



Board of Directors Board Report – March 29, 2021

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



Elizabeth Abbott, Acting Clinical Director

REVIVE	
Current Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are moving forward in the Medicaid process and have now received approval from Amerigroup and Optum, two of the five Medicaid insurance plans. • We are back to providing drop-in hours at Ground Floor, 22N, and the PAD which allows us the opportunity for youth engagement and support of staff. • NWYS has received an award from Washington State Department of Health to receive 100 naloxone kits for distribution and the Behavioral Health Team is working with the Harm Reduction Workgroup on identifying training and appropriate messaging. • Although one of the BHT Interns left to pursue a job opportunity in another part of the state, our remaining intern continues to add to the team and has been doing outstanding work supporting young people.
Current Challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It continues to be difficult to find available mental health supports in the community. One major community mental health provider has stopped taking new clients and another has a waitlist of approximately nine months, further narrowing options for people with Medicaid insurance. This is partially due to a segment of the population who have never felt the need to access services prior to COVID, a decreased no show rate with telehealth and people staying connected to counselors for longer periods of time, and difficulty retaining qualified staff.
Current Opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are extremely excited to share in Jason’s vision of creative engagement and the founding of the Art Hive, a creative space for healing and community building. • NWYS is a rich learning environment and the BHT is exploring what a more robust master’s level internship program might look like. • We are in talks with a local licensed social worker who meets the state requirements to contract for necessary supervision for associate level social workers. • We have two grant applications submitted (Upswing Coalitions Systems Enabler and CIGNA) aimed at increasing BHT and Director level capacity.





Jenn Daly, Director of Development & Communications

Development & Communications	
Current Success	<p>The year is off to a positive start – it has been fun to connect with donors in partnership with Jason and start our collective work to envision the future of Northwest Youth Services.</p> <p>Mandi has been working diligently to meet with service clubs and professional networks in Skagit County to help spread the word about our work and goals. These meetings have created some promising relationships.</p> <p>We have been working in partnership with Sydney to ensure our office and program spaces reflect our new brand. Our goal is to ensure that all of our spaces reflect a shared connection to our new brand by the end of 2021. Our current focus is 108 Prospect and the 1020 Achievement Center, with hopes of painting and branding the Ground Floor, PAD and new Skagit offices this year.</p>
Current Challenge	<p>Event Fundraising for 2021 and Beyond – We are still facing many unknowns with 2021 – will we be able to gather in-person this fall? Virtual event fatigue is real and local events are raising about 50% of their goals (this often includes sponsorship dollars).</p> <p>We would like to start soliciting sponsors for our Fall “event” with two scenarios ...</p> <p>In both scenarios, we’d like to develop a video that introduces our vision for Northwest Youth Services and where we’re going. Sponsorship dollars will help us produce this content.</p> <p>Scenario #1 – Host a dinner or lunch to celebrate our new vision in person. Program focused on mission and vision, young people and an ask for support.</p> <p>Scenario #2 – Premiere this video content as the kick-off to our Fall Appeal effort. Host a virtual event and conversation about where we are heading.</p> <p>In both scenarios, we will be teeing up our events to come in 2022 (we hope to have news to share on this front at the Board meeting on 3/29)!</p> <p>Also, look for our sponsorship information in your inboxes soon!</p>
Current Opportunity	<p>Sunnyland Garden Party – The breweries of Sunnyland have joined forces to host a spring garden party, with the proceeds benefiting Northwest Youth Services. Clearly the threat of COVID is still very real – we’re encouraging small groups to drink outside on our behalf 😊</p> <p>More information: https://www.nwys.org/events</p>





Paula Matthyse, Director of Finance & Operations

Operations	
Current Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financial tracking successful for our Office of Homeless Youth contracts. Monies are being redistributed so we can spend down this money before the contract expires.• All contracts have been reviewed and program managers have discussed their plans to ensure all funds are spent down by the end of June.• New phone system implementation successful. Staff learning the new software and using the less expensive options we have available.• Space needs refined, shared and discussed. Staff moving to the Achievement Center at 1020 N State Street working with Sydney to pack and relocate at the end of the month.• Space at 108 Prospect Street – accent walls featuring bright colors of our logo being painted this week and next. Thanks Daniel and Sydney!
Current Challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Every day the staff face challenges that surface. All hold the lens for trauma-informed practices framed in positive youth development. Our recent presentation by the ED to work toward healing engagement had an impact on perspective. My future board reports will reflect the word “CHAMPION” instead of challenge.• Champions – Finance Team for designing and implementing a system to support the T RAP funds disbursements in Skagit County.• Champions- Data Management Team for work to streamline paperwork and identify use of the data file management system.• Champions – Whatcom Housing team that is engaging in conversations across the continuum of care in NWYS to ensure equity, diversity and inclusion for youth in need of housing.• Championing the vision for a youth emergency shelter has begun and teams are discussing the way to how.• COVID communication with partners engaged Shantel, Jason and Rowan. Staff have responded to available vaccines and work continues. Gratitude to all especially Shantel for working to create access to staff.
Current Opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We are working with the Opportunity Council to subcontract and engage youth and landlords to spend T RAP monies to prevent eviction.• Davin Technology is creating a frame for our IT needs using a long range lens. We’ll have a map/plan for replacing older hardware, ensuring we can utilize cost effective software for our data filing system, and include the vision for the Achievement Center so youth have access to technology to attain their goals.• Insurance for the organization is in due diligence process in preparation for June contract.





Rachel Handy, Director of Skagit Programs

Skagit Programs	
Current Success	<p>In Skagit, the team has been supporting each other to meet youth needs and filling in for each other as individual vacation time has been much needed as we come out of the busy Winter months. Hiring for a Housing Case Manager is progressing and we hope to have an update from the housing team soon! The diligent work of the engagement and outreach folx has helped a few youth identify rentals and obtain stable housing. This is a huge success in such a competitive rental market. Staff have increased time at the office and with the team getting access to the vaccine this month, we are eager to have regular hours at the Skagit office once more.</p> <p>Whatcom engagement programs including the Ground Floor, Critical Transitions and Street Outreach have been so amazing to work with. The entire team at the GF came together to support Rowan taking some time off, showing the strength of the team and program during that time. The CT team in Whatcom has been successfully engaging youth to find safe housing and work towards housing stability. This included supporting two youth who aged out of the PAD and are benefiting from the continuum of care that NWYS can provide. SOP celebrated the hiring of Peter Miterko into the position of SOP Coordinator! We are so excited to be implementing the SOP program and held the first outreach route on the 23rd. These programs will continue to grow together to form a streamlined “front door” to services and support.</p>
Current Challenge	<p>The theme across all programs is building capacity and sustaining the work through essential self-care. We are only able to support others to the extent that we are supported and taking care of ourselves. Self-care is part of the resistance!</p> <p>The increased number of youth in need of support after this difficult year is an on-going challenge for the Skagit outreach and engagement which is at capacity. The vacancy rates continue to be a barrier for youth in all counties, especially Skagit and Whatcom. The need for a stable office space in Skagit continues and we are working diligently through challenges to meet this need.</p> <p>The SOP program has a deadline from our RHY funders to be fully implemented by April 18th which we are making great gains to be in compliance and avoid losing the funding. One component is having the two SOP Specialist positions fully filled which we hope to have an update on this soon! Working with the CT program has shown the need for housing supports specifically for youth who identify as BIPOC and LGBTQIA+. Safe and affirming housing is incredibly limited or nonexistent however absolutely essential in our support of youth.</p>
Current Opportunity	<p>Skagit County will be granting NWYS just over \$800,000 to distribute the next round of eviction prevention assistance through the rest of the year. The supportive collaboration of the county is opening new opportunities to advocate for youth when new resources come available.</p> <p>Adair and I met with the folks from Tangled Thicket Farms and had great conversation about future collaboration (shout out to Alex for connecting us!). We hope to build this</p>



	<p>partnership to create volunteer and experiential opportunities for youth over the summer.</p> <p>Mandi continues to bridge new and beautiful connections in Skagit and we look forward to seeing how these seeds blossom!</p>
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Shantel Rapp, Director of Human Resources

Human Resources	
Current Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are very happy to announce that we have selected a candidate for the PAD Program Manager position and they have accepted our offer! Kellie Shanahan will be starting on March 25th. Kellie has extensive experience working with young people and will be real asset to the team. She will start out working with us part-time and will move into the role full-time in June. Page will continue to support the PAD and assist with onboarding Kellie through April 30th. We appreciate Page’s assistance at the PAD and are excited to have Kellie join the team. • We have hired Serena Streitman as an On-Call PAD Youth Advocate. We are excited to have Serena join us as well. • We continue to screen and interview for all our open positions. • The direct service staff are now eligible to receive the COVID vaccine! I am happy to report that many staff members have received their first dose of the vaccine. • With shared information from Malora Christensen, Grace & LEAD Program Manager, we have been able to work with community partners through Lummi Tribal Health Center, Base Camp, and Unity Care to get last minute vaccinations for many NWYS staff. This has included direct service and administrative team members as well. I am super appreciative for these community members in reaching out to us with grace and kindness in sharing the vaccine.
Current Challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One staff member has left the organization this month, Rebecca Bianchi. Becca worked as a Youth Advocate at the PAD for almost two years. We are thankful for their contributions and wish them well in their future endeavors. • We have had two Whatcom Housing Case Managers put in their resignation notices. The Whatcom Housing Team has been an area where turnover has been low. This has come as a bit of a shock and they both have provided sufficient notice to hire new team members. We are happy for these team members to move on to new things and they will be greatly missed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Leigh Eubank has been with NWYS for two and a half years. Leigh is moving out of state and her last day will be June 1st. ○ Patrick Egan has been with NWYS just shy of 6 years and is moving on to new things. Patrick’s last day will be April 1st. • We have many positions to fill! Please share with your network. If you know of anyone who may be interested in any of the following positions please direct them to our website for more information, www.nwys.org. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assistant PAD Program Manager ○ PAD On-call Youth Advocates ○ Director of Whatcom Housing Programs



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Street Outreach Specialist ○ Temporary Skagit Housing Case Manager ○ Whatcom Housing Case Manager: Permanent Supportive Housing ○ Whatcom Housing Case Manager – 2 positions ○ Director of Engagement Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We were very close to filling the Director of Whatcom Housing Programs position and ultimately the lack of diversity in the area deterred them from accepting. Though this was disappointing we continue to have good candidates and the interview process continues.
Current Opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● With recent opportunities provided to NWYS in receiving the COVID vaccine we are building relationships with Lummi Tribal Health Center and Unity Care in possibly providing a mobile clinic for young people to access the vaccine. ● I continue to be motivated by NWYS leadership. I look forward to the work ahead in the strategic planning process. I am inspired by the Healing Centered Engagement presentation presented by Jason this last week. With this work I can see NWYS heading in a positive and healthy direction for youth and staff.



Jason McGill, Executive Director

Executive Leadership	
Current Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We have started our Healing Journey as an agency. I was able to present the Healing Centered Engagement Model of Care. We will be posting this video in the Board portal so you all can watch as well. ● The 1020 Achievement Center is taking shape. We have paint up on the walls and have identified a space for our new Art Hive within the Achievement Center
Current Challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● One challenge this month has been the lack of resources to offer young people when they exit the PAD. We recently had two youth who aged out of services and the only resource we could offer was to travel outside of the area. ● Another challenge is figuring out what to communicate to y'all each month so any suggestions will be welcomed.
Current Opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Being that we have no resources for young adults to transition into after they age out of the PAD services, we have started the process of identifying/creating a young adult shelter. This shelter will serve young folks between the ages of 18-25. With this opportunity, we will be seeking out support from various entities within the community. I have already started the conversation with potential partners and city staff, and it appears that we will have the support that we will need to get this shelter up and running before the winter months. ● Skagit Services will be moving into a new space. We recently identified two potential spaces and will report out that decision during the April board report.

