

2024

Closer to Home

Bellwether Housing's 14th Annual Fundraiser

OCTOBER 24, 2024, 11:30AM @ SEATTLE CONVENTION CENTER

Partnership



TABLE CAPTAIN'S GUIDE

Keynote Address:

Shereen Marisol Meraji

Thank You

Thank you for serving as a Table Captain for Bellwether Housing's Annual Closer to Home Luncheon on Thursday, October 24, 2024. I am grateful to have your partnership as Bellwether prepares to host our largest Closer to Home yet.

2024 is a year of partnership for Bellwether Housing. Our work is building communities where everyone has access to a safe, stable, and affordable home.

As a Table Captain, you will help us build a thriving community by filling the room with loyal Bellwether supporters and new faces interested in our work of creating access to opportunity through affordable housing.

In this guide, you will find information and materials to help you invite friends and colleagues, follow up with your invitees, and get attendees registered and excited about the event. Please read on and do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Megan Mayes". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each name being capitalized and prominent.

Megan Mayes
Director of External Engagement
mmayes@bellwetherhousing.org, 206-428-3761

Table Captain Responsibilities

As a Table Captain for Bellwether's Closer to Home Fundraiser, you will invite and host a table of ten at the luncheon. Leading up to the event, you will invite these guests, ensure they register for the event, and invite new guests as needed to fill your table of ten. At the event, you will hand out our pledge cards. There will be an envelope with instructions at your table during the event.

1 INVITE:

Invite friends, colleagues, and family members interested in Bellwether Housing's work to join you at your table of ten at Closer to Home. Invite new guests as needed. We have created template invitation communications for your use (find them on page 4 of this guide). Send invitations and communications to guests as needed to ensure that you fill your table of ten. We ask that attendees make personally meaningful gifts to support Bellwether's mission. Our suggested minimum donation is \$240, however we are grateful for gifts of all sizes. If you are interested in filling more than one table of ten guests, please let Megan Mayes (mmayes@bellwetherhousing.org) know by September 12.

2 REGISTER GUESTS:

Ensure your attendees register. Guests can register themselves using our online registration form found [here on the Bellwether website](#). Alternatively, you can email a list of your attendees to Megan Mayes, mmayes@bellwetherhousing.org. Please include their name, email, and meal preference: Fish or Vegan.

3 COMMUNICATE:

Send out email reminders as the event approaches (find template reminders on page 4 of this guide). Spread the word! Share our posts on social media and invite more folks to get involved. If guests can't attend, they can support our mission by [donating through our online donation portal](#), or by mailing a check. Thank your guests for attending and supporting Bellwether Housing.

4 COORDINATE AT THE EVENT:

Act as a liaison for your table and your guests at the event. Hand out pledge cards to your table guests. There will be a moment when you are prompted to do this, along with instructions.

Outreach

Please customize the following email templates, and send them out to your networks. We will post on social media and send out emails about this event. Deepen your impact by sharing Bellwether's social media posts, and forward on our emails to your network.

INITIAL INVITATION EMAIL TO GUESTS

Send by August 30

Subject: Please join me at Bellwether Housing's 2024 Closer to Home Luncheon on October 24!

Dear [INSERT NAME HERE],

I hope you are doing well [INSERT PERSONALIZED GREETING HERE]. I am reaching out with exciting news - [Bellwether Housing](#) will be hosting their annual [Closer to Home](#) fundraiser on Thursday, October 24 from 11:30AM-1:00PM at the Seattle Convention Center (WSCC). **I am serving as a Table Captain, and I would love for you to join me at my table.**

Bellwether is a local non-profit that develops and manages affordable homes for our neighbors and community members. As Seattle's largest affordable housing provider, they have over 6,000 residents across 35 buildings and counting. Bellwether is committed to meeting the housing needs in our city, and I am proud to support their work as a Table Captain at Closer to Home.

Shereen Marisol Meraji will deliver the Keynote Address at Closer to Home. She is a veteran audio producer and journalist who has been telling stories with sound for more than two decades. Shereen helped create NPR's groundbreaking and critically acclaimed podcast covering race and identity, Code Switch. During her time as co-host and senior producer, Code Switch won numerous awards and Apple Podcasts named Code Switch its first-ever "show of the year." She was awarded Harvard's prestigious Nieman fellowship in 2022 before becoming an assistant professor of race in journalism and head of audio at UC Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism.

Please let me know if you can join me by responding to this email or by [registering yourself online](#) (make sure to note that I'll be your Table Captain).

I hope to see you there.

Thank you,

[YOUR NAME]

FOLLOW-UP EMAIL:

Send by September 13

Subject: Please join me at Bellwether Housing's Closer to Home on October 24!

Hi [INSERT NAME HERE],

[INSERT PERSONALIZED GREETING HERE]

I am writing to check to see if you received my invitation to [Bellwether Housing's Closer to Home](#) fundraiser on Thursday, October 24.

The event runs from 11:30AM-1:00PM at the Seattle Convention Center on 10/24 (formally Washington State Convention Center). There will be time to mingle with fellow guests, learn about the groundbreaking work that Bellwether is doing in our communities to address our housing crisis, and hear a keynote address by veteran audio producer and journalist Shereen Marisol Meraji.

Please let me know if you can join me by responding to this email or by [registering yourself online](#) (make sure to note that I'll be your Table Captain).

Many thanks,

[YOUR NAME]

EVENT REMINDER EMAIL TO REGISTERED GUESTS:

Send by October 17

Subject: Looking forward to 10/24!

Hi [INSERT NAME HERE],

I am getting excited for Bellwether Housing's [Closer to Home](#) lunch, coming up on Thursday, October 24. Please let me know if you are no longer able to join me as a guest at my table on 10/24.

I will be arriving at the Seattle Convention Center at 11:30AM, for 30 minutes of mingling with fellow guests. The program will run from 12:00PM-1:00PM, featuring a keynote by audio producer and journalist Shereen Marisol Meraji.

Looking forward to seeing you there.

[YOUR NAME]

FINAL FOLLOW-UP EMAIL:

Send by October 3

Subject: Checking in about Bellwether Housing's lunch on 10/24

Hi [INSERT NAME HERE],

I am getting excited for Bellwether Housing's [Closer to Home](#) lunch, coming up on Thursday, October 24. I will be hosting a Table at the event, and I would love for you to join me.

If you are able to join me at my table, please let me know by October 10, by responding to this email or by [registering yourself online](#) (mark that I'll be your Table Captain).

Thank you!

[YOUR NAME]

THANK YOU EMAIL AFTER THE EVENT:

Send by October 26

Subject: Thank you for joining me at Closer to Home!

Hi [INSERT NAME HERE],

Thank you for joining me at Bellwether Housing's Closer to Home lunch. I was very moved by the stories we heard, and I am still reflecting on and feeling inspired by [INSERT PERSONAL REFLECTION].

It was so exciting to be together, supporting the necessary need for more affordable homes. I loved having the opportunity for my friends and colleagues to learn more about how Bellwether creates homes that offer stability and access to opportunity for over 6,000 residents.

You had a big impact by attending the lunch: together, we raised \$XXX,XXX and counting to support Bellwether Housing!

With gratitude,

[YOUR NAME]

SUGGESTED TIMELINE

- AUGUST:** Begin inviting guests
- AUGUST-SEPTEMBER:** Follow up with your invitees, and invite new people based on the RSVPs you've received.
- SEPTEMBER 12:** Email Megan Mayes if you are interested in hosting more than one table. We welcome this!
- OCTOBER 3:** Send a final reminder email/text/phone call to any of your invitees who have not yet RSVP'd
- OCTOBER 17:** Send event reminder email to all of your confirmed guests.
- MID-OCTOBER:** Bellwether will contact you to ensure our list of your guests matches yours.
- OCTOBER 23:** Send final "see you tomorrow" event reminder email to confirmed guests.
- OCTOBER 24:** **Attend the Closer to Home Lunch at the Seattle Convention Center!**
- OCTOBER 26:** Send Thank You email to your guests.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Bellwether Housing is Seattle's largest non-profit provider of affordable housing.
- Bellwether Housing has 36 buildings with 6,000 residents that call Bellwether home.
- Bellwether was founded in 1980 by Seattle business and civic leaders concerned about the lack of affordable housing options in the central city for people making lower wages.
- [Learn about Bellwether's 40+ years of service by watching online an incredible video documenting their history.](#)
- Bellwether Housing creates stable communities and access to opportunity through affordable housing. Bellwether's residents are majority BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color).
- Bellwether serves people transitioning out of homelessness, families large and small, independent seniors, adults with disabilities, and young people starting their careers. Most households residing in Bellwether homes earn below 60% of the area median income.
- Bellwether has four new buildings in development: The Aries at Bitter Lake and Flourish on Rainier opened this year, Thunderbird Nest, Bellwether Greenwood, Sunbreak (UW Filer), and Prisma (Overlake Village) will open in the coming years.
- Watch online the [Cedar Crossing groundbreaking](#), [The Rise on Madison groundbreaking](#), and the [Flourish on Rainier groundbreaking](#).
- Learn more about our Real Estate work and our new developments [on Youtube](#).
- Bellwether's team of Resident Services Coordinators connects tenants to resources and services that can help them lead independent, healthy lives and remain stably housed in their Bellwether homes. All residents have access to our Resident Services Coordinators. This is an opt-in program. Learn more about the incredible work of our RSC's [in this video about rent relief programs](#).
- Read our 2023 Annual Report online (coming soon!).

Our Keynote Speaker

SHEREEN MARISOL MERAJI

Shereen Marisol Meraji is a veteran audio producer and journalist who has been telling stories with sound for more than two decades. Shereen helped create NPR's groundbreaking and critically acclaimed podcast covering race and identity, Code Switch. During her time as co-host and senior producer, Code Switch won numerous awards and Apple Podcasts named Code Switch its first-ever "show of the year." She was awarded Harvard's prestigious Nieman fellowship in 2022 before becoming an assistant professor of race in journalism and head of audio at UC Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism.



When she's not teaching or reporting, Shereen's listening to hip-hop, dancing to salsa, or cooking up something delicious.



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