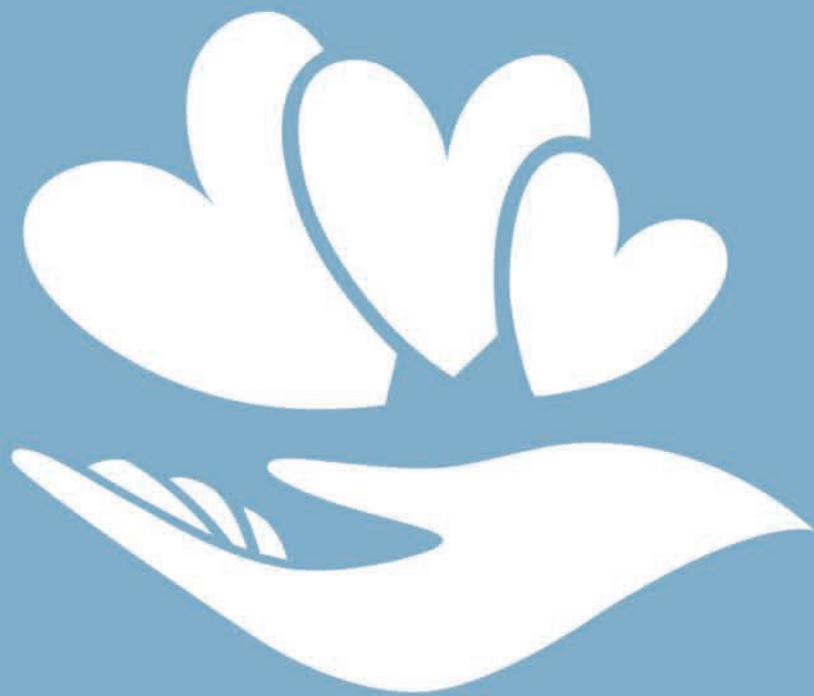


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The Road Home serves many different populations, including families with children.

The Road Home: 100 years and growing

Valerie Phillips
for Caritas

The Road Home has evolved during its hundred-year journey of helping people find a roof over their heads.

When it began in 1923 as the Salt Lake City branch of the Traveler’s Aid Society, the main intent was helping stranded travelers in the local bus and train stations.

“They were more focused on helping people get a bus pass to get home to their families,” said Michelle Flynn, The Road Home’s executive director today. “But the focus has shifted to helping people without homes.”

The Road Home’s mission has grown beyond being a safe haven for people with nowhere to stay. It includes case management to connect people with services to help them transition from homeless to housing, such as counseling, mental health services, job training and placement. It also operates permanent housing for people experiencing homelessness.

In 2022, the nonprofit served nearly 8,000 people, providing 585,301 nights of housing through its programs. And the numbers are growing; The Road Home served 16 percent more people in 2022 than it did in 2021.

It has more than 300 staffers as

well as 5,280 volunteers who donate over 14,000 hours annually.

Although many people stereotype “the homeless” as people who live on the streets most of their lives, Flynn said only about 15 percent of The Road Home’s clients would be considered chronically homeless. About 87 percent spend less than six months in emergency shelters.

“Most people we see are just like everybody else in the community,” she said. “They were living really close to the edge and had some kind of catastrophe that put them over the edge — a medical bill, an emergency or not being able to work and keep up with their rent. They didn’t have the support structure in the community to have a place to go.”

For instance, Amy and Dan (The Road Home doesn’t give out full names of clients) lived in their own home with their three kids until Dan had an accident that left him unable to work. Amy began working full-time while Dan took care of their children, but they couldn’t keep up with their rent payments and were evicted.

The family temporarily moved in with Amy’s mother, but the situation was unsustainable. Amy and Dan

reached out to the Midvale Family Resource Center. The family stayed in the shelter while qualifying for Rapid Re-Housing (which provides short-term rental assistance) and they were connected to the Department of Workforce Services. After moving into a place of their own, Dan was able to find remote work while he healed from his injury, giving the family a second chance.

Alicia Glead, a long-time staffer at The Road Home, said, “I hope I can help people see through the stereo-

types of people experiencing homelessness, and realize that the people we serve are just people who are in need of a little help.”

Today, The Road Home has three emergency shelter resource centers that offer beds, showers, meals, income and employment resources, housing and rental assistance and connections to treatment and counseling:

- The Pamela Atkinson Resource Center, a 300-bed facility for adult men at 3380 S. 1000 W., South Salt Lake.
- The Gail Miller Resource Center, a 200-bed facility for adult men and women at 242 W. Paramount Ave.
- The Midvale Family Resource Center, a 300-bed facility at 529 W.

9th Ave., Midvale.

There are also three permanent supportive housing centers for chronically homeless individuals and families, totaling almost 400 units.

Flynn has been with The Road Home for 27 years and has witnessed some of the nonprofit’s evolution.

In 1986, the Traveler’s Aid Society began providing emergency shelter. In November 1988, the Salt Lake Community Shelter and Resource Center opened at 210 Rio Grande St.

“That facility was started as a reaction to the death of someone living on the streets,” said Flynn. “(Salt Lake City) Mayor Palmer DePaulis and Harris Simmons of Zions Bank Corp. brought the community together to raise funds for the shelter, because they didn’t want people to be on the streets and die.”

The priority at the time was to ensure that everyone in the community had a place to stay, she said. “Especially in a community like ours, with cold winters and hotter and hotter summers, it’s a safety issue. That was the heartbeat of what we were doing, making sure if people had nowhere to go, we



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FROM page 3

would always be there for them.”

In October 2001, the nonprofit’s name officially changed to The Road Home, to reflect its goal of helping people end their homelessness and get back into a home.

“We changed our name because we recognized we needed to go to the next step from an emergency shelter — to help people get into housing,” said Flynn. “People were struggling to get through all the different systems that can help you. We focused on case management, to insure we are hearing what people are needing, and getting them connected to the resources they need.”

In 2019, the Salt Lake Community Shelter and Resource Center on Rio Grande closed and three new resource centers were opened. The Road Home immediately began operating the Men’s Resource Center, then in 2020 began operating the Gail Miller Resource Center while still operating the Midvale Family Resource Center, as well as operating long-term housing complexes and various scattered-site housing.

In 2005, the nonprofit began operating under the “Housing First” approach, a national best practice showing that the best way to address homelessness is to move people into homes as quickly as possible, with supports in place to help them remain housed.

“We’ve found that it’s next to impossible to give people the support they need until they are in their own home,” Flynn said. “Once they have their own place, they can take a deep breath, and they’re ready to address what they need to do to become

more stable, whether it’s getting on Medicaid or Social Security or veteran benefits.”

Recognizing the community need, in 2007 The Road Home partnered with Shelter the Homeless to purchase a former Holiday Inn hotel at 999 S. Main St., and renovated it to become Palmer Court, a 201-unit Permanent Supportive Housing complex for individuals who have experienced chronic homelessness. It was

named in honor of DePaulis. Two other permanent supportive housing units, Wendell Apartments (32 units) and The Magnolia (65 units), followed. Through case management, the clients are connected to resources such as job training, behavioral

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A case manager at The Road Home’s Pamela Atkinson Emergency Shelter and Resource Center picks out clothing and other items for one of the shelter guests.



A rack of donated kids’ shoes in the donation center at The Road Home’s Midvale Family Resource Center.

MISSION

The mission of The Road Home is to help people step out of homelessness and back into our community.

The Road Home is a private nonprofit social services agency that assists individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Salt Lake County and along the Wasatch Front.

CORE VALUES

- **Equal Treatment:** We are committed to providing equal treatment to all who come to us in need.
- **Compassion:** We will nurture our love for humanity within each of our relationships and interactions.
- **Respect:** Respect will be the cornerstone of our conduct.
- **Dignity:** We value the innate human dignity of every person.

VISION

We envision people moving seamlessly from the cold streets into warm housing; from despair and alienation toward hope and inclusion. We envision a community that recognizes the inherent dignity of those who live in poverty and homelessness. The Road Home will work with all of our partners to realize this vision.



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“Altabank brought
our complex vision
to fruition.”

FROM page 4

health treatment, child care and life skills development.

These housing units are for individuals with complex needs, a disability or other mental health conditions, or substance abuse complications that make it hard to get into a home, Flynn said. “We have on-site management there 24/7, so there’s always someone there if they need to help.”

Flynn said that after working for two years, a new facility specifically for about 150 seniors and medically vulnerable clients is slated to open in Sandy in December. The former Econo Lodge at 8955 S. Harrison St. is being renovated. Flynn said one of the partners, the Fourth Street Clinic, will help prioritize which people are most at risk, such as those with diabetes, cancer or kidney failure.

“As you can imagine, it’s been a long process,” said Flynn.

But most of The Road Home’s clients don’t need that level of support to step out of homelessness.

“They might need help with funding for a deposit. They might be working, but not able to afford rent. We can help them connect with a higher-paying job, more-affordable housing in the area or a shared housing arrangement — so they are well

able to live on their own.”

Expenses in fiscal year 2021 were \$25 million, with the majority (47 percent) going to housing programs. Shelter and supportive services take up 42.6 percent; and administration, 9.6 percent. Most of the funding comes from over 60 government contracts — federal, state, county and city.

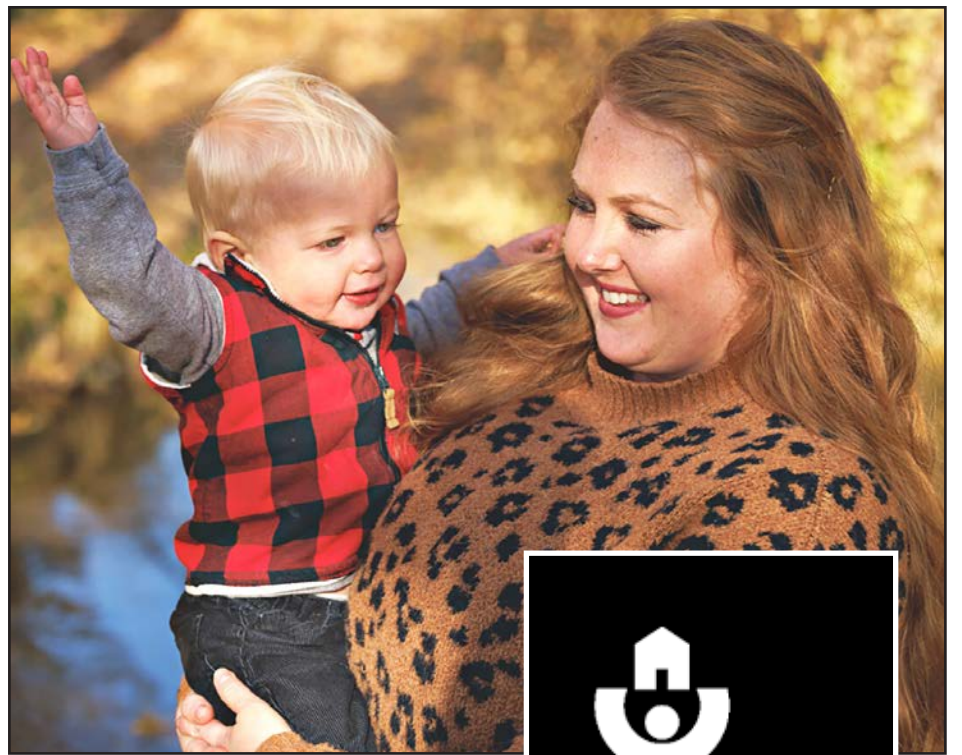
“We have to raise about \$5 million a year in private donations,” said Flynn. “It comes from businesses, corporations, and many individuals who give small donations.”

For 17 consecutive years, The Road Home has received a four-star rating by the Charity Navigator rating system, the highest rating given by the independent evaluator.

Volunteers are crucial. They serve shelter meals, sort and organize donated items, provide sack lunches and dinners and provide a playgroup for 2-to-5-year-olds. Also, donations of new or clean, gently used clothing, hygiene items, towels and other items are needed. Those wishing to donate or volunteer can go to the organization’s website at www.theroadhome.org.

Another way people can help: “Talk to your elected officials about affordable housing,” said Flynn. “A problem is that rents here are pushing out of affordability.”

More important than building another shelter, she said, is “keeping people in their homes in the first place, with affordable housing and resources to help families. Building more shelters might help homelessness today, but it won’t keep people from becoming homeless in the future.”



Single mothers with children are welcomed into The Road Home’s programs. (Above)
A bedroom at The Magnolia, one of The Road Home’s permanent housing facilities, that includes 65 units for individuals who are considered chronically homeless. (Below)



The Road Home’s Pamela Atkinson Emergency Shelter and Resource Center, which serves up to 300 individual men per night.



A kitchen at The Magnolia, one of The Road Home’s permanent housing facilities, that includes 65 units for individuals who are considered chronically homeless.



The courtyard and playground at Palmer Court, one of The Road Home’s permanent housing facilities, that includes 201 units for individuals and families who are considered chronically homeless.



The Road Home serves many different populations, including individual women and men.



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Youth Futures UTAH

Safety for kids with troubles

Valerie Phillips
for Caritas

Youth Futures Utah offers a safe haven to teens with nowhere to go, with centers in Ogden, Cedar City and St. George.

There are varying reasons why a teen would be living on the street — running away, being kicked out of the home, family conflict, abuse, drugs, abandonment, mental health issues and other difficulties. Some have families who are also homeless or unable to provide necessities.

“Some kids come to stay overnight and take a shower, because the family has had the water turned off in their home,” said Sheri Bambrough, Youth Futures’ community outreach and development coordinator for Northern Utah.

Regardless of their reasons, many teens don’t realize the risks of living on the streets.

“I say they are not ‘troubled kids,’ but ‘kids with troubles,’” Bambrough said. “One in four of our kids have been trafficked. That’s why it’s so important to get them off the streets. The longer they are on the streets, the greater the chances that they are going to be taken advantage of.”

Besides providing a hot meal and a safe place to sleep, Youth Futures Utah staffers help teens to build a better future, whether it’s

reuniting with family, getting counseling or medication, heading back to school or learning life skills.

“It’s letting them know there are adults out there they can trust,” said Bambrough. “A lot of them have been through more trauma than most of us can imagine.”

One client, “Han,” shared her experience on the nonprofit’s website. “I was living in a very abusive situation and I didn’t have a safe

place to go,” she said. “They gave me resources and clothes and bus tokens to go to school and work. And they were just all around there to uplift and support me, which is something I’d never had before in my life.”

Last year the programs served 850 teens in total, said Bambrough. Of those, 170 were residents who stayed an average of 36 days. The other teens were drop-ins, where they

could access meals, clothing, hygiene items, laundry facilities, computer stations (with controlled access), school supplies and case management from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. every day of the week. The shelters’ front and back doors have controlled entry by

CONTINUES on page 10



Kristen Mitchell (left) and **Scott Catuccio**, founders of Youth Futures Utah. Photo courtesy Youth Futures Utah.





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staff members to ensure safety.

“If we can save these youth and keep them off the streets now, there will be less adult homelessness,” said Bambrough. “Trafficking and suicide are greater with homelessness. You are solving so many problems if we can get them on the path to becoming contributing members of society. They are the future.”

Founders Kristen Mitchell and husband Scott Catuccio worked many years to bring Youth Futures to reality. In 2011, Mitchell started a support hotline for LGBTQ+ adolescents who were struggling with their families.

“They discovered that a lot of these kids weren’t calling from home, but from the streets,” Bambrough said. “They thought something should be done about it.”

But in Utah, there was a barrier to opening a youth shelter — it was against the law to “harbor minors.”

Through efforts with Utah legislators, HB132 was passed in 2014, to rewrite the law and draft licensing procedures for residential support programs for temporary homeless youth shelters in Utah.

Youth Futures Utah received Utah’s first license for a homeless youth shelter under the new law. It opened in downtown Ogden in 2015 with 14 temporary overnight shelter beds, followed by centers in St. George in 2018 and Cedar City in 2022.

Today, Mitchell is the vice president and executive director, while Catuccio is the board president and facilities director.

The team also provides outreach and crisis services on the streets. All services are free of charge.

When a teen comes to the shelter, a case manager meets with them for an assessment, including health and suicide assessments and searches through the teen’s belongings to ensure safety. They are assigned a bed and locker. In the kitchen area, a nutritionist plans three balanced meals served daily.

The case manager assesses each client’s situation.

“When kids show up, we always notify the parents,” said Bambrough. “We want them to know they’re here and are safe. As a parent I couldn’t



Cheri Bambrough, Youth Futures’ outreach coordinator, pauses in the Ogden shelter’s resource room, filled with donations of clothing, toiletries, blankets, shoes and other necessities. Photo by Valerie Phillips.

imagine not knowing where my kid is.”

The goal is always to reunite them with family, if it’s safe and possible, she said.

“If not, we look at the next steps, which could be living with a relative or going to transitional housing or qualify to attend Job Corps, which has been a good option for several of our kids,” said Bambrough.

The case managers also help teens access services.

“There are many programs out there, but so many barriers to access them — transportation, getting their paperwork together, they don’t have their birth certificate, or they don’t have proof of residence because they are homeless,” Bambrough said. “Case managers work through those barriers with them and advocate for them.”

Life skill classes are offered, where teens learn things like how to do laundry, pay bills or cook a meal.

“Many of them have never used a stove, so they are learning how,” Bambrough said. “Some of their circumstances are inconceivable.”

Bus tokens, passes and van transport can help youth get to school, jobs, doctor appointments and so on.

Since staffers follow up after teens move out, they have documented success stories from former clients who keep in touch, write

letters and even post videos on the shelter’s website.

“One young woman is in the Air Force now and going through medical training,” Bambrough said. “Another is a part-owner in an IT company. We have had kids who started out working at the drive-up window of McDonald’s and now they’ve become the manager. It’s amazing what a little stability, proper medication, good home-cooked meals and a place to sleep can do.”

Some clients have returned to become staffers for Youth Futures.

Not all cases work out as easily. “We’ve had some kids leave and come back, because their family has lost their home again,” Bambrough said.

“There are a few who leave, and we don’t know if they’ve moved out of state,” she said. “We can’t keep anyone from leaving, but we always try to find them another safe place to be.”

Over 30 percent of the teen clients are LGBTQ+, she said.

“A lot of the reasons they end up on the streets is family discord,” she said. “They are kicked out or made to feel uncomfortable at home, so they run away. We just had a young trans man here whose dad didn’t understand it and refused to call him his boy.”

Through family therapy counseling, “Dad is now the proud father of

a son,” Bambrough said. “Sometimes education is just all we need. This dad was willing to go to therapy, but some aren’t as accepting.”

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FROM page 10

The annual operating budget of Youth Futures is just over \$3 million, said Bambrough. Most of the money goes to programs for the kids and therapy.

“Imagine your costs if you have two teenagers living at home,” she said. “Now imagine having 800 of them to feed and shelter and get them the therapy they need.”

Funds come from state and federal grants, foundation grants and individual donations. A few community fundraisers include a Battle of the Badges chili cook-off in St.

George, a Holiday Hullabaloo at Kamikazes in Ogden and a Jeep Parade of Northern Utah that takes place this year on Dec. 17 at 7 p.m., from 2nd Street to 36th Street on Washington Blvd. and Wall Ave. in Ogden, where over 100 jeep drivers will light up the night.

The SleepOut is an annual fundraiser held in the backyard of the Youth Futures centers in November. People sign up to sleep outdoors overnight and get donation pledges from their friends and family. The night includes a candlelight vigil and raffle and gives an idea of what it’s like to sleep unsheltered in the cold, “spending a night in their shoes,” as Bambrough said. “Only about 40 percent of the people make it through the whole night, even with all the amenities that you don’t have if you’re homeless.”

Those wishing to volunteer or donate can visit <https://www.youthfuturesutah.org/>.



Kristen Mitchell and Scott Catuccio, founders of Youth Futures Utah. Photo courtesy Youth Futures Utah.



The SleepOut gives people a chance to see what it’s like to spend a night unsheltered, while raising funds for Youth Futures Utah. Photo provided by Youth Futures Utah.



The Christmas Jeep Parade is an Ogden fundraiser that started during the COVID pandemic, and has continued ever since. Photo provided by Youth Futures Utah.

LOCATIONS



Ogden Shelter

Phone: 801-528-1214

Text: 385-405-9460

2760 Adams Ave., Ogden, UT 84403



St. George Shelter

Phone: 801-528-1214

Text: 435-619-6985

340 E. Tabernacle St., St. George, UT 84770



Cedar City Shelter

Phone: 801-528-1214

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Violet Cheesman Unwin,
grandmother of Tiffany Sowby and
inspiration for the Rising Violet name



Rising Violet helps women find financial independence

Valerie Phillips
for Caritas

Tiffany Sowby once focused on sharing stories of so-called “ordinary” women. Nowadays, she’s focused on changing the future of some of those stories.

She founded the nonprofit Rising Violet as a way to help women who previously relied on a partner for their support. Usually stay-at-home moms, these women were suddenly left on their own, usually due to divorce or widowhood.

Rising Violet’s current mission is to give \$1,000 grants to recipients chosen from an application process.

While \$1,000 isn’t large enough to solve every problem, it can help these women jump-start their new lives, said Sowby.

“It doesn’t mean that they can buy a house or won’t have to work, but it can be a springboard toward financial independence,” she said. “More than the money, we want them to feel seen

and loved and rooted for — that someone believes they can do it.”

For instance, Shannon (first name only) wrote that after marriage, her husband convinced her to quit her career job and depend on him financially “... only to be left alone with three beautiful children to raise on my own— and back in my parents’ basement.”

She said the grant money will help catapult her out of debt, “so I can get out on my own. I am working hard to show my children that I am strong and can do hard things.”

An anonymous recipient wrote that after she was a stay-at-home mother for 14 years, her husband left her. Then an autoimmune disease kept her unable to work for two years. After starting back to work part-time, her \$1,000 grant paid for car repairs and medical treatment.

“This gift will be the catalyst to our financial security, financial independence ... and a stable financial future,” she wrote.

Another anonymous recipient

wrote that she was using the money to pay for a job certification program, to buy essentials that she and her children had gone without and to treat her kids to a fun day out, “so they can feel like kids again and don’t have to hear Mommy say, ‘No we don’t have the money right now.’”

Where there’s a nonprofit, there’s usually a founder with a passion. Sowby, who grew up near London and ended up in Northern Utah, is no exception.

“I am very passionate about the visibility of women in different places, especially women in the religious context,” she said. “I have a soft spot for women with a lack of privilege.”

Initially, she founded Rising Violet in 2015, as a way to collect and share women’s stories, primarily mothers.

“So often you hear the term, ‘I’m just a mom,’” Sowby said. “I wanted to highlight that there’s no such thing as ‘just.’ Everybody has a story to tell.”

Sowby believes that sharing life stories is a powerful way to “bring us understanding, strength and comfort, simply by connecting us to one another.”

She collected a number of women’s stories, both written and

on video, on the <https://risingviolet.org> website. Some talk of significant events, their feelings about motherhood and relationships and their experiences with trauma, loss, illness and grief.

She named the group Rising Violet, after her adored grandmother, Violet Cheesman Unwin.

The term “shrinking violet,” typically refers to a shy, retiring personality. But Granny Violet was the opposite. So “Rising Violet” is appropriate.

“My granny Violet, she was always volunteering and she had compassion and a genuine interest and concern for people,” Sowby said. “Whether she was serving with Meals on Wheels, shopping for seniors, volunteering in the cancer research shop, or baking a chocolate layered-cake topped with walnuts to take somewhere, Violet cared for others.”

Although Sowby initially registered her story-sharing group in 2015 as a nonprofit, “the nonprofit part wasn’t really clicking at the time.”

But in keeping with the “story-

For questions: info@risingviolet.org
To donate: donations@risingviolet.org
For interviews: interviews@risingviolet.org
For book donations: books@risingviolet.org

CONTINUES next page

FROM previous page

telling” initiative, the group donated books to places that might not have access to good literature, such as homeless shelters and women’s shelters.

Then in 2021, Sowby was working on a master’s degree in social justice and human rights through Arizona State University. In her grant-writing class, each student had to pick an organization and write a grant for it. She chose Rising Violet, “and it came to me what we should do.”

As the group had collected stories, “we began to feel a greater sense of purpose, and a greater responsibility to those women who are brave enough to share their story,” Sowby said.

She had a sense of her own privilege, in that she chose to earn a master’s degree, with her husband’s full support, “just because I desired it.” This was in contrast to a friend who married at a young age, had children and then her husband left her.

“She had no education or way to support herself and her children. So she was working full time while going to school,” Sowby said.

“I feel my own privilege, so I thought, I want to help people,” Sowby said. “That space between our own privilege and someone else’s lack of privilege — that’s where we can help.”

She wanted to focus on women who previously relied on a partner for their support, usually to stay home and care for the children. Perhaps in their early days of marriage, the couple could only afford to send one spouse to college. So the husband earned a

degree, while the wife supported him through low-end jobs and never made it to college.

“And then she’s left without a way to provide for herself and her children,” she said.

Having re-launched the group in 2023, Sowby and Rising Violet’s board of directors have given out six grants so far — two each for the months of August, September and October.

“We feel like we are still in a nascent stage,” Sowby said. “So far we are depending on corporate and private donations.”

Each recipient goes through an application process and an online interview with the board members, who are from throughout the country.

Some criteria:

- The recipients can be from anywhere in the United States.

- They must apply for the grant, instead of being nominated by someone else.

- At one time, they had to have been financially dependent on a partner and are seeking financial independence.

- A background check confirms no prior history of identity theft, fraud, embezzlement or forgery.

- They submit a one-page essay sharing their story and explaining how they will spend the \$1,000 gift.

- During the interview, questions include, “How has a woman influenced your decisions in life?” and “What are your goals to become financially independent?”

After the interview, the board votes on the recipients.

The recipients tend to be mothers, “But she doesn’t have to be a mother to receive a grant,” said Sowby

So far, the group applicants have come through social media and word of mouth. Applications are available on the organization’s website.

Rising Violet’s mission has sparked some interest from therapists and life coaches who may, in the future, offer a support group or life coaching for a few months. Another board member is compiling lists of existing resources and services that women can tap into, in addition to Rising Violet.

The group also wants to attract more donors.

“We would like more people to be aware of it,” said Sowby. “They may have someone in their life who has experienced divorce or a death, and the need to become financially independent.

“There but for the grace of God, it could be any one of us.”

Those interested in reading the stories of grant recipients and “ordinary” women, sharing their own story, applying for a grant or donating to Rising Violet, can go to <https://risingviolet.org>.

I was raised to believe that a woman’s highest calling was in the home. It was the best, most important thing a woman could do. I held tightly to that belief and stayed home with my son for the first 2 years, but then my husband left. He had a series of affairs, some pre-dating our marriage, and that left me alone, traumatized, and without income. I had full custody of my son, and was now tasked with being his parent and provider. While I was married, I didn’t seek any education because my intent was to be a stay-at-home mom and raise the babies. God placed a job in my lap and I was able to get my state insurance license and work in that field. Earlier this year, after five years of living with family, we finally managed to move out on our own! It has been a very important step for us, but it has also brought extra expenses. This financial gift will allow me to pay off some of the debt we have accrued, allowing us to continue to move forward and heal.

Emma, Rising Violet grant recipient



Tiffany Sowby, founder of Rising Violet

Rising Violet aids and honors women regardless of their age, ethnicity, nationality, race, marital status, political beliefs, religion, or sexual orientation. Although Rising Violet and its board members do not necessarily endorse the opinions and sentiments expressed by the women we interview, we honor each woman’s right to tell and live her own story. Some women may have controversial or challenging viewpoints. We ask our audience to respect each woman and her individuality. Thank you.



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