



Board Member Motivation Statements

Don: When I was working for the Council of Churches (now called Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon) for my conscientious objector service in 1972 or so, I went with a group of volunteers to take food to a migrant camp in Washington County. Along with the food, we took some presents for the kids and did some activities with them. The kids were so great, full of fun, very polite and had so little. Even though I had grown up in a government housing project with a single welfare Mom, I had never seen anything like that in my life: families of four or five kids living in absolute squalor with a tap outside for running water. It left a very strong impression. When Doug Longhurst and Linda Netherton asked me to be on the Housing Development Board (now Bienestar), I recalled that visit and decided that if there was anything I could do to improve the conditions for farm workers, it was my obligation to do so. That's why I've been very honored to be a part of this organization. Good, safe, clean housing is a basic right for all. The farm workers do the worst of jobs and deserve to have a decent place to live. I am proud that Bienestar is living up to its name and looking at the wellbeing of the families which include a full range of services to go along with the housing. It is important to me that these hard working families have equal access to the American Dream just like my family of immigrants had when they came here.

John: Grew up in San Diego and experienced 2 incidents growing up that pushed him toward service for an organization like Bienestar. In the first incident: He hitchhiked to get to college classes in order to save .35 cents, starting at a bus stop. One day he saw a man, minding his own business, being continually harassed by the INS before they eventually hauled him away "like the Gestapo". It didn't sit well with him.

Second incident: One day, while hiking through the hills of San Diego County (at what is now the Wild Animal Park) with a friend, John came upon a riverbed where he saw 30 men gathered scatter into the wind. They had feared that the two boys were members of the INS there performing a raid. He was touched that anyone could be so scared while they were just trying to find jobs to support families.

-Once living in Hillsboro he toured a migrant work camp with city leaders and has been with Bienestar ever since.

Cheryl: In 1985 she accepted a job with the Community Action Network to run programs and emergency services for the homeless at their shelter. That year Community Action had the capacity to help approximately 1 in 4 homeless families, 12 years later, they had the capacity to help 1 in 14. Many of these families were dual income and still could not afford adequate housing on minimum wage salaries. It was very important for her to work with an organization



addressing the issues of families who work hard and still can't afford housing.

-Cheryl has been on the Bienestar board since 1985

Olivia: Olivia started college in 1986. In 1987 she started working in social/human services with emotionally disturbed children. In 1996 she came back from a research trip to Mexico where she was working on her thesis and started a VISTA position helping first generation Latina pregnant women get prenatal and social service care. She encountered the myriad housing issues faced by the population through her work as VISTA. She witnesses multiple families living in squalor. Shortly after, she turned to education to support the Latino community which she felt and still feels connected to. As a board member of Bienestar, she feels as if she has the opportunity to support this community to access higher education opportunities.

Brenda: At age 12, Brenda had just finished her first year of 7th grade Spanish when her whole family (parents) decided to spend the summer picking beans. "it was a dirty, exhausting experience" Getting up at dawn, not showering because she would just get dirty anyway, and realizing, when talking to other ~~kids~~ farmers in her office, that picking beans is one of the "easier" agriculture jobs (as they are grown on poles and don't require bending over) Brenda decided that picking beans was no fun way to earn a living, especially at 7 cents a pound. This

experience opened her eyes to the plight of farmers and helps her connect to Bienestar residents.

Daryn: Daryn's defining moment was in 1999, after graduating from college he was working as a VISTA at a homeless shelter, living in a house full of other 22 year old men. His roommate was laid off suddenly and had to call his mom to bail him out. She paid his rent and his bills, gave him some money. Daryn couldn't shake the juxtaposition of his roommate's situation versus the people he was meeting at the homeless shelter. He found himself with the belief that housing is a basic right. This experience solidified his dedication to fair housing access.

-In the winter of 2010 when touring labor camps with Bienestar, he was shocked and appalled to find that these conditions still exist. He had just had his first child and a child he met at the labor camp which he visited resonated with him.

Teresa: Grew up in Hood River. In Hood River you either worked at the mill or in the orchards. She always heard whispers of "the other" people working in the fields and orchards that she never saw. When she was 6, her uncle was in an accident that made him a quadriplegic and had to rely on community support for the remainder of his life. She learned that it takes a village to help the village.



Seven years ago, after beginning her employment at Enterprise, her first assignment was at a farm in Washington County where the housing conditions were shocking: There were no doorknobs, windows.

David: David expressed that he has been blessed with many opportunities to move forward. Although he grew up in a New York barrio, he worked hard to get what he wanted from life and managed to have been blessed to receive many opportunities during key moments in his life. Later he and his wife decided it was time to give back. He gave back at first through the scouts and employee mentorship programs. After giving up his Intel Chair, which he held, he was looking for other opportunities to give back. The Pastor Larry Snow referred him to the Bienestar Board of Directors where he was able to share opportunities that he was given with other what aren't as blessed. "It's time to give back".

Rich: Found these stories very motivating. He was fired up before; now even more so.