What’s Happening at Strive
June 2018

Notes from the CEO:
Submitted by: Sharon Jacksi

Every month brings Strive one month closer to the opening of a new home base for both MDS Case Management and Strive Services. Remodeling has begun on this two story, 30 thousand square foot building at 790 Wellington which will house: Case Management, Nursing/Psychiatric Services, Infant and Toddler programs, Early Childhood, Accounting, Human Resources, Training, and Residential/Vocational administration. Some of the benefits of this new location include: greatly expanded parking, multiple conference rooms, technology access for multimedia and, possibly best of all, a state of the art heating and cooling system! An assessment of future needs was conducted and space has been allocated for growth in populations that are experiencing an increased need for services. This includes early childhood and diagnostics. Although this has been a relatively slow process, the thoughts and planning which have gone into our new facility are designed to meet the needs of our community for many years to come.

Since, regrettably, money does not grow on trees Strive has begun a capital campaign called Framing the Future to help support this venture. Part of this campaign has involved letting others in our community and our state know of the good work Strive has done, currently does and will do in the future. This outreach has resulted in May being a month of unanticipated press coverage for Strive. The new building project (790 Wellington) hit the front page of the Daily Sentinel, along with a very supportive editorial. Strives services were even featured on several local TV news stations. All in all the increased media coverage and growing community support speaks volumes for the work we all do and the importance of it in our world.

May was again the month for Strives traditional Tulips and Julips fund raiser. Scheduled each year on the Kentucky Derby day this event raises...
funds for Strive’s Children’s programs and includes a silent auction, lunch, and corn hole competitions this year. TVs were strategically placed in tents for guests to enjoy the race while enjoying the food. Women in fancy hats and men in jaunty attire graced the lawns of the botanical gardens which were, as the result of Carissa Hall and her merry crew’s many hours of work, beautiful as usual!

At last, it is happening!! The employment market is making a slow but steady turn around and we are seeing an uptrend in both applications and hiring for DSPs. CORE, under the leadership of Caleb Burgesser, is training new applicants as quickly as possible and integrating them into the homes as part of their training process. It goes without saying that the commitment and dedication you have shown in continuing to care for the individuals receiving our services during this drought is another reason that Strive is a leader in our community. Others may talk the talk, but each of you has well and truly walked the walk! Many, many thanks!

Employee survey ~ results are in, are being tabulated. The results will be presented to the Leadership Team, the Board of Directors and to all Staff at our quarterly meeting in June. They will also be featured in next month’s newsletter. I would like to thank each of you for taking the time to complete this survey. All of our work lives are very compressed and, regrettably, we don’t always have the time to just sit and share. The survey is one mechanism for us all to express what we see and experience as being positive while identifying areas of growth for each of our programs.

**Departmental Updates:**
**Vocational/Residential**
Submitted By: Valita Speedie

**Botanical Gardens**
Lots of planting this Spring at the Gardens! Individuals brought some color into the children's garden and planted in several of the raised beds. They also began planting our turtle garden. A Garden designed to feed our tortoise and turtles natural homegrown goodies!

Botanical is excited to announce the addition to our current USDA permit! We are in the beginning phases of rearing our very own Butterflies! This has been a long time in the making and a great privilege to have the approval of the USDA and the addition to the permit.
I am happy to announce that at approx. 3:30 P.M. on Sunday, 5/27/18, Botanical Garden’s very first Butterfly emerged since gaining the addition to our permit!!

**Introducing Harold! We raised this guy from an egg!!**

This picture was taken 30 minutes after he emerged and his wings are not yet able to expand which takes anywhere from 1-3 hours for the blood to begin circulating so that the wings can expand.

Elizabeth Harris, founder of the Heritage Garden, was out to the Gardens in May to plant her annual crops in the Heritage Garden’s raised beds. All crops are based off of the historical first grown crops in the valley. Last year they produced enough we were able to share with visitors to the Gardens!

Planting has started in the Pollinator Partnership Garden we have with Grand River Mosquito Control District! Over 20 plants have been planted with more to come. All plants are a beneficial aspect of Saving the Bees and Butterflies by increasing the pollination population. This will provide a safe place free of pesticides and harmful chemicals, free of commercial development causing a lack of fresh pollination plants to thrive and encourages the growth of our pollinator population for years to come!

Pollinator Awareness Week is the week of June 18th. Make sure to get out there and plant your Pollinator Garden. We will have free information about creating your own Pollinator Garden, the benefits of a Pollinator Garden and Pollinator seeds while supplies last in the gift shop during the month of June!

And remember when you visit the Gardens .... what looks messy to you is vital for our Pollinator population!

As many of you know there are all kinds of different events held at the Botanical Gardens. From meetings, weddings, Tulips and Julips, The JUCO picnic, the Sensory Friendly Christmas and concerts, to name a few. There is so much which goes on behind the scene (before, during and after) to make these events both beautiful and successful. A special “shout out” needs to be given to Carissa Hall, Jenneth Radar, Lani Mackey, Brenda Hahn and Nancy Franco for their “invisible” work which is critical to the seamless success and popularity of the events and of the Gardens as a whole!

**Milestones 2 & Retirement:**
The individuals in these programs continue to tend their garden, which is doing great. Interest is so high they again went shopping for more seeds to plant. These groups are volunteering to pick up trash at the park. Recently they went to the park in
Palisade and enjoyed eating outside kicking a ball, drawing with chalk on sidewalk and policing the grounds.

During the past month, these groups made some new bird feeders out of stale bread and toast with peanut butter and seeds, and have thoroughly enjoyed seeing the birds devour them. They also continue to enjoy the Mindful Movements activities coordinated by Walter from the Behavior Department. As a group everyone has been cleaning up our yard and they even got the fountain running!! These groups have eaten out back and several times just beaten the spring rains. Our next new project, which everyone is looking forward to, is a blanket project . . . . expect pictures to follow! We made Mother’s day cards as well.

**Milestones**
This group has gardened with Milestones 2 and found that watering is great fun. With the nicer weather there have been a number of outings to the park, bubble therapy, music therapy, and spent time interacting with our sensory balls. Individuals have enjoyed their coloring projects and the feel and ability to stack their sensory building blocks. Folks in this group will also participate in the project.

The individuals in **Sweet Beginnings** are making guy coasters as well as starting guy decorator pillows!

This group is also making Glass mushrooms for a fairy garden or as an interior decoration. And, since it’s never too early, we have starting knitting scarves for the fall. We are stretching our muscles and trying new projects, and enjoying every minute.

**Sweet Success** is again serving lunches at 950 Grand every other Wednesday (the Wednesday after payday) and we are loving both the cooking and the serving!! Come see us!! This group has also been keeping busy cooking daily, working on skills and practicing teamwork. We have made many orders for dinners for staff. If you have a day coming up where you may be too busy to cook, let us know because we would be happy to cook for you!!

**Healthy Body Healthy Mind, Coffee Klatch, Performing Arts:**

**YES,** it was that time of year again and the annual Rifle Trip was a great success. According to both staff and individuals, “Rifle was a blast!” It was a fun filled day with fishing, hiking, cave tours, and a BBQ. There was time to be alone, time to hike with friends and memories to be made. This annual Rifle trip is truly a beautiful experience for all that attend. We want to thank all that assisted us with making this day possible!
Healthy Body Healthy Mind: Under the leadership of Kathy Riddle and Rich Parker this group has also adopted a spot at the Botanical Gardens to plant flowers and care for them. Carissa Hall, supervisor of the Gardens, was very excited at their project and sent us the attached picture which she says “Looks wonderful and brightens up the area!!” She will have a sign made and posted giving credit to this group.

Woodshop remains ever busy with the summer season and customers ordering outdoor furniture. Eight Adirondack sets, 3 benches and 9 corn hole board sets have been completed. They have started making an Arbor made out of driftwood they have collected that will be installed at the Botanical Gardens.

Mobile Crew has not slowed downed and are welcoming additional customers. They continue to maintain Strive’s internal properties in addition to 20+ external customers. This group has been expanding their services to include some landscaping, planting shrubs and bushes for community customers, while teaching the crew new techniques and job skills.

Creative Creations: is all about creating new ideas and expanding into new techniques. They have started learning how to burn designs into the wooden signs they make, creating a whole new look. They are currently making Colorado flag signs using this technique and the customers love them!
Uniquely Yours: has started using new techniques to decorate the flower pots just in time for the planting season! Fabric wrapped pots are bright and vibrant adding a splash of color to any patio or home. They also have created beautiful hanging bird feeders and birdbaths with water features! Stop by and see all the beautiful products that the Strive programs are creating!

Wellness: A new “space” to hang out!

As shown in last month’s newsletter, the solar system covers

Now the rocket ship hangs from the ceiling so the individuals chair can roll in and enjoy the view. He loves it!

Residential: The individuals living in our group homes look forward to this time of year. The warm weather allows for outdoor adventures. Many have plans for the JUCO Picnic and games. Others have plans for fishing, parks and patio grilling. Many of the homes have started planting their flowerbeds and gardens. With the closure of homes and new combinations of people in the remaining houses, new friendships have been made between roommates that otherwise would not have occurred. We are grateful to staff and their willingness to continue to provide care and support in the ever changing homes. Applications for employment are coming in and we are hiring people who are passionate about serving people in our care. The DSP’s positive attitudes and commitment to the individuals has given stability to the changes. We are grateful for our current staff and hopeful for the new incoming staff.
Host Homes
- We currently have 4 people that are living in group homes that are interested in and currently exploring Host Home options.
- Strive is also working with the GJRC to find HH options for people that are transferring out of the GJRC.
- We have several people interested in becoming HHP’s and are interviewing 3 people this month to become possible HHP’s through Strive.
- With the growing HH program, we have hired two additional employees as HH Monitoring Specialists; we are excited to welcome Jamee Hansen and Sarah Unruh to our department.

Public Relations & Development...
Submitted By: Doug Sorter

Maintenance:
- Coolers are working in the many locations, 950 Grand is still up and functioning.
- 309 Kava has a unit that failed and will need replaced cost is $8,600.00.
- Other medical homes are have been checked and rechecked to insure reliability.

Safety:
- Committee has met and moving forward on inspections.
- Working with Home Loan and others building and strengthen our procedures.

Employee Recognition Committee:
- Voted and choose employee of the year Ed Madaris from the woodshop
- Changing up the Ambition for the Mission process to have a bigger impact
- Looking at setting up point system to reward outstanding employees

Grants:
- Have received funding from a local foundation for $48,000 to help the diagnostic clinic
- Several others in the pipe line local and eastern slope showing some promise

PR/Marketing:
- Have had a good degree of successful media stories and articles, Daily Sentinel, KKCO and KREX
- MBC Grand Radio is working on a roll out to give STRiVE much more coverage at their cost after their CEO attended a STRiVing for Success meeting

Capital Campaign:
- Still working with several eastern slope funders after receiving huge support from our local community. Those that have already pledged and contributed to name a few, Strive Board of Directors 100%, Strive Foundation Board 100%, Strive Leadership Team 100%, Bacon Foundation, Goodwin Foundation and Western Colorado Community Foundation.
Daniels Fund has been over to Grand Junction and reviewed our project, Gates Foundation, Colorado Health Foundation, Colorado Health Access Fund and many others are showing interest.

Events:

- Terrific turnout for our annual JUCO picnic this was by far the largest one to date. Thank you to Barbara Traylor Smith for raising funds from all the service clubs and to Bill Vrettos for always developing and getting the autograph books made and donated for this event.
- Tulips and Juleps event was another success. The committee that is involved is one of a kind. We are so pleased that they decided to help STRIVE raise funding for our children’s programs.
- First concert of the Garden Groove series was great. Stray Grass played to a perfect size crowd, had beautiful weather and again raised money for our children’s services.

Upcoming Events:

- Boys of Summer concert July 27th 7:00 to 9:00pm
- Ralph Dinosaur concert and STRIVE Family company picnic, August 24th 5:00 to 7:00 picnic, 7:00 to 9:00 concert.

Accounting Services ...

Submitted by: Chris Bergquist

- Starting to prepare for the ERISA and financial audit coming up over the next couple months.
- Working furiously to implement Paylocity to have it functioning 6/11/18
- Making final adjustments on budget for FY 19 and hope to have final in the next couple weeks.

Human Resources

Submitted by: Andrea Podgorny

- HR continues to be busily hiring new employees, especially DSPs to work in our group homes. Our monthly CORE started on June 11 with 16 new employees, mostly DSPs.
- We also rolled out the new TimeClock program, WebTime, through Paylocity this week and ran our last payroll with ADP. With any change, we are running into some bumps along the way but we are excited to transition to Paylocity next payroll.

Behavior

Submitted by: Christina Cruz

- Summer is here! There are many things we all enjoy about summer. Ask any kid and they will tell you the best thing about summer is no school. I am not sure how many adults agree with this sediment. However, we can all agree that sunshine and warm weather are two of the best things about summer. The long days of summer give us time to enjoy picnics and BBQ’s with friends and family. Also, who doesn’t like to go to the pool or the lake and take a nice
dip in the water to cool off? Tans! Right in the middle of summer is the Fourth of July. As Americans we get to celebrate this great nation and the freedom that comes from living in the great U.S.A. Again, it gives us a great opportunity to spend time with friends, family and have a BBQ. One of the things I like about summer is the fact that I don't have to wear a jacket and so many layers of clothes. Many people like summer because it is vacation time. Many people get to go see family and friends they have not seen in a long time and possibly even go to the beach. ICE CREAM! There is nothing better than a yummy ice cream cone when you are enjoying the hot weather.

- Many of us will be taking advantage of the nice weather and many of the opportunities listed above. Many of the people we serve may not get to enjoy the summer in the same ways that we do. Many of them do not have friends or family to have BBQ or go on vacation. I encourage all of the staff and individuals at Strive to take time to be creative and plan ways to enjoy the summer. This can include going to the Botanical Gardens, going for a walk on the river front trail, or going to a park to have a picnic. Let’s make summer for everyone! The Behavior Department encourages all of you to have a safe and fun summer!

*Early Intervention*

*Submitted by: Nancy Ketchum*

**Early Intervention**

- Currently serving 150 children and families
- EI is currently going through a lot of transitions. We are losing one of our Service Coordinators, Francesca Nelson. She will be moving to Eastern Colorado. We are currently trying to replace her, as well as trying to hire an additional Service Coordinator, due to high caseloads. We also continue recruitment efforts for an Occupational Therapist.
- Even short staffed our team continues to step up and take on extra, work, as well as rally around each other to offer support to team members. This is what allows EI to continue serving the families to the best of our ability, and remain a cohesive team.

**Success Story:**

We have a little boy who entered our program about 1 year ago. He initially came into the program very low tone and qualified due to a motor delay. He was assigned to Cheryl Bodie, OT who provided services and helped him catch up to where he should be. Cheryl noticed a concern with communication and referred him to Mary Johnson, SLP. Mary began working with this little one who is now saying 3-4 word sentences. His progress has been exciting for his family and team to observe. This little one is due for an annual review and Mary Johnson feels he will now come out developmentally on track. What an exciting result for this little guy.
MDS Resource Coordination...
Submitted by: Sarah Bonnell

- We have been awarded new resources have been allocated to our community for the Developmental Disability Waiver (otherwise known as the comprehensive waiver)

- The Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (the Department) will authorize 168 enrollments in the Home and Community-Based Services for Persons with Developmental Disabilities (HCBS-DD) waiver beginning on May 8, 2018. As of May 1, 2018, 2,936 individuals are waiting to enroll in the HCBS-DD waiver with a timeline of As Soon As Available. The authorized enrollments will apply to the first 168 individuals who are waiting for services as of May 1, 2018. Within our region, we were awarded 3 additional DDW slots. One of which was to a woman who has struggled with evictions and potential of homelessness, instability with finances, nutrition and other health related concerns. The opening of this waiver resource for 24-hour care will enhance her quality of life substantially!

- On June 4th, through the passage of HB18-1407, the department initiated enrollments of 300 additional people from the waiting list. Within our CCB’s local region, we were awarded 9 additional slots. Many of these people have been in and out of crisis and were in desperate need of additional services to support their level of need. This will be extremely helpful for our individuals.

- In an effort to improve our intake process, we have restructured our intake team and procedures. We have increased our Monitoring Specialists roles to also support our families while doing intake. They will call families weekly while working on enrolling, to assure that they do not get lost in the shuffle. Additionally, we are having one point person for the new enrollment. New enrollments will be facilitated by Isaac Ortega. While Isaac has been hired in the last 6 months, he has shown an incredible strength in enrolling individuals, quickly and efficiently. He will be a wonderful support to families and individuals.
**JUNE ANNIVERSARIES**

1  Sabrina Hoffman, Melody McClaugherty, Jessica Nelson, Michaela Rawley

2-4 Chelsea Dexter, Amanda French, Evelyn Gibson, Kathleen Goodwin, Linda Gubbini, Robyne Henderson, Jane Hyatt, Vivian Lybarger, Cory Meyer,

5  Carissa Hall

6-9 Sharon Jacski, Kristina Kukus, Tonya Lee, Peggy Maurer, Brenda Moseman,

10  Chris Bergquist

12  Mickey Burns

31  Kristie Gomez

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