



# TIPS FOR GETTING TO KNOW AND LIFTING UP HOUSING + TENANT VOICES IN THE PRESS

**MARCH 2022** 

# Agenda for today's training

- Context
  - What are we trying to accomplish?
    - How lifting up tenant voices helps us accomplish our goals
  - Tenant voices in recent news articles
  - Storybanks
- Short discussion
  - Topic: Your experiences with lifting up tenant voices in the media
- Building a relationship with tenants
  - Case study with Cory Winter, Hamilton Families
  - Case study with Stephanie Picard Bowen, Generation Housing
- Preparing tenants for press interviews
- Q&A

### What are we trying to accomplish?

Our goal is to elevate the conversation around housing in ways that prioritize racial equity and highlight the challenges faced by renters across our region. This approach is also designed to unseat negative attitudes about renters and reduce resistance to the 3Ps consensus policy frame. We want to shift the narrative:

- From housing scarcity → housing justice
- From individual responsibility → structural change
- From "rugged individualism" → a shared community that benefits all
- From fear of loss through change → confronting the risks of the status quo
- From defeatism and reliance on luck → belief in change through collective action

# How lifting up tenant voices in the press helps us accomplish these goals:

- Underscores the concept that achieving housing justice requires structural change
- Counters defeatist attitudes around housing by showing how life changing it is to have safe, stable, affordable housing
- Helps the issue of housing insecurity reach a broader audience
- Gives tenants some agency in how their situations and stories are shared
- Makes the news story about people -- not just housing prices

## **Examples of tenant voices in recent news articles**

San Francisco Chronicle e-Edition Account

**BAY AREA** 

COVID eviction battles have moved to the Bay Area suburbs







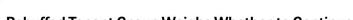




### **Examples of tenant voices in recent news articles**

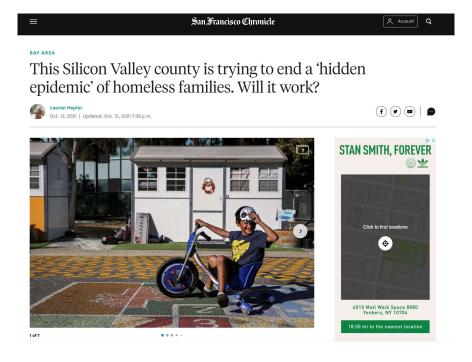
'CIVIC' PODCAST

KSEP RADIO



#### Rebuffed Tenant Group Weighs Whether to Continue 'Debt Strike'







SPECIAL REPORTS \*















# What is a storybank?

Storybanks are a database of personal stories on any one topic (i.e. housing insecurity) that groups can refer to when fielding media requests

#### Columns for storybank spreadsheet:

- NOTES
- NAME
- FMAII
- PHONE
- CONTACT PROTOCOL
- LANGUAGES
- STORY SUMMARY
- COMFORT W/ MEDIA

### Why storybanks are important:

- Helps you organize the people available to speak to subsets of the broader issue so that it lives in a permanent place
- Helps you understand the gaps in stories/perspectives ahead of media requests
- Allows organizations to work together in uplifting housing justice stories
- Can easily find people in specific places/counties to line up with media requests

#### **DISCUSSION:**

What challenges does your organization run into when getting to know and putting forward tenant voices in the news?

# BRINGING IN & GETTING TO KNOW LOCAL TENANT VOICES

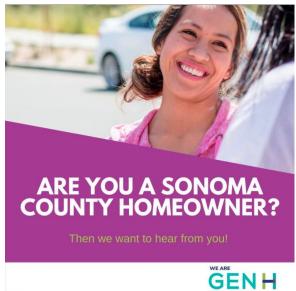
## **CASE STUDY WITH HAMILTON FAMILIES**

### **CASE STUDY: GENERATION HOUSING**

#### **Bringing in community voices**









#### **Bringing in community voices**

#### Welcome to Reddit.

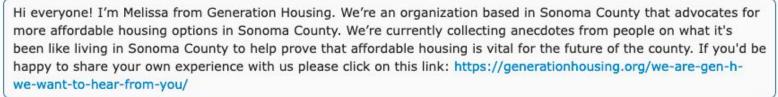
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submitted 1 year ago by GenerationHousing



14 comments share save hide report

#### all 14 comments

sorted by: best w



#### **Bringing in community voices**



#### Living in Sonoma County: Share your experience with Generation Housing As an organization focused on advocating for increased housing in Sonoma County, we at Generation Housing are reaching out directly to the community and want to hear from YOU. Please feel free to skip any questions that don't apply. Thank you for sharing your experience with us. aeske@mrss.com Switch account 0 \* Required Email \* Your email What's your full name? Your answer Email Address: Your answer Text Number: Your answer

	long have you lived in Sonoma County?
Your answer	
Can	you tell us a little bit about yourself? What is your profession? Are
you	a student?
Your	answer
\M/ba	
VVIIC	ere do you live in Sonoma County?
	answer
Your	
Your	answer
Your	answer  at type of housing do you currently reside in?
Your	answer  at type of housing do you currently reside in?  Apartment
Your	answer  It type of housing do you currently reside in?  Apartment  Condo
Your	answer  It type of housing do you currently reside in?  Apartment  Condo  Single Family House

#### La vida en el condado de Sonoma: Comparta su experiencia con Generation Housing Como la organización enfocada en abogar por el aumento de viviendas en el condado de Sonoma que somos, Generation Housing quiere llegar directamente a la comunidad y queremos saber de USTED. No dude en omitir cualquier pregunta que no le aplique. Gracias por compartir tu historia con nosotros. aeske@mrss.com (not shared) Switch account 0 Cuál es su nombre completo? Your answer Correo Electronico: Your answer Numero de texto:

Your answer

#### **Building relationships with community voices**







We are 150 Gen H members strong and we're going for more! Join us today at generationhousing.org/membership #WeAreGenH



#### **Putting forward community voices in communications**



**Generation Housing** April 19, 2021 - 3

Veronica along with her four children and husband have rented their two-bedroom apartment ever since they moved from Mexico 16 years ago. Her dream is to one day become a homeowner and wish the same for her children, but she realizes this may only happen if they leave Sonoma County.

Sonoma County is home. Veronica along with other Sonoma County residents hope to make it a place where everyone can live here for many generations to come. Learn more about their stories by explo... See more

"I really would love for my children to be able to raise their kids in this county, even if we can't afford to stay here. I hope that as working and educated individuals they can make enough to afford to live in this beautiful place they love."

**VERONICA ESQUIVIAS** Nanny and house cleaner, renter, Petaluma resident

Add your voice...



Generation Housing June 15, 2021 - 3

We are teachers, first responders, farm workers. We are grocers, we are artists. Together, each of you, all of us, and all residents of Sonoma County. We Are Gen H, and we all need affordable places to live. Join us at wearegenh.org!

Watch this video and more on our YouTube Channel: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC\_tHYR-5FBL9mNPIZd7uuwQ



GENERATIONHOUSING.ORG

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Learn more

# PREPARING TENANTS FOR PRESS INTERVIEWS

#### **Before the Interview**



- Make sure to set up a translator if needed
- Offer to do practice interviews with the tenant ahead of time
- Be explicit with the reporter about what the parameters are and how the tenant wishes to be identified (i.e. no last name, pseudonym, etc.)
- Be available to join the call in a listening capacity and step in if the tenant feels uncomfortable or nervous at any time

#### **Tips to Share with Tenants Before Interviews**



- Tell your story using examples and anecdotes
- Speak specifically about things you know
- Take your time answering questions it's okay to collect your thoughts
- Don't be pressured to share personal information that you are not comfortable sharing
- Don't give information you are not confident is accurate
- Don't answer questions you don't understand break the questions down, or ask the reporter to do so
- It's ok to end the interview if it's hostile or makes you feel uncomfortable

# **QUESTIONS?**