



## Cascade Christian Home Upgrades and Renovations



CCH staff and residents with newly installed floor



Floor remodeling in progress

Cascade Christian Home (CCH) in Lynden, Washington, is in the midst of some exciting accessibility updates this year to better accommodate residents' evolving needs. Although the home met state-of-the-art accessibility standards when it first opened in July of 1980, many circumstances have changed over its 40-year history.

Originally designed to provide residential support for our organization's first group home program participants,



Valley and Peggy with new floor

Cascade Christian Home initially served 12 younger adults. These early residents had developmental disabilities but few physical mobility challenges. Over the years, however, Cascade Christian Home has served residents of varying ages and mobility levels from across Washington State.

Now a licensed group training home, CCH currently serves eight older individuals, five of whom utilize wheelchairs on a full-time basis. Some residents have significant physical disabilities or mobility challenges that demand additional staff to provide overnight care. CCH Program Director Tara Boeckholt anticipates an increasing



Debra taking a stroll with Cheryl

need for these kinds of services in the coming years, and she wants to prepare CCH to accommodate everyone successfully.



Completed hallway



Completed shower room

To meet our residents’ changing health and safety needs, Cascade Christian Home began upgrading and remodeling some features this past year. Practical improvements underway include removal of old carpet and installation of wood floors that staff can clean more easily and effectively. We also hope to replace some bathroom fixtures and cabinets that date back 40 years. However, our most urgent and major renovation needs are the installation of accessible, walk-in showers and an overhead lift system.

The home’s older showers have a hazardous “tail-lip” entry with a high fall risk that demands use of grab bars, shower chairs, and two-staff transfers.



Shower room remodeling in progress

After consulting with occupational and physical therapists, we decided to rebuild the bathrooms with wheelchair accommodations in place. We began renovations this past year, and three of the home’s seven bathrooms have been renovated so far. The

new showers make resident bathing much easier, safer, and more efficient. A single staff member can now handle transfers safely, which frees up the second staff member to attend to other resident needs.

The home still needs three more wheelchair-accommodated showers and a lift system that would enable our residents who use walkers and wheelchairs to move around more easily. An overhead lift would significantly reduce fall risk and eliminate the need for a second staff member to safely assist transitions into and out of beds, wheelchairs, restrooms, and showers.

Cascade Connections usually has several in-person fundraising events throughout the year to help us finance bigger projects like the CCH renovations. Although the COVID-19 pandemic has changed our fundraising practices, donors still can help us make these much-needed renovations and improvements a reality. We would like to express deep gratitude to those who already have contributed toward CCH’s building updates. Making these accessibility improvements will increase the independence and safety of current and future residents.



Amy and her painting

We feel glad to have already assisted many individuals in leaving restrictive state institutions (RHCs) and becoming active participants in the larger community over the years. CCH’s long-term commitment and individualized approach helps to empower individuals with significant physical challenges in achieving their personal goals. CCH staff members have witnessed countless successes and accomplishments in the lives of the individuals we serve.

Your contributions help to make all of this possible. We deeply appreciate your support for those with developmental disabilities and the dedicated staff who serve them.

Those who would like to contribute funding toward CCH renovations can mail a check to:

**Cascade Connections**  
**P.O. Box 3174**  
**Ferndale, WA 98248**

Online donations can be made through the following link:  
[cascadeconnections.org/donate](https://cascadeconnections.org/donate)

# Cascade Connections Mourns Training Coordinator Lyndra Iddings



Cascade Connections is still reeling from the recent loss of our beloved coworker and friend Lyndra Anne Santos Iddings. Lyndra loved life, and she brightened so many people's lives with her kindness, humor, and wisdom.

Lyndra devoted herself to Cascade Connections for more than 20 years.

She started out in our Vocational Department, received a promotion to home care director, and eventually became training coordinator.

Lyndra truly put her whole heart into her training work. She cherished the opportunity to share her considerable



knowledge, experience, and positive energy with staff and with individuals we serve. The love and hard work she put into this field inspired us all.

Many Cascade Connections staff have written moving

tributes about Lyndra. Employment Specialist Joe Pruitt describes her as “a warm, loving person with an authentic beautiful soul,” and Vocational Services Administrator Kristin Nguyen assures us that Lyndra “will live on through our actions, emotions, and adventures.” Recalling her first training with Lyndra, Direct Support Professional Esther Quezada writes: “Her captivating spirit was so wonderful to be around that I felt sad when class was over and I had to go home. She will always remain in my memory as one of the most radiant people I've met.”

The Cascade Connections team is still in shock and struggling to come to terms with the loss of our treasured team member and friend.

Lyndra was a crucial part of the Cascade Connections family, and we will miss her very dearly. May God grant strength to us,



to her many friends, and particularly to her family during this difficult time. Lyndra's family is holding a Celebration of Life for her in November, 2021. Cascade Connections will keep our community posted about ways we can honor Lyndra's memory.

Rest In Peace, Lyndra. ❤️

## Thank You to Our Donors!

### Donations From Businesses:

AmazonSmile, Albertsons Companies Foundation/Haggen Foundation, Expedia Group, Harbor Lands Co., Facebook, GiveBig WA, Kroger, MOD Super Fast Pizza LLC, Thrivent Financial

### Donations From Foundations and Churches:

Hope in Christ Church, Netherlands Reformed Church, Christ the King Community Church, Third Christian Reformed Church

### Memorial Donation in Honor of Shirley Crowe:

Alvin & Maija Eerkes

### Memorial Donation in Honor of Sandra Chastain:

Darlene Hammond

### Memorial Donation in Honor of Richard Terwisscha:

Ernest & Rosa Terwisscha

### Memorial Donation in Honor of Shirley Crowe:

Joanne Young

### Donation in Gratitude of Don Bayne:

Phil & Christine Gubbins

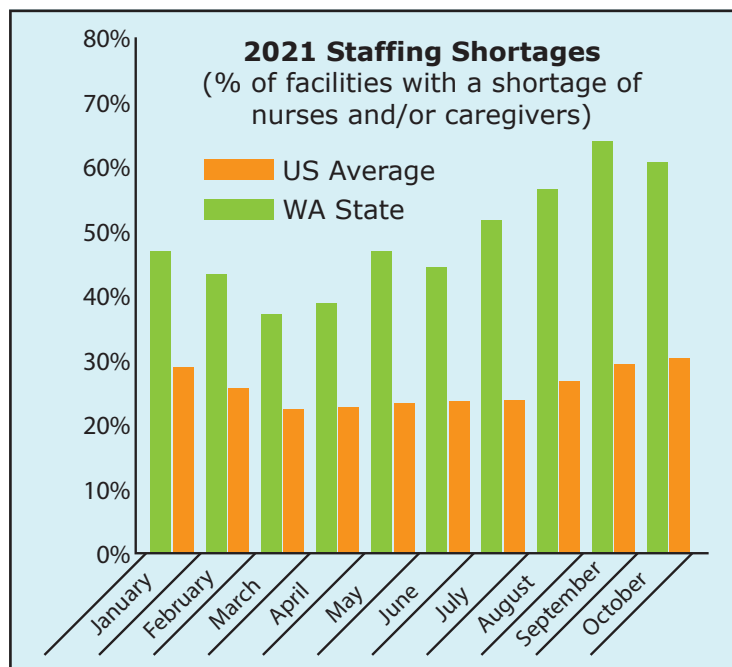
Special thanks to the dozens of other individuals and businesses who have donated since March 2021!

## We Are Hiring!

As the end of 2021 approaches, Cascade Connections continues to face some significant COVID-related hardships – including a major staffing shortage! The vaccination mandates and new COVID-19 procedures and protocols also have generated more stress and work for everyone, leaving us worrying if we can survive each week.

You may remember that the pandemic forced us to close several sites to visitors last year. Many of the people we serve stayed home for a while for safety reasons, and we had to come up with creative new ways to support morale and mental health among the people we serve and our staff. Many community and business activities have resumed since then, but as you know, this year's COVID case spikes prompted both Governor Inslee and President Biden to issue vaccination mandates. Cascade Connections has granted our employees all of the medical and religious exceptions and accommodations that we legally can, but we still have lost some of our best employees due to vaccination mandates.

Unfortunately, the mandates and other COVID-related issues also make hiring and retaining new staff extremely difficult. This trend extends beyond Cascade Connections – the entire health care industry has seen a sizeable downturn in employment applications. At the end of August, we had to discontinue services for many home care clients due to insufficient staff. Despite efforts such as hiring and referral bonuses, the staffing problem persists in our organization and elsewhere. Many health care businesses have closed or reduced capacity, which means that people who lose our services may not have access to other agencies or private providers.



These staffing shortages have demanded that our staff often work overtime shifts. Managers have stayed up all night working these shifts while also trying to manage their usual workloads. Our employees are stretched very thin, and we are bracing for more resignations. We need many new staff members to meet high demand and prevent staff burnout during this challenging period in our history.

Cascade Connections is a nonprofit, which means that we cannot entice workers with high wages in the way that some private businesses can. Instead, we rely on donations from local businesses, organizations, and community members. Please consider supporting us financially. We also ask that readers take a moment to spread the word that Cascade Connections has multiple jobs immediately available in various locations. We have full-time, part-time, day, evening, and overnight direct support positions to fill. Experienced applicants may qualify for positions such as employment consultant or site manager. Our employees enjoy competitive compensation and benefits, including generous PTO packages and performance-based wage increases. Our staff also benefit from diverse career development opportunities.

Learn more about our available positions and access our application portal at:

<https://csscc.sentrichr.com/>

# Cascade Connections' First Employee Appreciation Month



This past summer, Cascade Connections celebrated our dedicated and caring staff during our inaugural Employee Appreciation Month. Festivities included gifts, prizes, lunch, and social media recognition.



Through Facebook Live, we gave out weekly prizes such as chocolate and gift cards. Cascade Connections also honored employees by offering a free lunch event at our Ferndale office. Staff from across our departments gathered to enjoy lunch provided by the Little Mexico food truck. Attendees enjoyed the comradery after what has been a challenging and isolating time for many.

Throughout the month of June, the Cascade Connections Facebook page featured our staff's strengths and their experiences with the individuals we serve. Many staff members expressed how gratifying it is to see the people they serve living full, rewarding lives in their communities. Our staff's stories really highlighted the powerful nature of this work.

"I have been blessed with more joy and laughter with client interactions than I could even begin to share. It has been pure and organic and I hold each one in my heart."

– **Direct Support Professional Tracey Jongema, when asked for her favorite memory.**

"As an advocate, I would assist specific clients with grocery shopping. I had a realization one day as I was shopping with a client who has since passed away. After we had loaded all the groceries into the car, this client always walked the cart all the way back into the store and thanked whichever store employee was nearby...every single time!

At that point in my life, I was someone who would leave my cart wherever it was most convenient for me. As the client walked back to the car where I was waiting for him, it dawned on me that this job was not just about me helping people in need – in fact, they were often the ones helping me!

Over the years, I have continued to discover how this work is less about me helping others and more about the wonderful individuals we serve, who are teaching me what it means to truly be human."

– **Area Manager Nikki Harangozo, recalling her first days as an advocate nine years ago.**

"Some parts of the job are stressful but there is a lot of support and training. Cascade provides an employee assistance program with counselors for free to all its employees (FT & PT) to help with this. We also have an awesome team that is willing to help you and be supportive figures during hardships. If you are a student, parent, have a second job, are interested in mental health care or social services, and want to do work that truly matters while making a difference to another individual, then I would recommend working for Cascade Connections."

– **Training Coordinator Katherine Bates**

We know how much care and hard work our staff demonstrates every day, so giving back to our employees felt truly wonderful! We sincerely thank our team for their dedication and flexibility in supporting the people we serve. These caring and responsible individuals make it possible for Cascade Connections to fulfill our mission of empowering individuals with disabilities to enhance their quality of life.

# Woods Coffee Recognized as Employee of the Quarter



Please join us in congratulating Woods Coffee as Cascade Connections' chosen Employer of the Quarter for Fall 2021! The Herman family of Lynden, Washington,

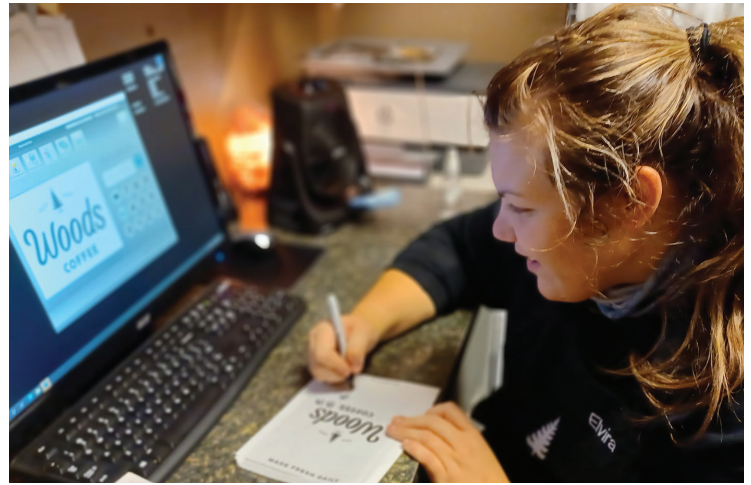
established Woods Coffee in 2002. Dreaming of starting a coffee shop chain, the Hermans pooled their talents and resources to open the first Woods Coffee location in Lynden. Six months later, they opened their second store in the same town. Following a steady growth track since then, the coffee chain now serves customers in many locations across Whatcom, Skagit, and King Counties.

Cascade Connections began our relationship with Woods Coffee when Janae Neilson,

the manager at the Boulevard Park location in Bellingham, Washington, agreed to hire our job-seeker Elvira. As a café attendant, Elvira helps out during the busy lunch



rush, restocking condiments, cleaning tables and collecting dishes from customers, folding dishrags, and doing dishes. Elvira has developed her skill set over time and now makes whipped cream and drip coffee, with the goal of eventually



learning how to make more drinks! The excitement and energy of the manager and workers at this location has helped make the experience valuable for Elvira.

Following this initial success, Cascade Connections spoke with owner Wes Herman, who has since helped open the doors to other Woods Coffee locations throughout the County. Woods Coffee just recently hired their second employee through Cascade Connections in October of 2021, this time at the Bender Road location in Lynden.

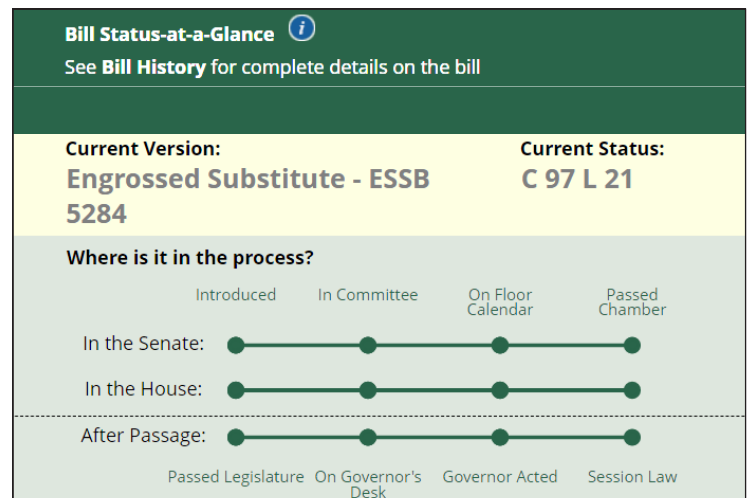
We look forward to continued collaboration with Woods Coffee as we advance our goal of meaningful employment for people with disabilities in Whatcom County. Cascade Connections is grateful for the opportunity to partner with Woods Coffee!

## Bill Ending Subminimum Wage Finally Passes

On April 16th, 2021, the Washington State House of Representatives signed and passed a bill that ended subminimum wage for employees with disabilities! The passing of Senate Bill 5284 means that by 2023, all employers must pay people with disabilities the same wage they pay other employees. This major event marks significant progress towards social inclusion and economic justice for Washington State's employees with disabilities.

Cascade Connections' Vocational Services celebrated this victory with festive decorations. Their department's work towards inclusion has paid off for the people we serve, who will now receive the wages they deserve for their valuable

work contributions to local businesses and organizations.



## Those That Are Doing It Right

Since 2005, Cascade Connections has recognized local employers who are “doing it right” in their hiring of employees with developmental disabilities. Employers who receive this recognition have contributed substantially to Cascade Connections’ mission. By offering meaningful employment, these local partners have helped us to empower individuals with disabilities to enhance their quality of life.

What does it mean to do it right? Our recognized employers have been open to looking at their hiring practices a little differently. In collaboration with our employment consultants, these employers have formed partnerships that benefit business and support our applicants. By working together, we have changed the face of employment in our community.

**Please join us in thanking all of Whatcom County’s current and former Employer Recognition recipients for helping Cascade Connections to provide opportunities for everyone.**

A Child’s Life Learning Center	Downtown Bellingham Partnership	Rusty Wagon
Among Friends Adult Family Homes	Family Care Network	Safeway
Anvil Corporation	FastCap	Samuel’s Furniture
Avamere Bellingham Healthcare	Fred Meyer	Soy House
BAAY	Haggen Food & Pharmacy	Target
Bellingham Pet Supply	Hannegan Home and Farm	Walmart
Cascade DAFO	Marlin’s Auto Service	Whatcom Transportation Authority
Connections Speech Language Pathology	Marshalls	WFC Country Store
Costco	Millard Mall Services	Woods Coffee
Denny’s	Northwest Health Care Linen	

## Teri Celebrates Her 15-Year Work Anniversary at Haggen



This September, Teri celebrated 15 fantastic and faithful years of employment at Haggen in Ferndale! Coworkers and staff hold Teri in high regard for her diligent cleaning around the store. Her coworkers support her whenever she needs additional assistance, and they appreciate her strong sense of teamwork. You

often will find Teri in the lobby, where she enjoys joking around with her coworkers. She has signed that Haggen is her “work home.”

Cascade Connections Employment Consultant Kelly Easter speaks to Teri’s positive experience at Haggen:

*“When I first started working with Teri at Haggen during the pandemic, the world felt extremely unsteady and mean and very scary. Seeing the support from Teri’s coworkers and the customers that interact with Teri warmed my heart to such an extreme extent; it gave me hope that all the community division that was making itself visible could be worked out, and that love and acceptance to all of our fellow community members was possible.”*

Thank you, Teri, for your hard work and commitment during all these years at Haggen! We are grateful for your dedication to your job, and we hope to work with you for many more years.

If you are an employer interested in working with Cascade Connections or you would like to find out more about our programs, check out this video featuring Teri and her work at Haggen:

<https://youtu.be/x7cdeY5oEZI>

Return Service Requested

Please visit us on the web at  
[cascadeconnections.org](http://cascadeconnections.org)  
to learn more.



[cascadeconnections](https://www.facebook.com/cascadeconnections) [cascade\\_connections](https://www.instagram.com/cascade_connections)

## Fall/Winter 2021 Newsletter

### Cascade Connections

PO Box 3174  
Ferndale, WA 98248  
360-714-9355  
[cascadeconnections.org](http://cascadeconnections.org)

### Board of Directors

Joe Tejada, *President*  
Becky Kirkland, *Vice President*  
Michael Adams, *Secretary/Treasurer*  
Mark Hildebrand  
Larry Stegink

## We Are Hiring!

View the current openings here:  
[csscc.sentricr.com](http://csscc.sentricr.com)

## Opportunity to Recognize Cascade Connections as a Great Nonprofit

**Cascade Connections**  
★★★★★ 11 Reviews  
Reviews from GREATNONPROFITS

**Most Recent Reviews**

**Review 1:** ★★★★★  
Cascade Connections has grown in size and scope because of George Beanblossom's 35 years of persistent...

**Review 2:** ★★★★★  
As a member of the board of directors at Cascade Connections I am astounded by all the hard work that...

**Review 3:** ★★★★★  
It is hard to point out one good thing this group of people do for the community as it seems every time...

[Read More Reviews](#)

Did you know you can help Cascade Connections by simply writing a review? If you love our work, please tell the world!

You can help increase our invisibility by posting a brief story of your positive experience with our nonprofit organization. Sharing your story can help us make an even bigger impact in our community!

Review us today at:

<https://greatnonprofits.org/reviews/write/cascade-connections>



## E-Newsletter Subscription

You can now get this newsletter in your email! To sign up, go to:  
[www.cascadeconnections.org/newsletters](http://www.cascadeconnections.org/newsletters)