

PSU Salutes Susan Emmons '78



**Distinguished
Alumni Service
Award**

Susan Emmons '78

Susan started working for Northwest Pilot Project, under legendary Peter Paulson in the 1980s to meet the needs of Downtown Portland's poor residents, and took over leadership as Peter's health declined.

Northwest Pilot Project began in 1969 as an all volunteer agency to provide basic supports for seniors at risk of losing their ability to live independently. At the time there was no agency providing support for the elderly poor and as a result elderly people were being put into nursing homes unnecessarily. There were no community supports making it possible for seniors to continue living independently.

Under Susan's leadership the Northwest Pilot Project successfully:

- Created the first Meals on Wheels program in the State of Oregon.
- Advocacy efforts leading to increased accessibility of the Tri-Met bus system for disabled people.
- Relocation services for seniors losing their housing due to building closures and gentrification of the core city area.
- Thousands of men and women have housing today because NWPP spearheaded preservation of affordable housing in our Portland community.
- Organized coalition of downtown Portland churches to provide emergency help to the poor.

Susan has dedicated 30 years of exceptional and devoted service through advocating for social justice in the city of Portland.

Getting to know Susan...

Favorite cause

My favorite cause is working to provide decent safe affordable housing for every man, woman, and child in our community.

Most important lesson learned

The most important lesson I have learned in my life came from my parents as I was growing up – to be true to yourself and your own principles, to have the courage to stand up for your beliefs no matter what the personal cost.

Goal yet to be achieved

The goal that we have set at Northwest Pilot Project is to end the homelessness of every man and woman aged 55 and over living in Portland. Personally, I believe that Portland could be the first city in our country to end homelessness, and so a goal yet to be achieved is to continue to advocate and work with others to create enough affordable housing for all of our citizens so that we can end homelessness in Portland



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