

Hi PSLA Supporters,

This week we would like to share a little bit about each PSLA staff member. We have created brief bios for your enjoyment here, then each one comes with a link to connect you to our website's biography page where you will find additional information about each person here and a few participating volunteers. One of my favorite aspects of working at PSLA are the relationships that form between people who otherwise would have never known one another. I am always pleased to see people finding common ground and connecting as volunteers, clients, or staff. I hope you learn something about each of us and feel a little more connected yourselves.

Thank you for your interest and support – the GiveBIG 21' fundraiser officially started this Tuesday so please take a minute to visit [PSLA's page](#) and consider making a contribution so we can reach our goal.



Samuel Sim was born and raised in Auburn, Washington. Growing up, Sam had an eye for the details: what makes an idea or process successful, and what it takes to design something that lasts. He developed this talent further during his education and was especially drawn to leadership and art classes. After finishing his schooling, Sam began a career in the financial sector, and worked for 20 years in bank management and corporate finance, respectively. He earned multiple performance awards from employers over the course of his career, including a national award from Chase Bank for his exceptional work in bank management.

Sam has always been a people-person with a heart for service. Before working in the non-profit sector, he had volunteered in youth leadership, event coordination, Kiwanis, and at food banks. Eventually, as he continued advancing in his career, he realized that his desire to serve others was outweighing his devotion to his work in corporate finance. Following his conscience, Sam left the financial industry in (year), and began looking for work in the non-profit sector.

He first heard about PSLA through Lynn Nishimura, then-executive director of the food bank, and began volunteering while building a personal relationship with her. Following Lynn's tragic and unexpected passing in (year), ...

Sam directs the food bank with a balance of knowledge, heart, and action. He always looks to perfect the work of serving others with the dignity and respect they deserve. To learn more about Sam and other PSLA community members, check out their biographies [here](#).

“We can hear, learn, and see what is happening but never truly understand or be in the same shoes.”



Starting as a hybrid coordinator and executive assistant, Lauren has proven to be the most adaptable member of the PSLA staff. Since then, she has changed titles and responsibilities a number of times but has maintained grace and a willingness to learn. Lauren’s love of dogs, combined with her generous, outgoing, personality makes her well suited to connect with anyone who visits PSLA, whether they be volunteer, client, or dog.

As a resident of Belltown, Lauren has added understanding of the needs and experiences of many of PSLA’s clients. She is a trusted community member who has made a point of learning clients names and takes pride in her ability to identify potential food bank visitors as they approach from blocks away.

Like many SoCal natives, Lauren enjoys the sunshine and taking her own dogs, Ripple and Marlow, on walks around Belltown. She often meets her best friend, current PSLA volunteer and former board member, Swen to go out for lunch, to people watch, and pick up trash in the city. To learn more about Lauren and other PSLA community members, check out their biographies [here](#).



William came to the Puget Sound Labor Agency after a year of working different positions as a way of exploring passions of his. As he approaches his third anniversary with PSLA it's clear that the agency has provided opportunities for him to develop as both a young professional and an engaged person, looking to make connections with others.

Originally from the Bay Area, William has spent time living in California, rural Iowa and Idaho, and Washington. He has also had the privilege of traveling with friends, family and alone to countries in Asia, Europe, and Central America. The opportunities he has had to connect with people from different parts of our country and the world have benefited him tremendously at PSLA. It's these experiences that inform his goal to create an environment where people are treated with dignity and valued.

In his free time, William likes to train on his bicycle, practice guitar, Spanish, and maintain vermicompost bins. He believes that he can one day roll each of these hobbies into a dream job. To find out more about William and other PSLA community members, check out their biographies [here](#).



Brandon is PSLA's most recent addition and has quickly made impacts all over the agency. As an avid cook, Brandon has been quick to share some of his favorite recipes with the PSLA community. The smells of mushroom stews, spicy tomato soups, and scallion pancakes have filled the food bank and everyone's belly after long days at work.

As a longtime family friend of Sam's, Brandon agreed to replace the outgoing Dean Nishimura as PSLA's bookkeeper and controller. Since then, he has proven to be a jack of all trades and an enormous help during the agencies move to the Showbox. If it weren't for him, PSLA's computers and technology might still be in the process of being unpacked, three weeks later.

Brandon has quickly made himself an integral part of PSLA's staff and has put the agency on the track to achieve its mission. To learn more about Brandon and other PSLA community members, check out their biographies [here](#).



Jacob McKay is a born-and-raised Washingtonian, living in different areas of Pierce County his whole life until 2018. He was a bookish child who preferred the quiet environment of home-education, which he continued until his senior year of high school. Taking advantage of Washington's Running Start program, Jacob enrolled at Pierce College, where he experienced public education in action for the first time. The school's academic emphasis on critical thinking and open-mindedness was a dream come true for him, and he has since been inspired to pursue a career in teaching, hoping to become a professor of Political Science.

Jacob has done many kinds of community service through different churches over the years, including city clean-ups and food distribution. Following a personal mental-health crisis, he moved to Eureka, California to attend a private, unaccredited personal development program. He continued serving the local community by partnering with Lifehouse Church in their dirty needle pick-ups, food distribution, and occasional homeless outreach events.

Jacob has worked in pizza restaurants since 2015, but when the COVID-19 pandemic began, he began questioning the value of his efforts in restaurant work. The more he learned about the virus' impact on Washington State, the more he wanted to move home, where he could be near family and -- somehow -- work to help those in need during the historic turmoil of 2020.

He first heard about the Puget Sound Labor Agency through a link on indeed.com that was asking for AmeriCorps members. Hoping for the best, Jacob visited PSLA for the

first time in September, 2020. Having never volunteered inside an actual food bank, he was blown away by the abundance of food being distributed and stored there, and eagerly applied for the AmeriCorps role.