

# NWYS Board of Directors Board Report – Month 2019

Northwest Youth Services collaborates with at-risk, runaway and homeless youth to foster self-reliance.



Programs	
Current Success	At the end of January, the Ground Floor Day Center officially opened. With a new Coordinator on board and a growing team of staff to support the space, we welcomed youth who, for the fall and winter, did not have a warm place to go and connect with resources. The opening of the Center was celebrated with two events in early February: a thank you evening for major donors to the Capital Campaign led by First Congregational Church and a public Grand Opening for the community. This was a very well-attended event and highlighted the need for this service and the support these services have from the community.
Current Challenge	With the move out of the “main office” at 1020 N. State Street, our program teams are increasingly spread across the community. We now operate programs in 8 different locations (PAD, 22North, Francis Place, Herald Building, HUSLY, Skagit, Ground Floor, and 1020). This dynamic is creating new challenges for the timely transfer of documents and cross-team communication. The Leadership Team is working to resolve some of these challenges, and acknowledging that our work is significantly community-based is important when developing policies and protocols.
Current Opportunity	The Queer Youth Project is leading some important work, in partnership with the Center for Child and Youth Justice based in King County, to standardize and improve the level of care for LGBTQ identified youth regarding data collection and increasing knowledge and understanding for all staff in this area. This work is being fully supported by the Leadership Team, and in order to ensure implementation in all programs, a Core Team with representatives from different programs will work together to implement each phase. The first step that all staff are participating in is a baseline survey. This will provide data about where NWYS is currently in its understanding and competence in providing high quality care for youth identifying as LGBTQ.



Robin Meyer, Director of Programs

Development & Communications	
Current Success	<p>With the opening of The Ground Floor and closure of the Main Office for repairs, the staff at NWYS have experienced the momentum we have needed to revamp our In-Kind donation process. For years, all sorts of In-Kind items have been received by the organization, often by staff while they are trying to manage programming efforts. While this has been well intentioned, it has created a strain on storage and program priorities.</p> <p>With input from direct service staff, we have determined what items are of most need to unhoused youth and a list of community partners that program staff can contact for</p>

	<p>youth in stable housing. This same list that will be provided to community donors interested in supporting our work and will be posted on our website shortly.</p> <p>See attached for a sneak peek at our new In-Kind support plan.</p>
Current Challenge	<p>Early next month we'll launch a \$5K special campaign on Facebook to raise money to stock the Ground Floor's pantry and food service efforts. Please support this campaign by sharing it with your friends with a post about why the Ground Floor matters.</p> <p>Example 1: @Northwest Youth Services opened its new day center space in January – offering unhoused youth a safe place to shower, eat, rest, and connect with resources. This new space has a full-sized kitchen – please consider helping us create a healthy and functional food resource for youth by donating TODAY!</p> <p>Example 2: As a Board Member of @Northwest Youth Services, I couldn't be more proud to see The Ground Floor open and serving local youth in need! Help us build a food pantry to expand on the healthy food we can make available. Donate TODAY!</p>
Current Opportunity	<p>In this month's Board documents please find our 2019 Fund Development Plan. This plan articulates how Northwest Youth Services will work to raise the funds outlined in its 2019 Budget and calls to attention to specific roles the Board should play to meet our goals. At the Board meeting on 2/28 there will be time allotted to discuss this plan and ask questions.</p> <p>It's time to gear up for our <i>2019 Light Their Path Gala</i> – happening on Friday, November 8, 2019, at BTC. Sigourney will circulate committee member job descriptions soon in hopes of solidifying our committee and meeting schedule by March.</p>



Jenn Daly, Director of Development & Communications

Operations	
Current Success	<p><b>Finance Team</b> Changes to the Finance Accounts Payable procedures have improved our ability to remove financial responsibility from housing staff who have previously paid for hotel rooms, lease payments, and lease deposits on their own cards. We're developing procedures to pay for these expenses electronically through the finance department.</p> <p>Our business machines are being mapped and utilized at each service site to ensure the highest and best use of the copiers.</p> <p>Financial reporting documents are being reviewed and updated. The new Accounting Manager has improved processes to ensure accuracy in all of reports necessary to track our finances.</p> <p><b>Property</b></p>

	<p>The work at the main office is progressing. We have received two design proposals for the work and will be identifying the design/architect who will produce the drawings we need.</p> <p>We have the water mitigation proposal from Foundation Restoration and will meet with a contractor next week regarding pre-construction documents and review of the quotes we have for the work. The contractor will be the general superintendent for the project.</p> <p>The offices at Main are not in use and all staff have been moved to locations that ensure accessibility to youth we serve.</p> <p>The roof has been repaired at the PAD, dishwashers installed, and other minor repairs completed. We're currently in the process of selecting an installer for the flooring in the PAD, which should be completed by the end of March.</p> <p>Snow, snow and snow. The Leadership Team addressed the snow and safety concerns for staff traveling to and from work. Staff were given late start days, early release days and also ability to use their PTO for the balance of time during days when they could not get to work due to road conditions. The Operations Team has shared their appreciation for the consideration and procedures that supported their safety on the snow days.</p> <p>I want to recognize the Operations Team for their dedication and flexibility during our changing times. (Sydney Dennison, Shantel Rapp, Stephanie Wagner, Dianne Ersser, Ashtin Carnahan, and Christy Wales).</p>
<p>Current Challenge</p>	<p>Technology needs and planning is both our challenge and opportunity. The opportunity is that we fully upgrade our technology infrastructure to support the work we do at all levels of the organization, including ensuring we have the necessary privacy and security procedures in place. The challenge will be the cost – both for day to day operations as well as upgrading our hardware, applications, file storage system, and implementation of a common platform for client data collection and reporting. An assessment of our needs is under way and will be completed at the end of February; a report will be provided to us in March that includes a recommended action plan with priorities and estimated costs. IT planning moving forward will include actual costing of each element as well as identifying a sequenced plan for ongoing development and support of the needed infrastructure. IT Help Desk services will also be transitioned from the current vendor to a new vendor better equipped to meet our business needs.</p>
<p>Current Opportunity</p>	<p>Review of the 2019 Board Approved budget is underway and will result in a mid-year budget adjustment. The Finance Committee of the board will be updated and engaged in the work, thus ensuring board involvement.</p> <p>HR department needs are being assessed. There is capacity in the Operations Team to support the HR department and some staff time and resources will be allocated to the HR department increasing our ability to maximize our HR potential for hiring, providing staff development, and staff care/engagement.</p>



Paula Matthyse, Director of Operations

Executive Leadership	
Current Success	<p>The Leadership Team is welcoming the participation of Shantel Rapp, HR Manager, who provides critical perspective and information on many of the decisions and planning undertaken by the team. As of March 1, Shantel will assume a leadership role in the organization, and planning is under way to ensure that she is able to take on additional responsibilities. She has already participated in the current discussions regarding the budgeting process and prioritization of our spending plan. A report from HR will be included in this document starting next month.</p>
Current Challenge	<p><b>The Clinical Services supported by SAMHSA, the County, and the Dept of Commerce</b></p> <p>Building the clinical team continues to pose significant challenges, not the least of which is the limited pool of qualified candidates in the Bellingham area. I am working with HR and Sydney to identify opportunities for upgrading and broadening the reach of our advertising, which will add costs to our CMS budget that have never been considered. A recent conversation with SAMHSA regarding shifting dollars in our budget to cover this expense identified some potential strategies that they could possibly support.</p> <p>Efforts to mitigate the impact of the vacancies on that team include 1) contracting with a licensed practitioner in the community to provide individual supervision and case consultation – and pursuit of another potential consultant; 2) scheduling a meeting with the team and housing managers to begin creating a realistic structure and set of services that would ideally be available if fully staffed as well as identifying the priorities for the current staffing configuration; and 3) beginning review and modification of job descriptions for the entire team to ensure consistency with program design.</p> <p>And finally, management of client records has been historically very informal, each staff person “doing their own thing”, and lacking in the necessary security and confidentiality controls and standardization that would stand up to an audit. An effort is now under way to create a system that is compliant with state and federal requirements and protects the youth we serve appropriately.</p>
Current Opportunity	<p>The current activity related to reviewing the budget, including right-sizing the estimated revenue and re-configuring the reports, will enable the Leadership Team and the Board to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ better understand where/size of the gaps in both program operations and Core Mission Support</li> <li>○ engage confidently in discussing and establishing program and CMS priorities</li> <li>○ make strategic decisions about spending and fundraising goals across multiple years.</li> </ul> <p>Closely related to this activity has been a discussion about supporting the professional growth and understanding of agency management for the manager/coordinator level staff across the agency. At the time of this writing, we are in the process of scheduling the next meeting with those staff, intending to listen to their perceived needs as well as to share our ideas about how we can make that meeting as valuable as possible. Training on the budgeting process and ensuring their participation in its development will support their ability to provide leadership and assume a more clearly defined decision-making role in day to day operations.</p>

Harriet Markell, Interim Executive Director

