



Randy's Story

In March 2018, Cascade Connections received a referral packet for a young man looking for residential support services. Sometimes these referral packets can be overwhelming, as they highlight the behavioral challenges of the individual and not necessarily any strengths. As the Director of Cascade Connections' Bellingham Supported Living program, my initial response was to tell our state Case Resource Manager, "No way!" However, as the days passed, I began to second guess my response. While there were some definite risks, could we really say no to someone in need? Cascade Connections' values state, and I believe, that every person has value and a place in our world, and that they were made with purpose and deserve community, a sense of belonging, and love. When Cascade Connections says, "Opportunities for Everyone," we really do mean everyone! Who were we to not give him a chance at the very least? After talking to my team, we were all in agreement that we should meet with the young man in Mount Vernon's foster care system.

It was late March when we met Randy for the first time at the Children's Administration Office in Mount Vernon. We were nervous and not sure what to expect. Our apprehensions went away as we spoke with this fidgety young man. He started by sharing with us his love for Harry Potter. Then he asked each of us what kind of cars we drove. Randy was much different in person than the referral packet made him seem! Shortly after that meeting, we decided that we wanted to take a chance and move forward with providing support for Randy. As I've watched all the pieces fall into place, I have no doubt there



was a greater plan and purpose in all of this. Randy may have exhibited some challenging behaviors at times, but he has also had a very challenging life.

After being placed into foster care at a very young age, Randy experienced trauma in his first foster placement. Randy then spent the rest of his childhood bouncing from one foster family to another. The more we learned about Randy's past and his experiences, the more some of his challenges make sense, and the less concerned we are about our ability to support Randy well. We have spent the last month shadowing Randy in his Community Transitions class, and attending appointments with counselors and his current team at Secret Harbor. The more time we spend with Randy and members of his team, the more convinced we are that Randy will be successful in our community with the right supports from Cascade Connections' Bellingham Supported Living program.

We are so excited and grateful for the opportunity to work with Randy!

Nikki Kilmer

*Bellingham Supported Living
Program Director*

Third Annual Hamster Crawl Success

On June 2, 2018, Cascade Connections hosted the **Third Annual Hamster Crawl**. This fun fundraiser event took place in downtown Bellingham. Participants started at The Local Public House where they learned about Cascade Connections and our mission. Dinger, the Bellingham Bells mascot, was also there to meet Hamster Crawl participants. Participants then enjoyed walking around downtown Bellingham enjoying food and beverage specials from our route sponsors. We all met up at The Underground later in the evening for the ending party and raffle drawings.

Thank you to **Haggen Food & Pharmacy** and **92.9 KISM** for being our Title Sponsors. Thank you to F.I.L.P. Painting for their Gold Sponsorship, and to Bellingham Promotional Products for making the Hamster Crawl t-shirts, sweatshirts, and lanyards. And thank you so much to our route sponsors for making the event possible:

The Local Public House
The Underground
Bellingham Bar & Grill
Bayou on Bay
Brotha Dudes
Casa Que Pasa
Cosmos Bistro
Grand Ave Alehouse
Horseshoe Café
Rook & Rogue Board Game Pub
The Firefly Lounge
Uisce Irish Pub

We would also like to thank our raffle sponsors and business that helped us promote the event:

KISM 92.9
Haggen Food & Pharmacy
Hempler Foods Group
Bellingham Bells
Mallard Ice Cream
North Bellingham Golf Course
AB Crepes
Pure Bliss Desserts



Grand Avenue Alehouse
Brotha Dudes: Fresh Eats
Costco
Black Drop coffeehouse
Boundary Bay Brewery
Fairhaven Stones Throw Brewery
Aslan Brewing Company
Eye Candy Lash & Wax Studio
Pickford Film Center
Elizabeth Station
McKay's Taphouse and Pizzeria
Shearer's Hair Design
Applied Digital Imaging, Inc.
The Filling Station

And thank you most of all to everyone who participated and helped make Hamster Crawl such a fun and successful event! All proceeds from the event were designated to benefit Cascade Connections to support people with disabilities to live and work in our community.

Donations from Businesses: Alcoa Intalco Works, Harbor Lands Company, Kroger, MOD Pizza, YourCause, Network for Good, Buffalo Wild Wings, 2ROOFS

Churches and Foundations: AmazonSmile Foundation, Hope In Christ Church, Mountain View Christian Reformed Church, Third Christian Reformed Church

Donation Received on Behalf of Mark Hildebrand Transportation Program: Lynden Lions Club

Memorial Donation for Lloyd Broersma: Don & Bernice Kooy

We Are Hiring!



Everyone who runs a business or organization knows that it is important to have good people working for you. Your business or organization is only as good as your employees, and I believe we have the best, most caring, competent people employed with us. Having good employees is key to providing good services and ensuring that you are successful in your mission. This is especially true when your mission is to provide supports for people. Right now, we have a reputation of providing good services and because of this we have a waiting list of people who want those services. But, sadly, we have a staff shortage and need to hire more people to be able to meet our current obligations, as well begin to serve new people. Currently, we need to hire at least

20-25 people in our agency in a variety of positions.

How can you help? Spread the word and tell your family and friends! Currently we are offering a referral bonus of \$100 to any employee who refers someone to us for employment if that person is hired. Also, if this referred employee stays employed with us for six consecutive months, the employee that made the referral will receive an additional \$100 bonus. We are also implementing a \$250 signing bonus for all new hires whose start date is between June 1st and July 31st. The \$250 will appear on their first paycheck. In addition, those new hires will receive an additional \$250 upon successful completion of their introductory probation period at the six-month mark (must be in good standing and have completed all training requirements). Please let anyone who might be interested know about this opportunity!

George Beanblossom
Executive Director

Buying or Selling a Home?

Cascade Connections now has a partnership with the 2Roofs team at Windermere. The 2Roofs realtors donate 20% of their commission to Cascade Connections when you use them as your realtor to buy or sell a home. The donation comes entirely from their commission, so it is at no additional cost to you! If you have a realtor who you have worked with before and who you would like to work with again, you can also mention that to the folks at 2Roofs and they will reach out to your realtor and ask them to participate in the program as well. To get more information, or to let them know you're interested, please visit www.2roofs.com/cascadeconnections. Please feel free to share this information with anyone you know who may be looking for a realtor!

Correction

In our last newsletter, we said that the Ferndale Ace Hardware had donated 5 gallons of paint for Make a Difference Day. However, that was not correct. It was actually Dean Hendricks from the Lynden Ace Hardware who made the donation. Our apologies to Dean and everyone from Lynden Ace Hardware for our mistake.

BUYING OR SELLING A HOME?

CASCADE CONNECTIONS
opportunities for everyone

Learn More:
2roofs.com/cascadeconnections

Why not use a Realtor who will give 20% of their commission to Cascade Connections at no additional cost to you?

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www.facebook.com/cascadeconnections

and  Like US!

Return Service Requested

Please visit us on the web at
cascadeconnections.org
to learn more.



Summer 2018 Newsletter

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Partnership with Christ the King (CTK)

We are excited to announce that Christ the King (CTK) – Bellingham has chosen to have Cascade Connections be one of their community partners. CTK has a number of organizations in our local community that they have picked as their community partners. CTK has chosen to dedicate time and resources to supporting each of their community partners in achieving their missions. They have done so much for us already including donating cleaning supplies for our clients' homes, and helping with outdoor clean up and yard work at one of our clients' houses.

On May 31st, they hosted a caregiver appreciation dinner for Cascade Connections staff. Employees could pick from a variety of relaxing activities such as chair massages, manicures, and yoga. There was also a gaming room and opportunity to participate in some relaxing crafts or take picture at the photo booth. Staff were also treated to a wonderful dinner made by CTK volunteers.

In addition, they also helped us to put on our annual company picnic this July. We are very grateful for their support and the time and effort of their hardworking volunteers.

