



HOUSING INDUSTRY FOUNDATION

FEBRUARY 2023



Helping those that help others. Meet John!

“Being accepted into the AHI program was one of the best things that happened to me in 2022.”

John joined the [AHI Program](#) this past July after learning about HIF through his employer. He currently works in the nonprofit sector where he oversees the Homeless Prevention Services (HPS Program), helping provide rental and financial assistance to families facing possible eviction and homelessness.

“For most of my adult career (as well as part of my youth) I have dedicated myself to provide services to the community at large, in particular at-risk youth,” shares John. “Most recently over the last 4 years I have been working in the housing field, providing housing or assistance for families to stay housed.”

"In the long term I hope that by being in this program I can afford to pursue a Master's degree and/or further my education in my field. It would potentially also give me the opportunity to save money towards retirement and/or investment or for a house purchase in the distant future.

"Knowing I have HIF's support gives me piece of mind as I struggle with my finances and debt. With this program, I could see myself in a much better situation and a home I can call my own and have visitors. I am so grateful to HIF and what the AHI is doing to support community minded professionals!"



Ha's Story

After three years on a waitlist, **Ha** and her daughter **Winnie** were finally approved for affordable safe housing. They had no way to pay double rent and a security deposit without the support of HIF. Their previous home was on a high traffic, busy street. Winnie's health and behavioral needs changed due to escalating behaviors of bolting and being unaware of safety concerns, which caused a lot of stress for Ha, a single mom caring for a child with a developmental disability. Thanks to HIF, Ha and Winnie are now in a more affordable and safe community.

"It was very helpful because first I didn't have any money to move—we didn't know when we would be called for a waitlist—and second, I am a single

mom from Vietnam with no family," says Ha. "I needed to hire movers to help with moving our items. Third, the deposit was such a high amount I would not have been able to cover it. I asked the property manager if they could give me 30 days to get money together. They said no. I would have lost the spot I have been waiting for and would have been placed back on the waitlist if it wasn't for the support.

"My daughter is now in a quieter, safer environment and our community is gated with no busy streets around. Thank you!"

Volunteer Spotlight: Wendy Johnson - Benchmark Environmental

We are excited that **Wendy Johnson** is moving from our Board of Directors to our Board Executive Committee. Wendy has led the launch of our Annual Ride Home event (coming on June 24th) and has been a strong supporter of our Board Engagement Committee and of HIF for years. We look forward to her continued leadership on our Board and in helping HIF realize more impact in the community.

Please tell us a bit about Benchmark Environmental Services:

[Benchmark](#) opened in June of 1994 as a Property Inspection company conducting buy/sale transactions for the real estate community. Shortly after opening, we diversified into environmental services offering hazardous materials inspections. In 2000, we sold off the Property Inspection portion of the company to focus on Environmental Service Offerings.

Benchmark conducts more than 3000 inspections per year from San Diego, CA to Seattle, WA. Services include (but are not limited to) inspections for asbestos, lead- paint, radon, mold/bacteria, and indoor air quality. One of the largest clientele we serve is the multifamily apartment industry for inspections and training. We have worked with the California Apartment Association on regulation language such as the *SB732 Toxic Mold Protection Act* that influenced lease documents and disclosures.

Our staff includes Certified Asbestos Consultants and Asbestos Site Surveillance technicians as well as Department of Public Health Lead Inspector/Assessors, Mold Inspectors and Certified Radon Technicians.

Navigating the federal, state and local environmental regulations can be challenging and it is our ongoing mission to help our clients understand potential liability while still maintaining reasonable and time conscious project outcomes.

How does HIF's mission and your service on the board align with Benchmark's priorities and culture?

Growing up in Mountain View my parents were apartment managers. While my father was in college, they managed several apartments, so I was raised around the challenges of multi-family living.

After Benchmark fully transitioned into Environmental Services, mold related issues became very significant, and clients were not sure what to do. We worked with CAA to create a General Mold Operations and Maintenance Plan that could be shared with the owners/managers within the industry. I came to know HIF early on in my career and volunteered where I could.

At that time, I was President of the Silicon Valley Chapter of the National Association of Women Business owners (NAWBO) so I could not offer a lot of time to HIF.

About 6 years ago, I had the time to dedicate to the HIF's mission and have been on the Board since. The priority of Benchmark is to be a trusted resource in a changing environment. This is also very true of what I feel HIF brings to its programs and participants. The challenges may differ, but the audience is the same.

Share a bit of your experience serving on our Board and as an active volunteer for HIF? How has your own leadership journey impacted HIF and vice versa?

I am proud to serve on the Board of HIF. It is an opportunity to be involved in a mission that changes people's lives immediately. The programs attract the most influential leaders in our industry to serve which is fantastic to see.

I hope to bring my leadership and organization skills, to bring real progress to the Board and to the committees I serve on.

What do you look forward to in 2023, both for Benchmark and for HIF?

I think 2023 will be a groundbreaking year in fundraising, outreach events, training opportunities and Board participation. The work that Steve, the Officers,



the Staff and the Board have done to create the momentum over the past several years is going to be monumental this year and I am up for the challenge and looking forward to the results!

[Learn more about Benchmark Environmental](#)

Join us in welcoming HIF's newest board members!

We are excited to start the year by welcoming new HIF board members! Keep checking in to the HIF Newsletter to see how these fab new board members and leaders make an impact on HIF!

Executive Committee

President: Rod Edwards, IBI, Inc.

Vice President: Nazar Elwazir,
Equity Residential

Past President: Tod Spieker,
Windy Hill Property Ventures

Secretary: Joshua Howard,
California Apartment Association

New Member: Wendy Johnson,
Benchmark Environmental

Board of Directors

Colin Gray, Saratoga Capital, Inc.

Meg Thomas, Spieker Companies

Board of Advisors

Karlee Coble, Karlee Coble Interiors

Ramon Kochavi, Marcus &
Millichap



Now accepting sponsors and teams for Home Runs for Housing!

2022 was our most successful kickball tournament ever — 19 teams competed and HIF raised over \$50,000 for our housing programs. We’re going to up the ante in 2023, with 22 team slots available this year!

Teams are already going fast, so book your team and sponsorship now before they’re gone! Contact **Amanda Edwards**, Development & Events Manager at events@hifinfo.org to get started.

Want more information? [Check out our event website!](#)



HOT OFF THE PRESSES!

Check out our 2022 Annual Report!

Thank you to our staff, Board of Directors, donors, community partners and volunteers that helped us expand our impact and strengthen HIF.

[View the Annual Report](#)

Our Industry. Our Community.

[Donate](#)



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