



Board of Directors Board Report – March 6, 2023

At Northwest Youth Services, we affirm youth experience and autonomy, as we work together to foster collective healing and justice, in order to dismantle the systems of oppression that perpetuate youth homelessness.

Advancement

Respectfully submitted by | Dejah Kutrovski, Senior Director of Advancement

- Our AmeriCorps Vista finished up their yearlong partnership with us. We offered them an official job within the Advancement Team as the Volunteer and Donations Coordinator.
- Our next Vista will be focused on working between the Advancement Team and Queer Youth Services to build capacity for both teams.
- We had a successful Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting for the new PAD house.
- The team is still planning and getting excited for the NWYS Annual Luncheon happening on March 15th.

Public Policy

Respectfully submitted by | Eve Smason-Marcus, Public Policy & Community Action Manager

- Eve Smason-Marcus transitioned into the new role (for them and the agency) of Public Policy and Community Action Manager successfully at the beginning of 2023. They have been fully onboarded to the ACI team, Healthy Whatcom, Washington Coalition for Homeless Youth Advocacy (WACHYA), Resident Action Project (RAP), and the Whatcom Low Income Housing Alliance (WLIHA). They participated in Mockingbird Society’s Advocacy Day on 2/3 as well as WLIHA’s Housing and Homelessness Advocacy Days 2/6-2/8.
- Two youth action board members along with NWYS staff that are on the Whatcom ACI team participated in A Way Home Washington’s Anchor Community Initiative Learning Session and Lobby Day 2/14-2/17. Youth and staff attended workshops in Tacoma 2/14, 15, and 16 and lobbied elected officials in Olympia 2/17 for continued funding of the ACI program and increased funding for the Homelessness Prevention and Diversion Fund (HPDF) from \$1,000,000,000 to \$5,000,000,000. Youth also lobbied to extend the Temporary Rental Assistance Program (T-RAP).
- Oliver Trulock, Youth Community Engagement Coordinator did a phenomenal job supporting youth action board (YAB) members. He supported them throughout the week in workshop spaces and exploring the State Capitol. He has built strong relationships with YAB members that can be seen in



how the YAB members trust him, engage in programming, and feel comfortable showing up authentically.

- Weekly emails are sent to all staff with 3-4 actions to support legislative actions that would support the young people NWYS works with as well as legislative agendas of community and coalition partners.
- Goals over the next couple months include:
 - Eve coordinating monthly outreach meetings between agencies (HOT, Nooksack, Bridge 2 Services, Ferndale, NWYS to start) across Whatcom County to build relationships, share data, and improve outcomes
 - Supporting Oliver in hosting focus groups of QTBIPOC young people and onboarding more QTBIPOC youth and young adults to the YAB.
 - Working with Emelie and Ground Floor staff to find a weekly time for Eve to have “office hours” at the GF and start Civic Engagement programming with youth.
 - Continue connecting with other agencies doing legislative work around youth and young adult homelessness to learn from them and build relationships for future advocacy work.
 - Connect with local efforts to oppose the new jail tax and build/participate in a coalition to campaign against the tax.

Young Adult Services – Engagement

Respectfully submitted by

Emelie Sanabria, Youth Engagement Manager & Adair Jewell, Associate Director of Skagit Engagement Services

Whatcom:

- The SOP route calendar has been created and routes will begin 2/27/2023 – routes will include various locations throughout Bellingham – with rural routes included every other week
- Starting on Mondays the Ground Floor will begin hosting an AA and NA meeting each week. After 90 days we will be able to register our location to be included on the national AA/NA schedule
- The Ground Floor will be hiring a Youth Development Coach to provide more case management and support for the youth – this will also include activity planning and coordination

Skagit:

- Skagit Engagement leadership attended the Anchor Community Initiative Conference this month with our Skagit County Core Improvement team (including staff from Away Home Washington and the YMCA) and five youth who are current members of our Skagit Youth Action Board. Takeaways from this conference included new and exciting youth-created tools for measuring equity within housing and outreach services, renewed energy and collaboration with other counties across Washington, and deep appreciation for our youth who showed up 110% and brought their voices and brilliance to all of the workshops and roundtables.
- In Skagit we are excited to have recently signed on our new house! The Engagement and Housing teams are working together to form our vision for the new space and are beginning the big move and furnishing of the new drop in space, offices, and youth apartments.
- We have had a freezing, drizzly February. We have been working closely with community partners such as First Steps Center, Friendship House and Welcome Home Skagit to get folks who are staying outdoors connected to the cold weather shelters, safe parking, and day warming centers and to keep those joint community operations open as long as possible.



- We are currently hiring for a Skagit Engagement Care Coordinator II position, which will support street outreach routes, community partnership building, walk-ins, and provide intensive supports to youth on their case load and on the Housing Youth Interest Pool as well as support the Anchor Community By Name List project. We have had an incredibly hard time finding qualified applicants and are currently trouble shooting new ways to creatively recruit.

Young Adult Services – Housing

Respectfully submitted by	Rebecca Pendergraft, Associate Director of Whatcom Housing Services & Andy Foyé, Associate Director of Skagit Housing Services
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Whatcom:

- One young adult exited TLP into Section 8 housing and one moved from homelessness to TLP.
- Two young adults exited HUSLY into secure housing and two moved into HUSLY with a solid obtainable path forward.
- Whatcom Housing has various exciting opportunities soon. The Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project is becoming available in Whatcom County. NWYS hopes to lead this project in collaboration with our Anchor Community Initiative efforts as well.
- The Whatcom Housing team is also excited to have a new Care Coordinator joining March 1st.
- The Whatcom Housing team continues to be a team player with the Whatcom Anchor Community Initiative.

Skagit:

- We closed on the property in Mount Vernon that will house our drop-in center, staff offices, and transitional housing units!
- We're entering into a partnership with a new landlord to lease transitional living apartments in Sedro-Woolley.
- Current and former Skagit housing youth participated in the Anchor Communities Initiative conference in Tacoma as part of the ACI Youth Action Board.

Learning & Impact

Respectfully submitted by	Ashtin Carnahan, Director of Learning & Impact
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- Ashtin Carnahan, Director of Learning & Impact resigned from her position with NWYS, her last day being March 2nd
- The Learning & Impact team will be absorbed back into the Operations pillar, the transition of supervision has begun; Maggie Newhouse will be supervised by the Senior Director of Operations and Gabe Stonoha moved back into Advancement
- Ashtin Carnahan attended an ACI conference with all agency staff and brings back the data learning to provide to Maggie, who will step into the Data support position with the Whatcom ACI

Culture & Employee Relations

Respectfully submitted by	Barrett Zimmerman, Associate Director of Culture & Employee Relations
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- Update: Our All Staff Lunch and Learns/Town Halls have been successfully transferred to CER as part of Kiana Jenkins' responsibilities. We have fully mapped out our monthly training schedule and quarterly Town Halls. Lunch and Learn trainings will take place in March, April, May, July, August,



October, and December. Town Hall events will take place in February, June, September, and the Holiday Party in December. February's all staff gathering was a Town Hall event focused on a celebration of Black Excellence, staff share-outs, and presentation of the strategic vision.

- Celebration: As of January 19, Kiana has been with the organization for two years! I am grateful for their continued good work for the organization, including last month's well-received presentation of the strategic vision to the board and beginning the onboarding process for new Cultural Impact Committee (CIC) members.
- Goals: CER team is moving towards data-driven decision making this year, including pre/post effects of the pilot wellness program for the Strategic Leadership Team, quantifying exit interviews, outcome data for CIC onboarding, analyzing hiring metrics, and collaborating with Rice Insurance for a mid-year employee benefit survey. Ideally, understanding our data will help us establish better hiring practices, overcome recruitment challenges, implement better total rewards, and form ideas of how to support staff more effectively, all of which may lead to better retention of staff and to support of Objective 2 of the strategic vision.
- Challenges: it has been a difficult month for hiring and recruitment with the overall number of applications down from the previous months, which is striking compared to the hiring surge reported by the BLS for January. It has been challenging to find new outlets for spreading our postings in the community and nationally as well as garnering applicants through our many ways of getting our job openings posted and shared.

Finance & Operations

Respectfully submitted by

Stephanie Wagner, Associate Director of Finance & Sydney Denessen,
Associate Director of Strategy & Operations

Finance:

- We have completed the purchase of the new house in Skagit County and are working on budget modifications with our funders to allow usage of contract funds for repairs, maintenance, and mortgage costs. We hope to hear back within the next few months on the status of our Rapid Acquisition funding application.
- Finance is partnering with the grant writing team to submit renewal applications for many of our funding contracts that renew mid-year.
- We are working on streamlining some of our expense management systems for consistency and alignment across multiple processes, which should increase functionality for staff and provide better documentation for audits.

Operations:

- Danee Smith is taking her new role in stride. She's been supporting the PAD in creating new systems and documentation, working with the City and the licensor, and participating in the RHY audit.
- Our maintenance tech is finishing up small changes at the PAD house and we're anticipating inspections over the next month, making us closer to having the new license approved.
- We're working on some remodel and repairs at the new Skagit house – anticipated move-in is by mid to late April.

