as emergency room visits, crisis care, and hospitalizations.

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Myth #5: Affordable Housing overburdens public schools and infrastructure.

Reality: Rental apartments, despite misconceptions, have fewer children and motor vehicles per unit compared to single-family homes, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. While not all multi-family rentals are affordable, they form the majority of affordable housing. Studies indicate traditional single-family neighborhoods have 2-3 times more school-aged children than apartments, highlighting the importance of rental units in diverse housing options.

Higher-density rental housing offers cost efficiencies in utility infrastructure, reducing costs compared to lower-density developments. This supports sustainability and effective resource allocation. Multi-family complexes also contribute significantly to local property taxes, alleviating strain on the tax system and supporting community services.

Although not a standalone solution, affordable housing with support services reduces pressure on government-provided social services. It attracts substantial subsidies, benefiting local economies by creating jobs, particularly in construction and services. Housing with support services is especially effective in aiding vulnerable community members, fostering independence, and reducing the need for extensive public services. Investing in affordable housing is investing in the well-being and potential of our communities.

