

HIGHLIGHTS

State—HCPF/DHS/Alliance.

- **Early Intervention Colorado**—Our current system structure in Early Intervention gives the responsibility for evaluating development of kids birth to three to the local school districts. But the responsibility for handling referrals, determining eligibility and providing Service Coordination and service delivery lies with the Community-Centered Boards (like Community Connections). This has resulted in an inefficient system that is not a seamless process for families. The state is currently studying the possibility of transitioning those evaluations from the school districts to the CCB's, and Community Connections will be participating in a pilot to work through what a new process could look like.
- **Office of Special Auditors**—We have the final report from the OSA audit that has occurred with all 20 CCB's and the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF) over the past year. On Monday, December 3rd, our VP of Case Management Elizabeth Fabrey and I will be present at the hearing where the report will be delivered to the Legislative Audit Committee. Once the LAC has accepted the final report, we will be able to share it with you. And I should be able to tell you all about this unique experience at the board meeting. Apparently, this is the first time nongovernmental organizations have been through this process. Lucky us. In the meantime, we have received notification of overpayments due to the audit findings and the Department is requiring a repayment of \$6,424.25 for Targeted Case Management billing that has been disallowed due to a variety of reasons, including insufficient documentation, duplicate billings (due to HCPF software error), and lack of proof of case manager qualification. All CCB's have backpayments due. Elizabeth and her team have reviewed all the disallowed units, and we are determining whether we wish to appeal some of the findings.
- **Conflict-Free Case Management**—Is moving along at a snail's pace. Currently, we are not in a position where we have to urgently make changes because of our rural exception, and the infrastructure and guiding Rules are not in place for any changes to occur anyway. I am ready to pounce when the stars align for us to construct a new system, though. I participate in a bi-monthly meeting with HCPF and the other Case Management Agencies across the state with CFCM as the topic. At the last meeting in September, we were told that HCPF was reviewing our Business Continuity Plans that we submitted in June and would notify us of missing materials. So far, I haven't heard anything, so I presume that have everything they need from us. They may not like it or approve it, but at least they have it.

Local Community

- Accessible Communities Team program—Since we will not have ACT funding for 2019, we are trying to get the last few accessibility projects done before the end of December.
- DAAR—Durango Area Association of Realtors held a gathering for all its grant recipients (including us, yay) to share a little bit about our work and then invited us to do a follow-up radio spot highlighting our work and thanking DAAR for their contributions. (Ellen has also participated in multiple other radio programs over the past couple of weeks to promote all our fundraisers below. Our friend and partner Jim Morehart even joined her for one.)
- Local First—CCI has joined the Local First group in La Plata County and will be included in this year's coupon book! As soon as I finished this report I will be headed over to their kickoff celebration for the new Be Local Coupon book for 2019.
- Thrive Living Wage Coalition—I applied for Community Connections to be an aspiring member of the Thrive Living Wage Coalition. Wouldn't it be wonderful to be able to claim that we paying a living wage to all our employees? Though the Coalition focuses on La Plata County, meeting the living wage in LPC usually means being slightly above in the rest of our catchment area due to the differences in cost of living.

Fundraising

- Festival of Trees—As you all know, Festival of Trees is fast upon us!! This year we have grown leaps and bounds with 27 trees, 5 wreaths and several additional sponsors who did not choose to decorate. Our current sponsorship total is \$14,700!! I think just about everyone is signed up to participate in one way or another during the weekend. So, we'll see you there for fun and festivities!
- Raffle—Thanks so much to the Board for taking the leap of faith to try out the Raffle. After just 3 sales events, we've already made over \$1100. Thanks to all of you who are taking the time to help promote the Festival of Trees and sell tickets. In addition to the money you are raising, you are doing more than you know to simply get our name out there and increase our exposure in our communities. Please keep track of any challenges or successes you encounter so we can debrief and plan for next year.
- Colorado Gives Day—With all the attention on Festival of Trees, we don't want to forget to plug Colorado Gives Day on Tuesday, December 4th. This is a statewide annual initiative to celebrate philanthropy and encourage online giving. Through the Colorado Gives Day platform, we recently received an unexpected \$1000 donation from a local business owner who has never donated to CCI before. It's just one more way to get our name out and engage potential donors. Go to www.coloradogives.org and type in our name. We were the first on the list when I did my search.
- Share the Love—And yet one more fun thing going on this month. Subaru's Share the Love event is going on, and anyone who purchases a new or used Subaru at Morehart Murphy Subaru between now and the end of the year can

select Community Connections to receive a \$250 donation. Last year, Share the Love resulted in a \$15,000 donation to our company. So it is definitely time for your neighbor to replace that old clunker.

- Successful grant applications—City of Cortez awarded us \$1500 for 2019. Still waiting to hear back on many more. We were also approved by the First United Methodist Church in Durango to be a recipient of a portion of their December collections, which they approximated to be about \$20,000. This money will be used to make accessibility improvements to the bathrooms at the Holly House.
- Memorial Fund—We were saddened to learn that a friend and community partner in Cortez passed away recently. Penny Livingston was the Special Education teacher at Cortez High School for 14 years before she retired. During my years in Case Management, I received countless referrals from Ms. Penny. She was always looking ahead and worrying about what supports would be available for her students after they left school. She chased down parents and documents and whatever we needed to help smooth the transition from childhood to adulthood. Her family has generously requested that in lieu of flowers, donations be sent to Community Connections. We are honored by their generosity and to be thus associated with such a remarkable woman.

Internal CCI highlights

- Open enrollment—We are pleased once again this year to be able to continue major medical coverage for our staff with no additional cost to our employees. After last year's hike of 30%, we were relieved by the plans our current plans was able to offer us for 2019 at a low additional cost. A couple of plans even had a slight decrease in monthly premium. Our HR Department has spent the past couple of months comparing plans, figuring out dental and vision insurance and communicating the changes to employees. Offering these benefits are crucial for us to continue to be a competitive employer.
- Compensation plan—As you may recall, over the past year, we have been working on developing a compensation plan for the company that allows for more equity and transparency, encourages growth and longevity with the company, and favorably compares with competing employers in our region. We hired an outside company, Payscale, to do the research and market comparisons for us. Since receiving their information, our VP of Human Resources has been working on developing a tiered compensation plan based on their numbers. This has required both defining the tier qualifications for each position and calculating the associated wages based on the benchmarked percentiles. We have a draft and Shannon is putting together the numbers to find out what the impact would be. We hope to implement this new plan with the new budget/fiscal year.
- Policies—Our departments are working on reviewing and tweaking our agency policies for review, editing and eventual approval by the Board. We intend to have a draft ready by the end of the year for the Board to start reading.

Facilities

- Fort Lewis College House—We are currently under contract with a closing date of January 2, 2019.

Other

As always, we have a million and one projects going on and daily tasks to take care of. I try to whittle it down to the most meaningful for Board members in this report, but please feel free to reach out to me if you have other questions or want to know more about any piece of our business. There are far more items that I leave out than I include, which I presume you appreciate. I trust you will tell me otherwise!

Acronym Cheat Sheet

- ACT (Accessible Communities Team) – Supporting businesses to become more accessible
- ART (Administrative Review Team) –The Executive Team and Program Directors oversight of Quality Indicators
- The Arc – advocacy for people with intellectual disabilities
- ANCOR (American Network of Community Options and Resources (for DD))
- BHO (Behavioral Health Organization)
- CCB (Community Centered Board) we are 1 of 20 in the state
- CCI (Community Connections, Inc.)
- CDLE (Colorado Department of Labor and Employment)
- CES (Children’s Extensive Services)
- CHCBS (Children’s Home and Community Based Services)
- CMS (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services) Federal
- CORA (Colorado Open Records Act)
- DHS or CDHS (Colorado Department of Human Services)
- DSP (Direct Support Professional) – field staff working with clients
- DVR (Department of Vocational Rehabilitation)
- EI (Early Intervention) Developmental services for kids Birth to 3
- FOT (Festival of Trees)
- HCPF (Health Care Policy and Financing) State Medicaid office
- I/DD (Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities)
- IMA (Insurance Management Administrators)
- JBC (Joint Budget Committee at the Colorado legislature)
- LPC (La Plata County)
- MOU (Memorandum of Understanding)
- PASAs (Program Approved Service Agencies) Marcy’s department
- PCA (Personal Care Alternative) residential services not in a host home
- RCCO (Regional Care Coordination Organization)
- Residential (a.k.a. Comprehensive – our adult 24/7 support)
- ROI (Return on Investment)
- SJBHD (San Juan Basin Health Department)
- SLS (Supported Living Services) – Services for adults living independently or with family
- TCM (Targeted Case Management)

- UW (United Way)