

# Executive Director Announcement



northwest  
**youth services**

## Who We Are

Forty-three years ago, a police officer, social worker, and teacher founded Northwest Youth Services to help young people experiencing homelessness. Today we are one of the largest non-profits in Whatcom County, with a smaller program in Skagit County. We are a vital part of the community response to the needs of young people experiencing homelessness. Annually, we serve more than 1,000 youth between the ages of 13 – 25. We have a \$3.5 million budget, 55 staff (40 full-time, 15 part-time), 100 volunteers, and an 8-member board of directors. We accomplish our work by collaborating and partnering with donors, volunteers, and community organizations in all sectors – nonprofit organizations, public entities, and for-profit businesses.

## What Sets us Apart...

... is *how* we do what we do. At the core of our work is heart and relationships, rather than data and demographics. Known for our strengths-based and trauma-informed approach, including a commitment to harm reduction, we meet youth where they are, with open minds and open hearts. As much an advocate for social justice as a direct service provider, we have a strong track record of serving LGBTQ youth. Rather than dictate what youth should or must do to access services and remain in our programs, we offer options and a safety net to support them in achieving their own goals. We want what's best for each individual and see the best in them.

## Mission

We collaborate with at-risk, runaway and homeless youth to foster self-reliance

## Vision

All young people have a place to belong:  
to be safe, heard, and valued

## Recent Growth

Our former Executive Director was the public face of the organization, inspiring in infusion of volunteer and community support. Under her direction, we rebounded from a challenging financial crisis in 2008 to the flourishing nonprofit we are today. Her vision, commitment, relationship-building skills, and fundraising ability were essential as we've grown and adapted to the needs of the youth we serve.

We've expanded rapidly in the last two years, collaborating closely with community partners, donors, and local businesses to increase housing options, and strengthen outreach and vocational/educational opportunities for youth through these three new initiatives:

**22 North:** We've more than doubled the number of housing units available to homeless youth through our collaboration with the [Opportunity Council](#). 22 North has a total of 40 units, 20 of which are designated studio apartments for NWYS clients over the age of 18. Wrap-around support services help residents meet their goals and support them on their journey to independence and prosperity.

**The Ground Floor:** In partnership with the [First Congregational Church of Bellingham](#), our outreach services have moved from the cramped lobby of our Main Office that served as a drop-in center. Located on the 'ground floor' of the church, our day center has more than 3,500 square feet of space where youth under 25 have a place to get out of the weather, do laundry, shower, cook meals, use computers, rest, pick up mail and access services that include case management, employment services, and access to education.

**Revive:** With a three-year funding commitment from SAMHSA (the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration), we launched a collaborative partnership with a variety of local community-based agencies to provide behavioral health services to youth and young adults in crisis. The Whole Person Care Approach will infuse all aspects of our service delivery.

Our other essential services are represented below and described in detail at [www.nwys.org](http://www.nwys.org).

## Our Community Partners

Bellingham Food Bank  
Catholic Community Services  
Chuckanut Health Foundation  
City of Bellingham  
Compass Health  
Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Services  
First Congregational Church  
Lydia's Place  
Opportunity Council  
United Way of Whatcom County  
Whatcom Community Foundation  
Whatcom County  
Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center



Justin,  
Age 19

Brittani,  
Age 14

Marissa,  
Age 21

David,  
Age 18



## In Whatcom and Skagit Counties:

- **68% of 18-24 year olds live in poverty.**
- **40% of youth experiencing homelessness identify as LGBTQ.**
- **Over 100 young adults are currently waiting for housing.**
- **19% of 10<sup>th</sup> graders have seriously contemplated suicide.**

## The Leadership Opportunity

### Why Us, Why Now

Northwest Youth Services seeks a visionary and strategic Executive Director who is well-prepared to provide the inspired external and internal leadership required of this role. The successful candidate must have a **background in proven, significant, and successful nonprofit leadership**, including the ability to oversee fundraising, programs, overall management and financial performance. The Executive works effectively with the board and staff leadership team to build on and strengthen our track record of innovation, collaboration, and mission success.

Northwest Youth Services is a remarkable organization backed by the incredible good will and support of a community passionate about finding solutions to pressing challenges through nonprofit partnerships. We are well-positioned to increase our mission impact through collective action. As our **strategic leader**, the Executive Director works closely with the board, staff, and stakeholders to define what that additional impact should be and how it will be delivered.

**Collaboration, relationship management, and community engagement** are essential to the Executive's success. The qualified candidate will bring a history of **accomplishment working within community systems as well as an ability to forge effective working relationships** with organizations and people, including the board, staff, donors, community partners, people impacted by the issues we seek to address, and other potential allies.

The Executive Director is **an articulate, inspiring communicator** who has a way of engaging others in a conversation about homeless youth so that people feel they are, and want to be, involved. They possess an ability to **authentically relate to and connect with** people from all walks of life, with diverse perspectives. They have a strong commitment to **diversity, equity and inclusion**, and determination to guide the agency to further embody these values.

Our growth over the last several years has been exciting. Now we're ready to **strengthen processes and systems agency-wide, with an emphasis on infrastructure**. This is a rich opportunity for a candidate who loves to bring their experience and expertise to this kind of organizational evolution, while preserving essential elements of the culture that supports our work.

A photograph of a person wearing a plaid shirt and jeans, holding a globe. The person's hands are resting on the globe, which is tilted. The background is blurred.

## Who We're Looking For: Does this Sound like You?

### Priorities

The Executive Director will focus on the following priorities in the first 18-24 months:

- **Stabilize the agency and grow into current opportunities** ensuring increasingly efficient and effective operations. Simultaneously and collaboratively with staff, attend to the implementation of our new initiatives: 22 North, The Ground Floor, and the integration of behavioral health protocols across all of our programs.
- **Establish alignment, a solid partnership, and collaborative working style on the leadership team** and across the organization to move the mission forward in sustainable ways. Get to know all staff, solicit their input, and build understanding for needed organizational changes.
- **Support the development, engagement, and expansion of the Board of Directors** by assisting with board member recruitment, orientation and ongoing training. Help provide focus and clarity to the board's governance and fundraising roles within the strategic plan and organization.
- **Get to know our community.** Develop and strengthen relationships with our public and private partners and supporters.

### You are:

- Strategic and visionary, with a **pragmatic, compassionate** work-style.
- A relationship builder – from kids to major donors, progressives to conservatives, the street to a cocktail party.
- A **passionate ambassador for the mission**, with compassion for and understanding of the life experiences of homeless youth, many of whom have been marginalized by poverty, homophobia and racism.
- An inspired and inspiring **fundraiser** who enjoys working with a strong development team.
- A savvy nonprofit administrator who likes solving problems in the least complicated manner possible.

- A systems-thinker, who looks across an organization, **sees and hears what's needed**, and implements it throughout.
- Able to strike a balance between preservation and innovation, and can influence others to embrace desirable change.
- A strong mentor who **grows the strengths of others** and develops their “bench.”
- An inclusive decision-maker who genuinely considers the opinions and wisdom of others.
- Able to **align teams** and get them thinking and working together.
- A natural bridge builder and a **great story teller**.
- Approachable with a warm easy manner, a lively sense of humor, and a strong backbone.
- Wise and experienced enough to **listen first and deeply**, and then take action with confidence.
- A direct and open leader who speaks from the heart and without judgement.

### You bring:

- At least 7 years of experience as the leader of an **organization serving the homeless**, ideally homeless youth, as an Executive Director or CEO in the nonprofit or public sector. Direct experience working with marginalized, traumatized or under-supported youth a plus.
- **Fundraising success** with individuals, governmental agencies, foundations and events.
- A clear track record of **building boards** of directors, working successfully with them to guide the organization.
- Depth and breadth of expertise in financial management, human resources and operations. This includes strong experience providing financial oversight to **programs supported by city, county, state and federal funding**.
- Demonstrated success as a **change agent** in a complex organizational setting.
- Proven experience **structuring and streamlining** a rapidly growing organization in a time of major transition.
- Business acumen, strong **administrative skills**, and know-how to collect and use data to make decisions.
- A keen understanding of how to **empower, support and motivate staff** of varying generations and cultural backgrounds.
- Experience building and empowering teams and organizational leaders while creating **clarity about roles** and responsibilities.
- Strong collaboration and partnership skills and a track record of working successfully in a **highly collaborative** community.
- A Bachelor's degree in public sector, nonprofit or business management, or a related field. Master's degree preferred.



### You're about:

- |                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| • Compassion        | • Perseverance                               |
| • Transparency      | • Lifelong Learning                          |
| • Vision            | • Work-life balance                          |
| • Equity            | • Walking your talk                          |
| • Cultural Humility | • Humor                                      |
| • Excellence        | • Strong sense of connection to young people |
| • Integrity         |  |
| • Humility          |  |

## To Apply

Please submit a cover letter and resume to the Search Committee at [nwys@roamconsultingllc.com](mailto:nwys@roamconsultingllc.com). We accept emailed applications only; no paper submissions. In your cover letter, in addition to sharing why you are interested in this job, please tell us about your connection to and understanding of the background and life experiences of youth experiencing homelessness.

*Applications will be reviewed upon receipt and full consideration will be given to applications received February 28, 2019. Interviewing begins in mid-March 2019.*

**Compensation:** This full-time exempt position reports to the Board of Directors. The expected salary range is between \$XXXXX, depending on experience and skills. Medical / Dental benefits, retirement, paid vacation/sick/holiday time and parking provided.



The search for this position is facilitated by Roam Consulting LLC, providing a full range of executive transition and search services to nonprofit organizations in the Pacific Northwest and beyond. Roam Consulting LLC is honored to partner with Northwest Youth Services to recruit an Executive Director for the next stage of its growth and development. Questions may be directed to Amanda Madorno, Principal at Roam Consulting LLC, at [amanda@roamconsultingllc.com](mailto:amanda@roamconsultingllc.com) or 425.488.7747.

## About Location: Bellingham, A Gem of the Pacific Northwest

Northwest Youth Services is located in Bellingham, Washington, in the beautiful Pacific Northwest. Bellingham sits on the shores of Bellingham Bay, just 90 miles north of Seattle and 21 miles south of the Canadian border. With both sea and mountain views that include the San Juan Islands, Mt. Baker and the North Cascades, the city offers a rich variety of [recreational, cultural, educational and economic activities](#).



Education is key to the community, with two community colleges, as well as Northwest Indian College and Western Washington University. The combination of physical beauty, friendly people, and affordability for a West Coast location make Bellingham a desirable location for families and retirees. The city has consistently been ranked as one of the best places to live from multiple sources, including Livability's [Top 100 Best Places to Live](#), as well as [Sunset Magazine](#) and [Outside Magazine](#). Bellingham is a [college town](#), noted for its [clean air](#), [cyclability](#), [green power partnership](#).