

# THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE POLICIES

## THE ART OF PERSUASION THROUGH STORYTELLING



NPH *STANDING TOGETHER* CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 6, 2017

FEATURING: **LAUREN BIGELOW**, PALO ALTO HOUSING; **CHRISTINA GOTUACO**, EAH HOUSING; **JULIE QUINN**, HOUSING TRUST SILICON VALLEY; **PUNAM SHALLENBERGER**, MERCY HOUSING



# WELCOME!

**Stories are an integral part of our movement's ability to drive support for affordable housing.**

In this workshop, NPH Strategic Communications Council members will work with advocates, resident services staff, and others who engage with lawmakers, community organizations, funders, and/or the general public to develop concrete storytelling skills to persuade progress for affordable housing. We'll discuss what makes a powerful story, how to inspire residents and impacted community members to tell their stories, and/or how to tell our own!

# AGENDA

- Panelists Perspective
  - **Lauren Bigelow**, BMR Administrator, Palo Alto Housing
  - **Christina Gotuaco**, Policy and Communications, EAH Housing
  - **Julie Quinn**, Director of Resource Development, Housing Trust Silicon Valley
  - **Punam Shallenberger**, Communications Manager, Mercy Housing
- Storytelling Exercise
- Reflections and Conversation
- Panel Q&A

# WHAT ARE WE WORKING TOWARDS AND WHY?

Two examples:

- Engaging partners & donors
- Influencing elected officials

# HOUSING TRUST SILICON VALLEY, INVESTOR BRIEFING

**Goal:** Engaging our partners and donors

**Strategy:** Speaker and video

**Results:**

- Greater connection with our work & the work of our partners
- Raised 60% more in day of donations, engaging 35% of attendees as donors





# BELOW MARKET RATE RENTAL PROGRAM, PALO ALTO HOUSING

- Resident Profile
  - 86 year old married man
  - Years of community service
    - 20 years in Army
    - 28 years at USPS
    - 30 years as a Reverend
  - 6 months at a homeless shelter



# THE SCIENCE OF STORYTELLING

- Purpose of Storytelling
  - People remember things they attach images to.
  - Remembering positive stories about affordable housing helps fight stigma.
- Effective Altruism
  - Hard data is important for people to know, but data without some imagery leaves people feeling uninspired.
- Contact Hypothesis
  - People often stereotype because it's easier for them. Introducing them to a real person in that situation will become their default thought, rather than their stereotype.

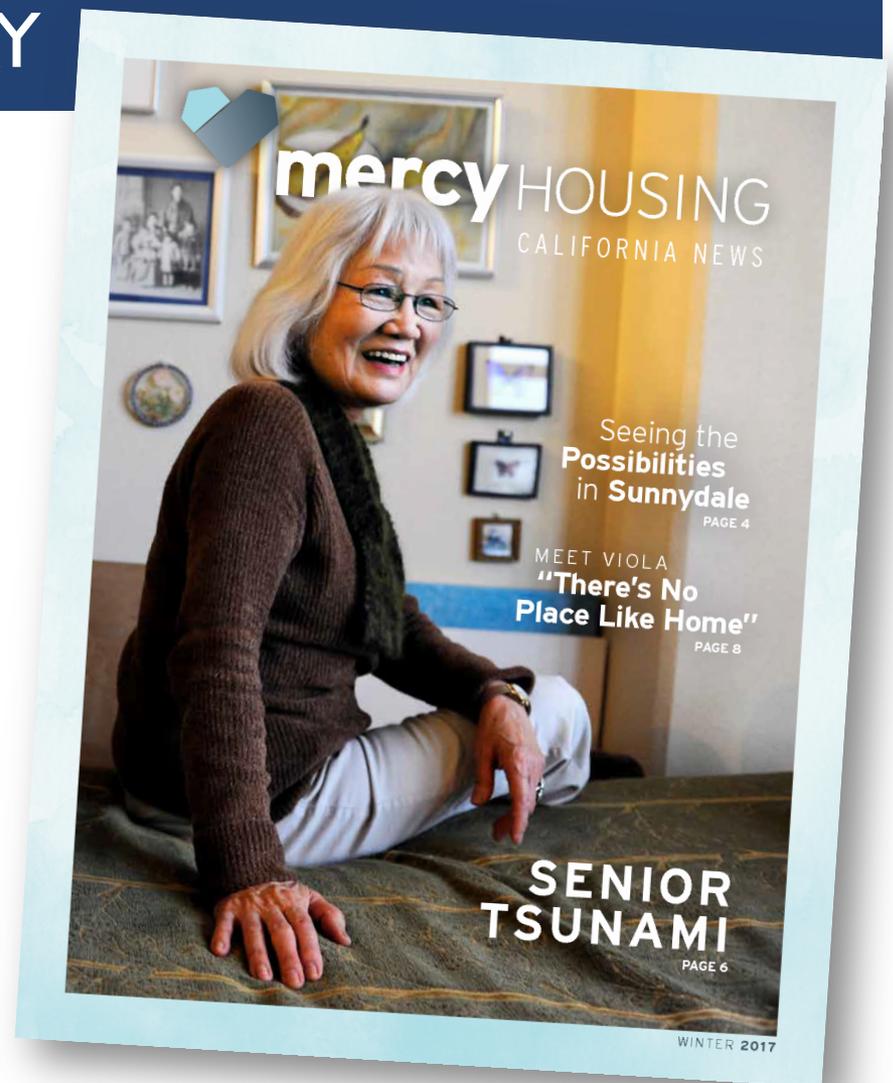
# WHY USE STORYTELLING?

- Connect to Content
- Data Doesn't Do It
- Enables Empathy



# COLLECTING THE STORY

- WHERE DO I START?
  - How to address varying degrees of proximity to the story
  - Don't wait to get started
    - Editorial calendar
    - Finding leads internally
    - Actively sourcing stories with residents/ clients/ community



# COLLECTING THE STORY

- YOUR CHECKLIST:
  - Nuts and bolts
    - Consent forms
    - Names, titles, contact information
    - Camera
  - Get organized: Consider your platforms and the building blocks of your communications



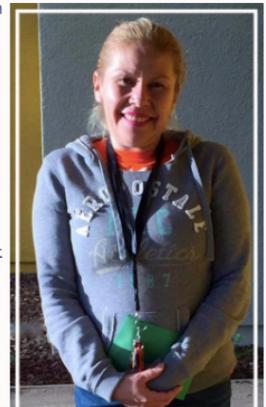
## New year, new beginnings series

*This is the final in a four part series of profiles of families who found stable, safe housing in San Jose's newest affordable housing complex, The Met. Thank you to you all, our valued partners, for sharing these stories and for helping change lives and create new opportunities.*

## A home she's proud of

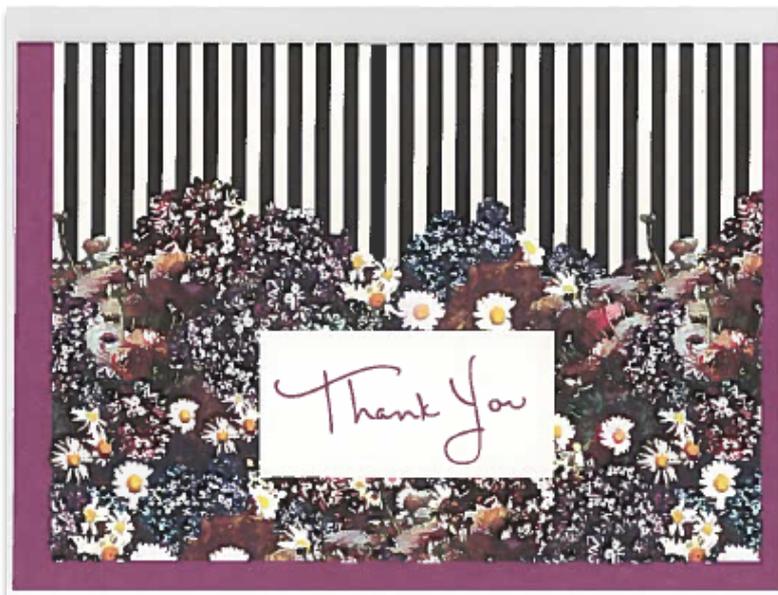
For five years, Gabriela Salazar rented a house in San Jose for herself and her three youngest children, daughters ages 13 and 11, and a 9-year-old son. When the owner told her he was going to sell the property and she would need to find a new place to live, she wasn't worried. She thought she would have time to make plans.

Even when the owner moved more quickly than she expected, Gabriela still believed it would be easy to find a new home. "I thought I might have to put our things in storage for a while and maybe spend a night or two in a hotel," she said, not realizing that rents had skyrocketed and a security deposit alone could be as much as \$3,000 - the kind of money she didn't have as a seasonal, part-time worker in a decorating business.



For many months, Gabriela and the three kids stayed

# COLLECTING THE STORY



- GETTING THE STORY
  - Building trust and addressing fears
  - What to do when you hit a wall/ getting the RIGHT story
  - Follow up
  - Think outside of your box



# TYPES OF STORIES



# ELEMENTS TO PULL

## POTENTIAL AUDIENCES

### Current & Future Partners

- Construction Partners
- Funding Partners
- Cities & Counties
- Other Owners
- Vendors & Service Providers
- Advocacy Groups

### General Public

- Neighbors & Voters
- Relatives of Residents
- Press & Media
- Donors & Foundations
- Future Residents/Employees

### Internal Audience

- Current Employees
- Leadership
- Board of Directors

## POTENTIAL TOOLS

Annual Event  
 Annual Newsletter  
 RFP Submissions  
 Social Media: Twitter/Facebook  
 Youtube  
 Website

E-blasts  
 Press Kits  
 Social Media: Facebook/Twitter  
 Youtube  
 Website

All Hands Calls  
 Annual Picnic & Holiday Party  
 Memos or E-blasts  
 Yammer/Intranet

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# TONE & PLOT

## Storylines

- Cause and Effect
- Input and Outcome
- From Problem to Solution
- Overcoming a Challenge

Consider the tone of your words:

***Empathetic but Empowering***

## Tips to Remember

- Structure: Context + Arc
- Elements of Commonality:
  - Family type/siblings
  - City/state of origin
  - Age, Employment, Hobbies
- Cross-Reference:
  - Organizations
  - Schools/Programs

# CHECKLIST: FINAL DRAFT

1. Have I removed or avoided including any information the resident disclosed but wanted kept private?
2. Did I have someone else read my draft to provide feedback from a different perspective?
3. Do I have the resident's approval of: 1) the draft versions, 2) the photo, 3) the photo caption and 4) the final narrative?
4. Did I spell out each acronym mentioned?
5. Did I double check the spelling of people and places?
6. Did I include the name of our organization?
7. Did I update the statistics in our standard footer language?

# GOING LIVE!

## EXTERNALLY

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## INTERNALLY

*Motivating people to continue doing  
the great work they're doing.*

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## LET'S GIVE THIS A TRY

- **Imagine:** You are about to meet with an elected official, a potential donor, or a community leader. You have about 5 minutes to make your case and inspire this person to take action in support of your ask. How can you shape out your own story, or share the story of someone you have worked with, to make your ask personal, compelling, and persuadable?

# ROLE PLAY: SPLIT INTO PAIRS

- Time for a little role play! Decide who you're meeting with and what your "ask" is for this person. **Be specific!**
- Split into partners
  - *Practice delivering your story to your partner*
  - *You'll also get a chance to hear their story*
- You have about 10 minutes to share, before we'll reconvene as a group – **Get busy persuading!**



QUESTIONS?

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# THANK YOU!

## STAY IN TOUCH!

EMAIL [ALINA@NONPROFITHOUSING.ORG](mailto:ALINA@NONPROFITHOUSING.ORG) FOR  
INFORMATION, SLIDES, MATERIALS, OR QUESTIONS FOR  
ANY OF TODAY'S PANELISTS!