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Connecting Community

NONPROFIT NEWS



The Columbian

Connecting Community

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Contact CommunityPartnerships@columbian.com
for additional information.



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Nonprofit News

The goal of our 'Connecting Community' publications is to highlight the needs of our organizations, and the work being done as they strive to fulfill their missions.

Nonprofit organizations are vital to our community. They provide a voice to the people they serve. Their efforts strengthen our community and help meet the needs and enhance the lives of our neighbors. They also can positively impact the local economy.

The Columbian's Community Partnership division is meant to be a resource to help these nonprofits spread the news and share valuable information about the work they do to serve those who live and work in Clark County.

Seven organizations are featured this month with service to children, families, domestic violence survivors, supporting healthy bodies and minds and those struggling with addiction, and a story about those who generously give to support these resources and beyond.

If you have any questions about these or other nonprofits, please visit our website where you can see past issues with more stories.

<https://www.columbian.com/community-partnership/>

If you have any questions about our Community Partnerships program, please contact communitypartnerships@columbian.com

LEAD THE WAY!

Become a monthly donor to Northwest Association for Blind Athletes (NWABA) with your donation of \$10, \$25, or \$50 a month!

Help "lead the way" for individuals of all ages who are blind or visually impaired.

\$10 – provides transportation for two athletes to summer programs events
\$25 – provides two goal balls our athletes will use during summer programs
\$50 – provides programs and services to five athletes for one season



Sign up at: www.nwaba.org/leadtheway
It's that simple to make a huge impact! Thank you!



camas
ART & WINE
WALK

Saturday,
September 7,
12-5 pm.

Savor Washington wines from 17 wineries, explore local eateries, shops, and galleries, immerse in local art, & enjoy live music as you stroll through Downtown Camas!

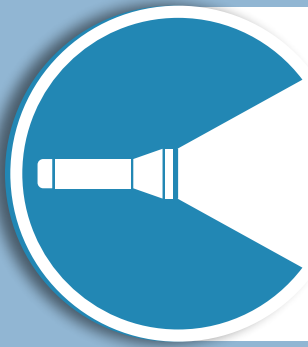
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Runyan's Jewelers, Juxtaposition, Realty by Rutherford,
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This 21+ Event is a Fundraiser
for Camas Students &
Families Foundation





NONPROFIT *Spotlight*



For information contact communitypartnerships@columbian.com



COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION
SOUTHWEST
WASHINGTON

40 years of
local giving

Shine
On!

Paul Christensen is a champion for local arts and culture, yet few know that he helped set the course for the Community Foundation as an early board member.

Since then, he has contributed more than \$250,000 to our Community Giving Fund, expanding grantmaking to hundreds of nonprofits that provide critical services in southwest Washington.

“Art can show us the way we would like life to be. And it can also show us the things about life that we need to rethink.”

PAUL
CHRISTENSEN



The Community Foundation helps transform purpose into impact.

See the difference we make together at cfsw.org/40stories.

REALVEST FOUNDER MERGES LIFE'S WORK INTO ONGOING IMPACT

Paul Christensen sees memories everywhere he walks in Vancouver. There were schoolyard shenanigans at Hough Elementary, piano lessons on 18th Street and swim days at Memory Pool. Most of his life has unfolded between Columbia and 39th Streets, including the years he spent growing his family and business, Realvest Corporation.

Paul credits much of his success to his community, so it's no surprise that he has become one of Vancouver's biggest advocates. His civic involvement began in 1986 when a friend asked him to help bring a Goodwill Rehabilitation Training Center to Clark County. He said yes and watched the center quickly become a reality. The experience opened his mind to the possibilities and promise of philanthropy.

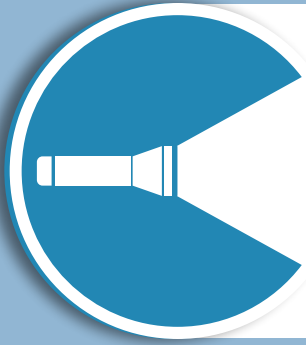
His next big project moved closer to home when he set his sights on revitalizing the neighborhood where he grew up. With a guiding belief that schools are the heart of any community, Paul established the Hough Foundation at his childhood elementary school. The organization provides Hough students and families with greater opportunities through enrichment programs, social services and meaningful classroom assistance.

Paul's vision was bigger than a neighborhood though. He wanted to make Realvest a major force for local good, but he wasn't sure how. In 1993, he reached out to the Community Foundation for Southwest Washington. With their guidance and support, Paul created the Realvest Community Fund, which allowed his staff to direct grants to local nonprofits supporting education, underserved communities, the arts and civics causes.

Today, Realvest's impact is just as present as the memories Paul has made in Vancouver. The company has contributed more than \$5 million to area nonprofits. Their gifts have helped launch the Boys & Girls Clubs of Southwest Washington, grow the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra into a regional asset, open doors to affordable housing and so much more.

Recently, Paul took his visionary giving a step further. Working with the Community Foundation, he established a supporting organization that allows his business to continue operating and supporting its dedicated team of 60 employees while funneling even more profits toward local causes.

The Realvest Foundation recently distributed its first round of grants, which provided \$296,000 to local causes. This arrangement is the masterpiece Paul has been carefully composing his entire life, and there is no greater joy for him than to see it play out in his hometown.



NONPROFIT *Spotlight*



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**WE DON'T JUST
TALK ABOUT
CHANGE—
WE MAKE IT
HAPPEN.**



eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca
Clark County

**BUT WE CAN'T DO IT
WITHOUT YOU.**



**OUR SAFECHOICE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
PROGRAM NEEDS VOLUNTEERS.**

YWCACLARKCOUNTY.ORG/VOLUNTEER

YWCA VOLUNTEER CAMPAIGN WHAT'S YOUR STORY EDITION

This year, YWCA Clark County celebrates a remarkable milestone—the 50th anniversary of the SafeChoice Domestic Violence Program. Originating from a grassroots initiative by four visionary women, SafeChoice was among the nation's first to offer refuge and aid to survivors of domestic violence. Today, it remains the only gender-inclusive emergency shelter in Clark County, serving nearly 1,000 individuals and children every year.

Over the years, SafeChoice has evolved from a single apartment to an expansive support system, providing shelter, advocacy, and empowerment to thousands. Last year, we completed a significant renovation of our facilities, expanding our capacity to offer immediate and effective support. These upgrades include private, safe spaces to respond to the immediate needs of survivors, better security for the safety of both survivors and staff, and upgraded living spaces that offer comfort for survivors and their families, who often arrive with nothing but the clothes on their backs.

As we celebrate this significant milestone, we invite you to join in this legacy of compassion, care, and empowerment. At YWCA Clark County, we don't just talk about change—we make it happen. But we can't do it alone. We need your help. Volunteering with us means demonstrating the power of compassion and addressing the issues in our community. It ensures that no neighbor, friend, or community member has to walk their toughest path alone.

YWCA Clark County offers a variety of volunteer opportunities, from direct support at our shelter to engaging in programs that educate and prevent violence. We have immediate needs for hotline volunteers, support group facilitators, and facilities volunteers. Each role is designed with flexibility in mind, allowing you to contribute in a way that fits your schedule.

Empowerment starts with you.

Volunteer with YWCA Clark County and be part of something transformative. Together, we can continue to provide safety, support, and empowerment for survivors of domestic violence. Your commitment can change lives and extend a legacy that began 50 years ago, creating a safer, more equitable community for all.

For more information on how you can get involved and make a real impact, visit ywcaclarkcounty.org/volunteer.

How to read a charity report



Reading and understanding reports on charities are two of the fundamental tenets of smart giving. Various organizations, including Give.org, the website of the Better Business Bureau's Wise Giving Alliance, vet charities based on an array of criteria. The information gleaned during this vetting process is ultimately used to create reports on charitable organizations, which donors can then access to make sure they make donate to organizations with reputations for meeting their missions.

Donors without much experience reading charity reports may not know how to use the extensive amount of information within the reports to make sound donation decisions. Give.org provides the following basic breakdown of what donors can expect to see in every report the group produces.

GOVERNANCE AND OVERSIGHT

When examining a charity based on its governance and oversight, Give.org hopes to determine that the organization's volunteer board is active, independent and free of self-dealing. This can help donors know that the people responsible for overseeing the charity are doing so with the mission and not their own interests foremost on their minds. This section of a Give.org report will include information such as the size of the board, whether or not the organization meets the minimum standard of three evenly spaced board meetings per year (and if the meetings include face-to-face participation) and details regarding board member compensation. This section will also illustrate if there are any existing conflicts of interest regarding board members.

EFFECTIVENESS

This section will indicate how effective a charity is at meeting its mission. Give.org standards require charities to set defined, measurable goals and objectives and to establish a process of evaluation to determine the success and impact of programs operated by the organization.

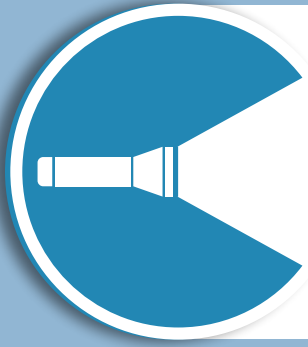
FINANCES

This is a highly detailed section of a Give.org report that will include information about program expenses; fundraising expenses; an audit of existing financial statements; a detailed breakdown of expenses, such as salaries and travel; and whether or not the charity is reporting these expenses accurately. This section also aims to inform donors if the organization has a board-approved budget for its current fiscal year.

SOLICITATIONS AND INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

This section will inform donors if a charity's representations to the public are accurate, complete and respectful. Recognizing that fundraising appeals are sometimes the sole impetus for giving, Give.org uses this section to let prospective donors know if an organization is representing itself accurately when appealing to donors.

Reports from charity-vetting organizations can help donors make sound, smart donation decisions. More information about reports is available at www.Give.org.



NONPROFIT *Spotlight*



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Start Your Opioid Recovery Journey Today!



NORTHSTAR TREATMENT CENTER: A BEACON OF HOPE AND HEALING

In fall 2023, Columbia River Mental Health Services opened its NorthStar Treatment Center at a new location. The opening marked a significant milestone in the treatment of opioid use disorder in Clark County by expanding access to same-day medication treatment. The center has become an essential resource in the community, given the ongoing fentanyl crisis.

NorthStar is dedicated to providing top-tier care tailored to its patients' individual needs. Its comprehensive treatment approach involves a team of therapists, case managers, peer support specialists, physicians, psychiatrists, nurses and more. This multidisciplinary team ensures that every aspect of a patient's health is addressed and creates a supportive environment where people can achieve their recovery goals.

With an expanded facility, NorthStar has increased its treatment capacity, enabling the clinic to support more Clark County residents. Dr. Kevin Fischer, Columbia River Mental Health Services' chief medical officer, says of the new location's impact: "It exceeds all of our expectations and wildest dreams. It was the right solution at the right time, to meet the community's need for the fentanyl epidemic."

The new facility has not only maintained its number of new patients, but has also seen an increase in people more inclined to stay in treatment. Dr. Fischer emphasizes, "When someone shows up in a moment of need, can we say yes? Are we the type of place where people want to stay during those challenging personal moments of early recovery? This is how NorthStar measures its success."

Clark County residents are voting with their feet. Over the past five years, NorthStar's daily census has nearly tripled – from 300 to now 800 patients served. NorthStar continues to attract 50 to 60 new patients each month, a testament to its vital role in the community.

NorthStar provides immediate walk-in access to resources without the need for scheduled appointments. The center can provide same-day access to opioid treatment along with necessary medical interventions such as wound care, which is crucial for patients whose living conditions might be unstable. Accessibility to these services has contributed significantly to the wellbeing of our community and has resulted in lower overdose rates compared with other counties across Washington.

NorthStar's success story is a beacon of hope. With the right resources and a dedicated team, recovery is possible. NorthStar's comprehensive and compassionate care continues to make an impact, making recovery possible for people with opioid use disorder.



NorthStar Clinic

A program of Columbia River
Mental Health Services

Scan the QR code to
discover our comprehensive
opioid recovery services.



Charitable contributions of money or goods may entitle individuals (and businesses) to certain tax breaks. However, it's important to note that there are rules concerning charity and tax deductions. According to NerdWallet, for the 2021 tax year, each person was eligible to deduct up to \$300 without having to itemize, which meant couples filing jointly could deduct up to \$600 in charitable donations, which is referred to as an "above the line" deduction. Generally speaking, the United States Internal Revenue Service enables people to deduct up to 60 percent of their adjusted gross incomes via charitable donations, but there may be limitations based on the type of contribution and the organization. For example, contributions to certain private foundations, fraternal societies and veterans organizations come with lower limits. Tax-deductible donations are those made to qualifying organizations in the year the tax return is filed, says the IRS. Qualifying organizations may include religious organizations and churches, 501(c)(3) charitable organizations, nonprofit volunteer organizations, civil defense organizations, fraternal societies, and educational institutions, among others. Donations that are not tax-deductible include cash gifts to individuals and political contributions. Rules may be complex, so it's always best to discuss charitable donations with a certified public accountant for clarification.



**DID YOU
KNOW?**

Charitable groups have been in operation for as long as there have been people willing to offer assistance to others. The oldest charities in Britain have been around for roughly 900 years. The Hospital of St. Cross in Winchester is one of the oldest. It was started in 1136 by Bishop Henry de Blois. The Puritans of early Massachusetts helped to lay the foundation for philanthropic efforts in the colonies. Their first real philanthropic organization was Harvard College. Established in 1636, it was designed to train young men for the clergy. The Scots Charitable Society of Boston and the Charitable Irish Society of Boston were some early benevolent societies that began operations in the 17th and 18th centuries. George Peabody, a wealthy businessman, was known as the father of modern philanthropy. He helped guide other American millionaires who turned palaces into buildings opened to the public and helped many through permanent foundations. Peabody's last great effort was the Peabody Education Fund.

Participate in a Beach Cleanup

Beaches are synonymous with summer, but they've come under increasing threats that can spoil them for both humans and the marine life that live in lakes and oceans.



Marine debris and litter are polluting our coastlines and threatening fragile ecosystems. Fortunately, beach cleanup initiatives offer an opportunity for individuals and communities to come together in the spirit of conservation and make a tangible difference in preserving coastal environments.

Coastal ecosystems, including beaches, dunes and mangroves, are vital habitats that support a diverse array of marine life and contribute to global biodiversity. However, human activities such as littering, improper waste disposal and marine pollution pose significant threats to these sensitive environments. Debris, including plastics, glass and other materials, can harm ocean and lake animals through ingestion, entanglement and habitat destruction, causing harm to marine ecosystems and biodiversity. Beach cleanup initiatives empower individuals and communities to take action and become stewards of their local coastlines. Organized by environmental organizations, non-profits, schools, businesses and community groups, beach cleanups bring together volunteers of all ages and backgrounds to remove litter and debris from beaches and coastal areas. By participating in beach cleanups, volunteers contribute to cleaner shorelines and raise awareness about the importance of marine conservation and environmental stewardship.

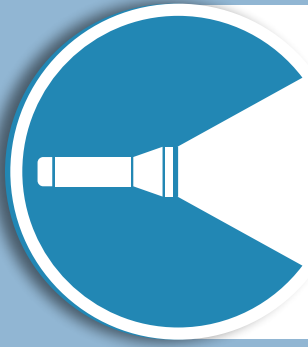
Some organizations, such as the Alliance for the Great Lakes, sponsor groups that want to adopt a specific beach. They ask team leaders to organize volunteers, pick up debris and then enter litter data into a database that helps the organization understand the extent of issues on the Great Lakes.

Beach cleanups have a tangible and immediate impact on coastal environments, helping to reduce the harmful effects of marine debris on marine life and ecosystems. Every piece of litter removed from the beach represents a step towards a cleaner, healthier coastline. Additionally, beach cleanups provide valuable data on the types and quantities of litter collected, which can inform policy decisions, raise public awareness and support efforts to address the root causes of marine pollution.

The Ocean Blue Project encourages beach cleanups as a part of eco-tourism, explaining that the cleanups safeguard marine life and its habitats. It's a way of maintaining the ecological balance and integrity of endangered regions while ensuring long-term marine biodiversity.

Getting involved in beach cleanup initiatives is easy and rewarding. Check local environmental organizations, community groups or online platforms for upcoming beach cleanup events in your area. Join organized cleanup efforts or gather a group of friends, family or colleagues to initiate your own beach cleanup project. Remember to follow safety guidelines, wear appropriate attire and bring gloves, bags and other cleanup supplies.

Individuals can raise awareness about marine conservation and environmental issues through education, advocacy and community engagement. Share information about the importance of reducing plastic consumption, recycling responsibly and adopting sustainable practices to minimize waste and protect our oceans. Encourage others to join the movement and promote healthy coastal environments.



NONPROFIT *Spotlight*



For information contact communitypartnerships@columbian.com



Join us on Thursday, September 12th, 2024 to ensure hope, help, and healing for our community members most in need of a lifeline!

Lifeline Connections' annual fundraiser, *A Lifeline to Wellbeing Luncheon*, will be held from 11:30am – 1:00pm at Royal Oaks Country Club in Vancouver, WA.



Click or Scan to Join Us

Email Development@LifelineConnections.org for more information and sponsorship opportunities!

Thank you to our sponsors!

Gold: Recovery Café Clark County

Silver: Kaiser Permanente, Lockton, HUB International Northwest LLC, Vancouver Housing Authority, and Riverview Bank

Bronze: The Vancouver Clinic, Jodie Sharp Realty, SWACH, and MorePower Technology Group

In-kind: Upbeat Music Therapy and Wellpoint Washington

Media: The Columbian

LIFELINE CONNECTIONS

About Us

At Lifeline Connections, we inspire hope and support lifesaving changes for people affected by substance use and mental health conditions, through superior customer service, high quality programs, and dedicated staff.

We have proudly served our Clark County community for 62 years, serving 5,000 individuals each year, across 10 locations and 38 programs. Children, Youth, Adults, and Families have easy access to our comprehensive continuum which includes behavioral health treatment and supportive recovery services, such as:

- Crisis Triage and Stabilization
- Withdrawal Management
- Treatment for Pregnant and Parenting Women
- Residential and Outpatient Substance Use Treatment
- Mental Health Outpatient and Case Management
- Court-Based Services
- Supported Employment Services
- Medication-Assisted Treatment and Recovery
- Housing and Recovery Supports
- Homeless Outreach, Stabilization, and Transition
- Primary Care Screening
- Animal-Assisted Therapy
- and more!

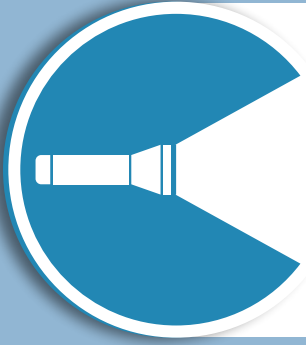
More than 90% of our patients are below the federal poverty level and many are unhoused before treatment.

Partner With Us

The opioid epidemic and the suicide crisis continue to take lives in Washington. While we will never know the exact number of lives we save, we take pride in the difference our treatment and services make in the lives of our patients, their families, and our community. We strive to create a better future for our community – one where behavioral health treatment is available for all so everyone can thrive.

By supporting Lifeline Connections, you are ensuring that lifelines to life-saving treatment and services are available for those in need and at the greatest risk.

Join us at our annual fundraiser, A Lifeline to Wellbeing Luncheon, on September 12, 2024 from 11:30am -1:00pm at Royal Oaks Country Club in Vancouver, WA to provide hope, help, and healing for our community members most in need of a lifeline!



NONPROFIT *Spotlight*



For information contact communitypartnerships@columbian.com



For over 30 years, the Free Clinic of Southwest Washington has been providing free, compassionate, quality health care for uninsured community members in Clark County, Washington. Our services include basic medical care, urgent dental care, medication assistance, immunizations, diabetes care and self-management, insurance navigation, and coordination of specialty care in the community. Today, we have over 300 dedicated volunteers, who with the support of our staff, provide over 3,000 patient visits every year.

While our mission has remained the same, our model of care has changed. In 2020 we switched from a walk-in urgent care clinic to a primary care home for our patients. Now that we are settled into this new model, we are seeking to renovate our space so we can continue offering high-quality care. Our goal is to keep our clinic within our existing location for decades to come, while creating a modern primary care clinic that is an efficient, comfortable, and functional space for our patients, staff, and volunteers.

The renovated Free Clinic will include new paint and floors, an additional exam room, an updated dental suite, a break space for staff and volunteers, a conference room, increased private workspace for our providers, and a redesigned reception/lobby area. These changes will allow us to care for more patients, attract more health care volunteer providers, and modernize the clinic.

We want the clinic to be a welcoming, safe, and comfortable space for our patients. Our care is free, but we do not want the Free Clinic to suggest the quality of care we provide is less than. The renovation will reflect the kindness, compassion, and dedication we show to our patients every day, while also meeting the functional needs of a modern primary care home.

We are excited to finally share the news of this exciting renovation project with you. Now, we need your help to get us across the finish line and reach our \$1.4 million goal.

You can learn more about the project details and how to support the Free Clinic renovation by visiting <https://freeclinics.org/your-support/capital-campaign/>. For additional information, please contact Pam Knepper, Director of Communications, Development and Outreach at pam@freeclinics.org or Rebecca O'Brien, Executive Director at rebecca@freeclinics.org.

We look forward to keeping you updated on our progress as we move closer to renovating the Free Clinic of Southwest Washington - a place of compassionate care-always.



How parents can pitch in at their children's schools

Giving back to one's community can take many forms. Some may give back by supporting legislature to make communities more inclusive, while others may volunteer with their local fire departments. Parents of school-aged youngsters can typically find many opportunities to give back through their children's schools.

Parents who volunteer with their children's schools often get a unique glimpse into their children's life at school. Such parents may see how their children interact with educators and classmates and gain greater insight into the school community where kids spend so much of their time. Volunteering at school also can benefit kids, who may recognize the importance of education more readily if mom and/or dad are spending their free time on campus. That recognition can leave to improved performance in the classroom.

Parent-teacher associations (PTAs and PTOs) can be great resources for parents who want to volunteer with their children's schools. Each year, students graduate and move on to new schools or colleges, and that means schools are in fresh need of parent volunteers each school year. Though each school has its own unique needs, the following are some roles parent volunteers may be able to play at their children's schools.

- **Tutor**
- **Mentor**
- **IT support:** Parents with significant experience in tech or information technology can offer to lend a hand or provide advice or insight in support of a school's IT staff
- **Organizer:** Schools host many functions in a typical school year,

and officials typically ask parents to pitch in so such events can be successful. For example, parents can help organize school fundraisers, dances and holiday bazaars.

- **Chaperone on field trips**
- **Assistant coach:** Many schools pay stipends to the head coaches of their athletic teams, but parents can serve as unpaid assistants or support staff during the season. For example, parents can volunteer to work as gameday staff, taking tickets at the gate or directing ticket holders where to park.
- **Club official:** Extracurricular clubs also can benefit from parents willing to work as volunteers. Parents can help students who want to start new clubs or serve as moderators or helpers in existing clubs.
- **Speaker:** High schools may host periodic career days throughout the school year to help students on the cusp of applying to college uncover potential career paths. Parents with significant professional experience in a given field can offer to speak to students on career days, sharing information about their careers and industries and answering any questions students may have.
- **Administrative support:** Parents also can pitch to help with behind-the-scenes administrative duties like letter-writing, grant proposals and other projects that play a vital role in securing funding for school programs and other services.

Parents who want to give back to their communities can take an active role in their children's schools.



We're *cheering* you on...

Columbian Community Partnerships has worked with hundreds of local area nonprofits to help them meet their goals over the past 30 years. Through our Local Public Service Announcements, Community Partnerships matching funds program, Nonprofit Spotlight promotions and offering specially priced advertising options to our GiveBIG participants we are able to share our Columbian audience and help nonprofits get their message out.

We're on your side, and cheering for our local nonprofits to succeed.

The Columbian Community Partnerships encourages our community members, our friends and neighbors to get involved. By giving generously of your time, talent or resources, we can make our community stronger. Connecting Community is our goal. Are you on the team? Or a cheerleader?

Let's do this!

The Columbian
COMMUNITY
Partnerships

If you'd like more information on how Columbian Community Partnerships can help your nonprofit organization imagine the future, contact **Teresa Davis** at CommunityPartnerships@columbian.com or **360-735-4572**.