

Jeff Blackford Biography

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Jeff Blackford grew up in Anchorage, Alaska and started his first job at the age of eight delivering newspapers. Ever since, Jeff had a strong work ethic. After graduating high school, Jeff attended college in two vastly different environments! His first year, Jeff attended the Northwest Nazarene College in Nampa Idaho, the second was the University of the Virgin Islands on St. Thomas USVI. Can you guess what one he attended classes at more often? I can give you a hint, not the one on a tropical Island. But The Island was where Jeff formed many of his cultural, racial, ethical, and moral codes that stuck with him to this day. To speak up, stand up against hate, racism, bigotry, oppression and to defend fiercely what is right and wrong.

Jeff is passionate about helping his community, in fact, this is what fills his “cup” or what many call your soul. Social and community work is the core of Jeffs character. He is most enthusiastic about LBGTO, social, and political issues, Diversity, Equality, Equity, Inclusion, Access and Bias trainings and education, helping those in our community who are homeless, dealing with mental health and addiction related issues, and change within the justice and political systems. And it all starts by sitting down and having a conversation, building relationships and trust.

Jeff is an accomplished executive director and has over 30 years of professional experience. Jobs ranging from customer service, travel and tour guide, foundation development manager, general manager / night club owner to name just a few. Jeffs careers have always focused on community and giving back.

Jeff is proud of his accomplishments, and never loses sight that his accomplishments are made in part because he had great support from both his partner at home and his team at work. The ones that are noteworthy are, being awarded the Seattle GSBA (Greater Seattle Business Association) Business of the year award in 2004. Jeff and his partner Jim, through their nightclub, The Timberline Spirits, raised and donated over 100K to multiple organization and charities benefiting HIV / AIDS, LGBTQ Youth, The LGBT Community Center, HRC, Equal Rights Washington and many more. Jeff also gained the support and backing of the City of Albany, police and fire, the local Hospital and CCO and other non-profits, to approach a failing homeless shelter and propose that the agency Jeff ran, to take the shelter over to make improvements that would enrich the quality of life for the residents and allowed the owner and his family to retire. After several weeks of negotiating and no financial gain for the previous owner, Jeff was successful, and the shelter transferred ownership to the agency with a full year’s operations budget secured. Agency growth is something else Jeff is extremely proud of. When he first started as Executive Director, the agency had just celebrated 7 years. He had two other staff and an annual budget of \$89K. Jeff had a lofty goal and a vision for the community. He gave himself 10 years to achieve the goal. That goal was to have a location in each of the five communities that the Hospital CCO served. In just five years, Jeff met that goal, increased the agency to five locations, increased staff to over forty and increased the annual budget to over \$3.5 million. In his seventh year he negotiated the acquisition of the 140-bed homeless shelter increasing services from just addiction and mental health, now offering support for homelessness which all are intertwined, and support can be made at all three sectors of care.

Jeff and his partner celebrated 28 years together, May 2023. They currently live in Albany, Oregon in an 1878 Victorian that they have been lovingly restoring and decorating as close to historic accuracy as possible while still having modern accommodations. They both love to be pet parents to rescue dogs who need a loving home. They recently lost their beloved Roxie, a 19-year-old Black Lab mix who was their joy. Jeff also loves spending time in his greenhouse and gardens, antique hunting, and volunteers and participates in other Nonprofit fundraisers. Jeff and his partner Jim travel to Palm Springs, Ca a few times a year to recharge, see friends and plan to retire there one day, many, many years from now. The joy of collaborating with the community and making a positive difference in people’s lives is what keeps Jeff involved and happy right here in Oregon.