



What's Happening at Strive March 2018



Welcome New Employees!

Kevin Groff, DSP
Norma Sue Hicks, Lead Inv.
Melody Jones, DSP
Lisa Lopez, HR Asst
Tyler Marsh, DSP
Shane Molenda, DSP
Shawn Quintana, DSP
Maria Safken, DSP
Douglas Saterland, DSP
Caleigh Zedicher, DSP

Notes from the CEO:

Submitted by: Sharon Jacksi

Proverbs have always been a challenge for me. Sometimes I get them a bit twisted ... as an example "Don't close the barn door until you lead the horse to water" So, to avoid both confusion and embarrassment, I promised myself I would never repeat this saying, **Note To Self:** *Never make a promise you can't keep! I think it's time I give them a try again.*

"Hope springs eternal" ~ this captures my many trips to Denver over the past month to continue conversations with HCPF regarding the compensation (or rates) Strive receives for serving individuals in our Agency. With the promise of careful consideration of our requests we are submitting Level 7 and SIS re-do appeals. The disparity of compensation has created an inequitable distribution of resources and has negatively impacted Strive's budget.

"A penny saved is a penny earned" is the philosophy behind our extensive look at operating expenses. This has driven certain reorganizational strategies designed to reduce expenses and more effectively utilize our resources.

And then, of course, there's **"Many hands make light work"**...not necessarily so; however, with the current staffing shortage the many hands of our dedicated staff has made continuation of our work possible. In 2017 a report compiled and written on behalf of the President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities was presented to the President of the United States. It states that: [People with an intellectual disability rely on DSPs for daily support that enables them to live in U.S. communities. Challenges in finding, keeping and training this workforce persist and have reached crisis levels in the long-term services and supports industry nationwide]. We are not in this alone. It is not just Strive's challenges and **we will make it!!**

Finally, and most importantly, is **"Yesterday's the past, tomorrow's the future, but today is a gift. That's why it's called the present"**. It may be a present with challenges, but the gift of working with the dedicated and problem solving staff of Strive has been, is, and will continue to be one of the greatest gifts I had in my life.

Thank you all so very much for your dedication and commitment to Strive and the individuals we serve.

Departmental Updates:

Vocational/Residential

Submitted By: Valita Speedie

Sweet Beginnings

The Sweet Beginnings crews are working on new merchandise. Currently we are learning braiding to make headbands and we are working on plastic canvas embroidery. Everyone is excited to be learning new skills and to have some new products for sale. We are still making toilet bombs and bath bombs etc. Feel free to come over and see what we are up to and what we have for sale.

Sweet Success

In Sweet Success we are cooking like crazy. We are filling orders and enjoying every moment of it. We have made taco casseroles, lasagna, cakes, etc. Come to us with your culinary needs, we will happily make your dinner. We have been working on our decorating with frosting and creating seasoning mixes. So, we are ready for the new month and anxious to make you all of your St. Patrick's day needs!!

Golden Years

In Retirement we have moved our location to the room Milestones was located in. We are enjoying the additional space and are creating activity stations for exercise & crafting. We are enjoying our time with Walter on Tuesdays with Mindful Movements, if you have not tried it, it is amazing!! We are looking forward to exploring all the possibilities with our new found space. We have also been working with Milestones and Milestones 2 on decorated bags for the homeless project.

Milestones

- In Milestones, we have moved to the area Retirement was in. We love our new space and are having fun exploring the endless possibilities laid out before us. We are partnering with Sweet Beginnings and they are going to be making us Lincoln Logs out of pool noodles. We cannot wait to use them. We have gone on some outing and have gotten some new sensory objects. We have also partnered up with Milestones 2 and are making dog treats for the homeless with dogs. We are also putting bags together for the homeless men, women, their children and pets. We are looking forward to giving those out and helping others in our community.
- In Milestones 2 we are happy to report on our first month. We have enjoyed pet therapy days, along with playing board games, going on outings, doing some cooking and working on our street safety skills. We enjoy arts and crafts projects, recently we personalized our placemats for dining.

- Staff Tonya Lee and Amanda Wood would like to thank all of you for your donations to help the homeless in our community; together we make great things happen!!!

Botanical Gardens



A photo from our participation in the Lions Club Parade. The banner and decorations were created by the talented individuals and staff at Botanical.

- There is currently construction underway at the Gardens. The main Library and Gift Shop are being modified in order to make room in the main library for the Pomrenke children's library. This should be completed by mid-March with a new cozy area designed specifically for kids to read and explore the world around them. The Pomrenke Library is being made possible due to the amazing donations provided by the loved ones of Bill Pomrenke.
- The Botanical Gardens staff members, in partnership with Grand West Mosquito Control District, are working on a conceptual design for the creation of a new Pollinator Garden.
- March 24th is the Birthday of Elizabeth Harris one of the original founders of the Botanical Gardens. **Happy 100th Birthday Elizabeth!**

Wellness, Active Wellness, and Labor Solutions

508 Fruitvale is undergoing some exciting environmental changes. The walls are being painted in shades of blue (goodbye to that "off" colored orange/peach)! "Pass through" windows have been put in 2 of the unused offices, one of which will be designed around outer space (a favorite theme of one of our new individuals). Staff continue to work on visual, sensory and tactile items for each of the individuals we serve. A TLC room has been outfitted at 508 with comfy rooms, beds and soft lights to provide care for individuals feeling unwell and not wanting to attend their regularly assigned programs.

Residential:

Even with a staffing shortage our Group Homes are running smoothly. **Great KUDOS go out to all DSPs who are making this possible.** During the last

month the decision was made to keep only two homes (Victoria and 1444) open during the days (Monday thru Friday). Individuals were given the choice to:

- Attend existing program...
- Attend the new program (currently called Milestones 2) which has been designed for free time, optional outings, games and crafts or
- Spend their days at 1444 or Victoria. This has reduced the number of staff, who were spread out over all of our group homes, and has had the added benefit of getting folks out into new environments during the day.

Public Relations & Development...

Submitted By: Doug Sorter

Maintenance

- We have completed the remodel of the children's library at the Gardens.
- The office is almost complete in the Gardens Gift Shop area to start the season.
- The repairs were made to 508 Fruitvale for better access to the different rooms.

Transportation

- We have a couple of our small buses that are in need of repair to the lifts.
- Purchased two smaller vehicles for use in Children Services and PCA departments to reduce the mileage costs of employees using their own vehicles.
- Tina has worked very hard to revamp the bus routes and reduce time and travel.
- Met with the District 51 transportation person on helping with our needs.
- Met with Don Kendall from Hilltop on how we may work together utilizing there down times with our needs.

Safety Committee

- The safety committee has been very active with inspections.
- We are working to make it more of a team effort fixing issues as inspections are being performed.
- A new manual is being developed with the help of our insurance agency Home Loan.
- All identified safety repair issues are addressed with Bray for repair.
- Working on protocol for security in the different facilities including active shooter.

Employee Recognition Committee (ERC)

- Continue to support the Committee with picking the employee of the month in addition to assisting them with Ambition for the Mission employee choices.
- Working on a wellness aspect to introduce to the STRiVE community of employees

- Have set the date for the employee picnic to coincide with the last Garden Groove Concert with Ralph Dinosaur on Friday August 24th 5:00 pm.
- All staff meeting went well supplying information about the organization and **making it fun!**

Capital Campaign

- Moving forward with grant requests in several areas.
- Completed and submitted a grant to the Colorado Health Access Fund and Goodwin Foundation.
- Met with Western Colorado Community Foundation to discuss campaigning. They appear to be positive with some funding.
- Met with Mind Springs CEO, she was extremely helpful with suggestions for funding.
- Reconnected with the Daniels Fund. They will be visiting us in the near future to tour our current location along with the proposed new location.
- Rocky Mountain Health Foundation has shown an interest in supporting our campaign efforts.
- We have several others we are currently communicating with that are interested as well.

Events – All are being held at the Botanical Gardens

- The **Easter Egg Hunt** is just around the corner Saturday March 31st, contact Doug if you'd like to volunteer.
- **Tulips & Juleps Derby Party** is moving in the right direction Saturday May 5th
- **JUCO Picnic** is coming together. Bill Vrettos is working on the autograph books with Office Depot.
- June 1st **Stray Grass Concert**
- July 27th **Boys Of Summer Concert**
- August 24th **Ralph Dinosaur Concert (Employee Appreciation Picnic)**
- October 13th **“Rollin on the River”**

Check out our web site for details and how to get involved!!!

Accounting Services ...

Submitted by: Chris Bergquist

- Evaluating new payroll vendors
- Focusing on accounts receivable to try and make determinations on collectability
- Working on next year's host home contract

Human Resources

Submitted by: Andrea Podgorny

- We are pleased to have Lisa Lopez join our team as the new HR Assistant. If you get a chance, stop by and welcome her.

Behavior

Submitted by: Christina Cruz

The New Year offers all of us the opportunity for a new start. We start our New Year off with a clean slate. This is a time for letting go of the old and making way for the new. This gives us the opportunity to get rid of distractions and old energy that has kept us stuck from the previous year.

A few good ways to start your new year can be:

- Creating a vision board of what you are looking for in the New Year.
- Getting rid of the old. Cleaning out your environment of old things and making space for new things.
- Create a bucket list of things you would like to accomplish in the next year.
- Learn a new skill such as yoga or meditation.
- Start keeping a daily journal to keep track of your daily thoughts and/or feelings. This gives you the ability to track your progress and goals throughout the year.
- **Love yourself. Dedicate yourself to taking care of yourself in the New Year. Buy yourself a new outfit, new pair of shoes, plan a vacation, etc.**

Happy New Year!

Early Intervention...

Submitted by: Nancy Ketchum

- Our team remains busy serving children and families, as well as completing some personal trainings. We recently had the Department of Human Services come in to do a Mandatory Reporter training. We are working with law enforcement to set up a Drug Recognition training as well as a training on working with visually impaired children that will be done by A Shared Vision. These trainings will not only help us serve our families better but also help ensure the safety of the team.
- The EI team is one that has to work closely together to serve children and families. We rely on each other to complete various aspects of our job, and will consult each other if someone is struggling on how best to serve a particular child. We also depend on each other to step up and assist when we may be unable to do our work because of personal or family priorities, or illness. Without this strong support for each other we would struggle individually and as a team. Several EI team members have recently encountered personal issues that required our team to rally around them, and at times take on additional work. The entire team has stepped up as needed, without complaint or hesitation. Our team cohesiveness carries over to our families and the work that we do individually. **"Thank You"** to everyone for being such a part of the reason EI is such a successful team. You are all an example for others.

Program Operations...

Submitted by: Sarah Bonnell

- Case managers are starting to get more comfortable in their positions and understand their expectations. It is difficult to learn such a complex job and also take time to document. While a necessary part of the job, often this is pushed to the back burner. Case management leadership has been working very hard to emphasize that all case management activities should be entered into the system to have a proper case file. With people increasing their documentation frequency and input, our TCM billing is starting to really make some great progress. From November to last month, you can see a steady progression of improvement for their levels of documentation. **Many thanks to the case managers and their hard work!**


BILLING UNITS	
4,184	November, 2017
5,362	December, 2017
6,643	January, 2018
7,750	February, 2018

- Case management and provider agencies are working to reassess the levels of need and funding attached to individuals in services. Currently, we have many individuals who had a rate set several years ago and their needs do not meet the state funding. This is an enormous task, and Cassie Williams has graciously been willing to be the point person receiving hundreds of documents, filtering through them and writing up a needs report and increased funding request for each individual. With this increased funding, this will allow for our individuals to maintain in their desired environment without interruption.

Good job!

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES	
1	Tracy Brown, Sandra Padilla
2-4	Debra Edmands, Donna Fox, Sharon Francis, Suzanne Jacox, Barbara Metsker, Hattie Motter-Shore, Vanessa Roberts, Alyssa Weeks
5	Christina Cruz, Cassie Krafka
6 – 9	Doug Sorter

March Birthdays

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Daniel Craig, Ed Madaris	Stephanie Sheely	Mickey Burns, Evenlyn Gibson, Brenda Hahn	Kat Goodwin, Brendon Osborne		Susan Adamson, Brandy Gebbie
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	Kathryn Conradi	Yvonne Renova	Shanalyn Hibberd	Ruth Dickey	Julia Craig	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Patti Buzzell, Katrina Katen	Andrea Podgorny		Tessa Binam, Anne Fitzgerald, Joe O'Connor			
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Krysta Forbes-Dolan, Donna Foxx, Michelle Sharman		Sharon Francis, Judy Whittlesey		Logan Mason	Tina Neil	Angie Eustice, Doug Sorter, Tanya Workman