



Board of Directors

Linda Reid
President

Josh Oliva
Vice President

Linda Glover
Secretary

Michelle Thor
Treasurer

Casey Wyckoff
Immediate Past President

Nancy Baker

David Copenhaver

Lee Coulthard

Charlene Donnelly

Brian Davis

Michael Lary

Celinda Rupert

Christie Rust

Alishia Topper

Lee Rafferty
Executive Director

811 Main Street
Vancouver, WA 98660
360.258.1129
www.vdausa.org

January 14, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

It has been my honor and privilege to know and work with Katherine Garrett for the past 7 years. As the executive director of the Vancouver Downtown Association, I work to make the downtown core a vibrant, beautiful, and comfortable place for businesses, shoppers, and those who live here. In my work, my members, my board, and myself have all had frequent contact with people who are experiencing homelessness downtown. Katherine Garrett has always been an asset and a bridge between the needs of those who are homeless on our streets and the needs of the other members of our community.

I first met Katherine in our shared work on the Safety Committee. This committee was dedicated to making Downtown Vancouver a safe place for all people. Members of the committee had a range of concerns some of them revolved around specific issues involving people who are homeless, people sleeping in the doorways of businesses, shopping carts left filled with items, etc. Katherine proved to be a tireless advocate for the most vulnerable among us. She has an understanding for those who might feel intimidated or concerned about people with visible mental health issues but she also brought to the group an understanding for those who were struggling. She offered up her Outreach team as a "community first responder", willing and interested in being called initially for non-emergency issues involving homeless people. This service helped and continues to help put people's minds at ease. Her on-going engagement with the local businesses is a perpetual relationship builder keeping the lines of communication open even as the players and the issues change with time. Her involvement with the clients and her Outreach team in Adopt-A-Highway efforts, clean-ups in Ester Short and over in Hough Neighborhood, have helped to remind people who are experiencing homelessness and the housed members of the community that we do all live here together and all benefit from a healthy community. I continued to work with Katherine in our mutual fight to keep the first Day Center open in 2010 and could not be more pleased that that work has been renewed.



Board of Directors

Linda Reid
President

Josh Oliva
Vice President

Linda Glover
Secretary

Michelle Thor
Treasurer

Casey Wyckoff
Immediate Past President

Nancy Baker

David Copenhaver

Lee Coulthard

Charlene Donnelly

Brian Davis

Michael Lary

Celinda Rupert

Christie Rust

Alishia Topper

Lee Rafferty
Executive Director

811 Main Street
Vancouver, WA 98660
360.258.1129
www.vdausa.org

Our community needs passionate, caring and dedicated people like Katherine Garrett. Her commitment to those who battle mental health concerns, substance abuse issues, and the daily trials imposed on those who live on our streets is evident every time she speaks. I have been honored to know Katherine and I strongly encourage you to honor her with this award.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Lee Rafferty, Executive Director of the Vancouver Downtown Association
(360) 258-1129
director@vdausa.org