



March 22, 2019

Dana Miller  
Senior Program Director  
M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust  
655 W Columbia Way, Ste. 700  
Vancouver, WA 98660

Dear Mr. Miller:

Enclosed is a comprehensive proposal requesting \$4,800 for the NAOMI nonprofit of Spokane Valley, WA. NAOMI is a transitional home for single mothers experiencing homelessness in Spokane County. This proposal is seeking funding for two projects: new flooring in the home and gardening supplies for the community garden within NAOMI.

NAOMI partners with local shelters within Spokane County and takes in women by referral only. During their stay at NAOMI of up to two years, single mothers receive guidance in life skills including parenting and recovery while maintaining sobriety. The program helps women by focusing on accountability and community-based learning.

Receiving funding for new flooring in the home will maintain a safe environment for the women and children residing at NAOMI. Funding for gardening will enable women to learn about nutrition holistically and teach them the skills to maintain a healthy diet and grow their own food. Both projects seek to maintain the safety, education, and growth of women and children during their stay at NAOMI, and enable the women to develop the knowledge and skills to continue these practices after completion of the program.

Thank you for considering this proposal. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Lucille Hanson, Community Engagement Coordinator, at [lucille@naomicommunity.org](mailto:lucille@naomicommunity.org).

Sincerely,

Angela Slabaugh



**Project Name:** NAOMI Gardening and Home Improvement Project

**Project Lead:** Lucille Hanson

**Duration of Project:** N/A

**Type of Support Requested:** Program and Staff Grant

**Amount of Support Requested:** \$4,800

**Executive Summary:**

The following document is a grant proposal for NAOMI, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, to apply for funding from the M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust. NAOMI's mission is to inspire transformation in the lives of single mothers who are experiencing homelessness by providing life development skills and education in a safe environment. Our goal is to get funding from M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust's Program and Staff Grant for NAOMI's gardening program and to hire contractors to implement new flooring. The Program and Staff Grant provides funding for staff and programs that are needed to either start a new program or expand on an existing one. This grant will help NAOMI's goal of implementing new flooring into one of their housing units to maintain a safe and sustainable living environment for the families. It will also contribute to expanding and maintaining NAOMI's current gardening program which educates the residents about nutrition while exposing them to gardening and builds a sense of community. These projects connect with M.J. Murdock's goal of creating sustainable programs in a creative way for organizations. Throughout the duration of the gardening project, residents will be supported by NAOMI's staff and community to ensure that the gardening program will be part of the organization's life skill classes. The total cost of both projects is \$4,800.

**NAOMI**

**11214 E Broadway Ave**

**Spokane Valley, WA**

**99206**



## **Organization Statement:**

### **Mission**

NAOMI is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization established in 2003 with a vision of helping mothers experiencing homelessness so they can be free from isolation and poverty. NAOMI's mission is to transform the lives of single mothers who are experiencing homelessness and their children through Christian love, hope, and faith. NAOMI implements community therapy, self-help classes, life coaching, rehabilitation therapy, and life skill classes to achieve this goal. These programs are built to foster a community of women who have had similar experiences so that the women can connect with and support each other during this transformative program and build a network for them to use after completion of the program.

### **History**

NAOMI was created by Karen Falke, a single mother who previously experienced homelessness and then opened her home to other single mothers who faced a similar situation. Our goal since then has focused on housing single mothers who are experiencing homelessness. We are beginning to expand our program to include two houses for transitional living, and are working towards buying new property to expand the program and provide an aftercare program for mothers who complete their stay at the main location.

The mothers who go through NAOMI's program are given coaching and support to live on their own, apart from transitional housing, once they have successfully established themselves. Some of these mothers have never parented sober, and therefore need support in doing so. One of our methods for establishing security and independency in our residents' lives is through goal-setting and accountability. At NAOMI, we have learned that giving mothers set goals rewarded with an in-facility currency is an effective way to do this.

One of the mothers who went through NAOMI's program, Erin, started out as a homeless addict with children, and through NAOMI has transformed into an independent, self-sufficient individual who now gives back to her community. When Erin came to NAOMI she was ready for a change from living a dependent life and raising her children in an unsafe environment. From NAOMI, she learned how to manage her money, parent sober, establish boundaries, and sustain herself and her children. Erin now lives independently and works as the Volunteer Coordinator for NAOMI.

NAOMI is primarily funded by the community. We hold an annual Red Carpet Gala in April as a fundraiser in which we receive \$50,000 on average each year from participants. We receive monthly and annual donations from individuals. We have also received funding through grants like Women Helping Women, Kiwanis, and the United Way.



## **Demographics**

NAOMI operates in Spokane Valley, WA. In 2018, NAOMI served 12 residents with an average goal completion of 82% (a three year trend).

We only admit women by recommendation. In 2018, NAOMI received 152 calls. Only 73 were completed intakes. We ensure that the women we take in are ready for change, that they are willing to work for a better life, and that they are not being forced into our program.

## **Community Recognition and Support**

Since establishment in 2003, NAOMI has received wide support from our community. While we were still under the name Hearth Homes, we received recognition from KHQ Morning Show LIVE in the form of a showing of Hearth Homes open house. KHQ showed a new house being built for Hearth Homes as well.

NAOMI has won the 2017 Gem of the Valley award and the Spokane Valley Chamber of Commerce Nonprofit of the Year award in 2017. NAOMI has also been recognized in *The Current* and *The Inlander* (local newspaper).

## **NAOMI Resources**

NAOMI is a referral source for crisis shelters in the community. We partner with the Spokane County Library District to host community events and are active members of the Homeless Coalition and Greater Valley Support Network. We utilize local resources such as SNAP and Transitions courses to educate our mothers.

## **Current Programs**

NAOMI currently has several programs that are used to develop strong relationships between the mothers and children in the program in order to create a support system for during and after their time at NAOMI.

The Communal Garden allows mothers to break out of their comfort zone by learning gardening skills while gaining knowledge about nutrition. It gives them experience with healthier food, while allowing them the opportunity to work with their children and fellow mothers.

The “Boutique” is a closet within the home that contains store quality donations from the community, such as women’s business wear for job interviews and workplaces as well as children’s clothes and toys. It is based on a reward system that allows the mothers to acquire more “boutique money”—the in-home currency, previously stated— by attending workshops and meeting personal goals and objectives. This program allows them to work towards a goal and use decision-making skills to learn responsibility.

NAOMI hosts personal growth workshops that focus on how to learn and grow from each experience, even the negative ones. These are imperative to empowering mothers to learn how to sustain themselves and maintain stability after finishing the program, and are especially important for our mothers because many have lived through abusive relationships and have had



their lives uprooted by mental health, financial instability, and other problems, but they don't know how to learn and grow from these experiences. These skills classes have been proven to be helpful. In fact, in a 2018 evaluation, 90% of our mothers indicated that they would very likely use the content learned in the classes.

### **Strengths of Programs**

Since NAOMI was founded by a mother who experienced homelessness, the programs we have focus on things we believe will empower the mothers to break the pattern of homelessness, create a strong supportive network, and allow for a stable and meaningful life in the program and afterwards.

NAOMI strongly believes in accountability systems such as reward programs (in-house Boutique currency) and puts strong emphasis on basic household duties like cooking, cleaning, and gardening, to teach responsibility and stability in their future lives.

The community and family focus of the programs, such as meals and gardening, allows for a tight-knit community and supportive network for our mothers to depend on. It builds a community of people who have experienced similar things and results in long lasting relationships between its participants, overall producing long-term stability, accountability, and growth for our members.



## **Need Statement:**

Our findings show domestic violence and rising housing costs are the main causes of mothers becoming homeless.

In Spokane County, data proves that women are increasingly at risk. A study done in 2017 shows that domestic violence in Spokane County increased exponentially by 59% since 2004. In 2016 alone there was a reported total of 5,102 cases of domestic violence in Spokane County.[1] Further, 1,000 to 1,600 women die yearly from domestic violence in the United States.[2]

More and more women are taking to the streets with their children out of desperation. Mothers are given the choice between staying in a familiar and dangerous situation or an unknown one away from their abuser. They know they might die in the situation they are in, so many take the chance and leave their homes.

Housing costs also factor into why more women are experiencing homelessness. In Washington State, housing costs have been rising while the average wage has been lowering. Research shows that in order to afford a one bedroom apartment one has to work two jobs.[6] This data is based on the assumption that the individual will be making more than minimum wage or that there are two contributors to the household income. The cost of housing becomes even higher when we consider that a healthy living environment for a mother and her children requires separate rooms.

Understandably, Spokane County makes up the majority of the homeless family population in Washington State as there are 293 homeless families in a one-day count in the entire county. Spokane County currently lacks the resources to adequately address this problem.

Studies show that women with children are more likely to get food and shelter than other homeless individuals, but they are also more likely to have mental health issues and instability once they leave the shelters, with the end result of being homeless yet again. [4] This means that homeless mothers are more likely to get help in a dire situation, but also are more likely to return to homelessness. This research also shows that the percentage of homeless women and homeless mothers with substance abuse continues to stay the same. To completely reintegrate into society and break the cycle of homelessness, many homeless mothers need rehabilitation and a supportive network.

Systems operating in Spokane and Spokane Valley are mostly meant to deal with homeless individuals, not single mothers with children.[3] The common services in place provide short-term shelter and food, but do not meet the full needs of single mothers with children. These single mothers are often currently or have recently been drug addicts and/or alcoholics and do not know how to properly support themselves, let alone know how to parent or lead healthy lifestyles. Although the initial need of food and shelter is there, these women also need strong support systems, therapy/counseling, and education in order to be able to live a healthy lifestyle to support themselves and their children. Mothers experiencing homelessness who have a supportive community are more likely to stay out of homelessness [5].



NAOMI responds to the needs of homeless women throughout Spokane County by providing holistic care through accountability, training, shelter, and programs that lead to women's empowerment and growth. We address a need no one else is able to provide in our area. Activities like gardening and cooking at NAOMI are common means of drawing women together while increasing their skills. Rewards systems, such as purchasing new clothing based on length of sobriety, maintain accountability throughout the home. With a strict vetting process and shelter that is transitional by working with other programs, NAOMI responsibly houses women that are ready to make changes in their lives and gives them the tools to do so. Maintaining a safe home environment, a reflection of our grant request for new flooring, allows NAOMI residents to feel at home during their transition from homelessness.



## **Project Description:**

### **Goals and Objectives**

The goal of our proposed program is to empower single mothers who are experiencing homelessness to make healthy food choices while connecting with their children and other mothers in a safe environment. The main objective will help the single mothers by teaching them the importance of nutrition while providing them tools needed to experience gardening and cooking skills. The mothers will be exposed to positive reinforcement through the gardening program. This will be more effective with a safe environment to live in which is made possible with new flooring. The main target population are the single mothers who are currently residing at NAOMI. The time frame of the gardening program will be continuous, where every mother residing at NAOMI will be able to take part in it because the gardening will become part of their routine and healing process. The time frame of the flooring project is the length it takes to repair and maintain the project.

### **Methods**

The methods to achieve our goals and objectives include taking practical steps toward empowering, teaching skills, and providing resources to the single mothers of NAOMI. Methods include gardening classes taught by NAOMI staff and volunteers, cooking classes, accountability for women in making dinner, cleaning their spaces, saving their money, and utilizing the rewards system set in place. Accountability among these methods ensures that NAOMI members are held responsible for their actions that will lead to their success and development. Methods stated are already in place and have been an ongoing process at NAOMI with a high success rate for the women who have stayed in the community.

While single mothers can stay up to two years at NAOMI, the timeline for these methods can vary as to how long the women stay. Depending on the state of the mothers and their learned skills and development, this can be anywhere from a couple months to the full two years of the program.

### **Staff and Administration**

The staff and administration of NAOMI is comprised of paid staff, financial management, and volunteers. Volunteers in 2018 totaled 82, accounting for 1,920 hours of volunteer work. Volunteers are tasked with child care, property maintenance, office help, and teaching classes, as well as other necessary tasks to keep NAOMI running smoothly.

Only Angela Slabaugh, Lucille Hanson, and Sara Cardwell are paid staff at NAOMI.





Angela Slabaugh is the Executive Director, overseeing all of NAOMI's workings. Angela has been working in social work for over 10 years and has been at NAOMI for 6. She holds a Masters degree in Social Work and is the only full-time paid staff member at NAOMI.

Lucille Hanson is the Community Engagement Coordinator. Lucille holds a Masters degree in Organizational Leadership and has been at NAOMI for 1 year. She works at NAOMI part-time, around 30 hours per week. Lucille is in charge of volunteers as well as other community partners. She makes sure that NAOMI connects with its community and establishes deep and long lasting bonds. She also researches opportunities for funding and partnerships.

Sara Cardwell is the Program Coordinator. Sara has over 10 years working in social work and has been working with NAOMI for 5 years. She also holds a Masters in Social Work. Sara works at NAOMI part-time, around 25 hours per week. She ensures that the programs NAOMI adopt and undergo benefit our participants in a positive and meaningful way.

NAOMI's Volunteer Board, consisting of 5 board members, oversees financial management and reporting. The Volunteer Board is composed of Connie Hemmer, Sigrid Branna, Erik Larsen, Lee Carney, and Michelle Mors. Each member of the board has experience with accounting and financial management. With varying time spent with NAOMI, each member brings a new perspective on how to best manage NAOMI's funds in a reasonable and responsible manner.

Connie Hemmer is a retired certified public accountant and has worked with NAOMI since June 2013. Sigrid Brannan, with a PhD in Leadership Studies, has been a member since September 2018. Erik Larsen, MSW, Board Secretary and supervisor of the Dept of Child and Family Services, has been member since August 2014. Lee Carney, Board Treasurer and owner of Spokane Corporate Housing, has been working with NAOMI since March 2015. Michelle Mors is a certified public accountant and member since January 2019.

## **Evaluation**

In order to measure NAOMI's success in its programs, we will research how the projects have improved the quality of life for our residents and what we could have done better.

In order to answer these questions it is necessary to measure changes concerning the gardening project. We will note changes in food and health choices in the mothers as well as their hobbies, mental health, communication with fellow mothers, and their communication with their children. Concerning the flooring project, we will note changes in the mothers' desire for their children's safety and the desire of maintaining a safe home environment.

Unfortunately, these are abstract concepts that are hard to measure. The easiest and most accurate way, which we have chosen, is surveying the women, employees, and volunteers to see if and how the improvements and projects affect the quality of NAOMI. To keep an accurate and detailed trend of data we suggest recording information before project implementation, at its midpoint, and after project completion.



For comparison to determine the growth and success of the projects, we will be referring to a collection of baseline data. For the gardening project we will be using responses from previous years (since it is a yearly project) and the “before project implementation” as our baselines. We will also compare employee and volunteer responses to the responses of the mothers and children.

Since new flooring is not a yearly need at NAOMI, we have no prior records of evaluations done on similar projects. Due to this, we will just use “before project implementation” as our baseline. This will entail an evaluation of the safety and quality state of the floor before the project is implemented and the mothers’ views of their safety.

The recording and evaluation of the data will be collected by our employees or volunteers. They will determine if the projects are implemented correctly and yield positive results. Our definition of success for the two projects are significant improvements in the mothers’ knowledge and desire for a better lifestyle, comparing the beginning observations to the final observations the mothers made for each project.

### **Sustainability**

NAOMI remains sustainable through consistent community funding, both annually and monthly, from community partners and donors. For example, we currently receive financial support from an annual fundraiser called the Masquerade Gala Red Carpet, in which previous years has raised \$50,000 and future years are expected to match or raise more.

The gardening project, as earlier stated, is a yearly project and it contributes to the self-sufficiency of the organization and its members. Since the garden is centered around teaching their members gardening skills we are in need of new seeds, mulch, and fertilizer. It is a fairly sustainable program with little funding needed for continuation.

The flooring project, on the other hand, is considered upkeep of a safe environment and is less sustainable due to the specialized skill needed. However, through increasing support from the community, the project can be funded by donations of labor and money.

Those responsible for the program’s sustainability are the staff of NAOMI; in particular, the Board of Trustees and those in charge of finances at NAOMI.



## Budget

Project	Type	Amount	Cost
Garden	Seeds/seedlings		
	Mulch		
	Fertilizer		
	Other		
<b>TOTAL garden</b>			<b>\$300</b>
Flooring	Contractor		
	Materials		
<b>TOTAL flooring</b>			<b>\$4,500</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$4,800</b>

## Conclusion

Single mothers who are experiencing homelessness have a chance at NAOMI to make their lifestyle better for their families and themselves because of our goal to provide the needed resources for mothers. The total amount of \$4,800 will be distributed between the flooring program, which will need \$4,500, and \$300 towards the gardening program. The gardening program will be improved by providing more options for mothers to learn about gardening and nutrition in a community-based setting. The new flooring will keep the home of NAOMI's residents safe, secure, and sustainable for many families to stay at NAOMI in the coming years.

Thank you for reading this grant proposal for NAOMI's proposed Gardening and Home Improvement Project. If you have any additional questions, please contact our Community Engagement Coordinator, Lucille Hanson, at [lucille@naomicommunity.org](mailto:lucille@naomicommunity.org).



## Appendix

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