KATIE O'BRIEN

Senior Director of Strategic Initiatives, National Women's Shelter Network, Inc.

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Portland, OR

National Women's Shelter Network

Katie O'Brien is the Senior Director of Strategic Initiatives for the National Women's Shelter Network, where she previously served as a founding board member for two years. A nonprofit leader with more than 30 years of experience, Katie brings deep expertise in strategic growth, fundraising, organizational leadership, and community engagement, along with a lifelong commitment to advancing services for women, children, and families experiencing homelessness and poverty.

Prior to joining the Network in this leadership role, Katie served as Executive Director of Rose Haven, a Portland-based day shelter and community center serving women, children, and gender-diverse people. She joined the organization in 2009 and became Executive Director in 2020 after serving in several leadership roles. During her tenure, she helped transform Rose Haven from a small program into an essential community resource, expanding services and partnerships to meet dramatically growing needs and supporting more than 4,000 people annually in Portland, Oregon—a city with one of the highest rates of unsheltered homelessness in the United States.

Katie is known for her collaborative leadership style and her ability to bring people together around a shared vision of dignity and care for those most often overlooked. Throughout her career, she has secured millions in funding and mobilized communities to strengthen the safety net for people experiencing poverty and homelessness. She is deeply committed to advancing compassionate, trauma-informed systems that center dignity, equity, and belonging—ensuring that women, children, and families facing the most difficult circumstances are met not only with services, but with respect, opportunity, and hope.