



Press Release

When most of us want to go out for coffee, or out in our community, we just hop in our car. For people whose primary transportation is a motorized wheelchair, it can be a different, and a lot more challenging. Without a wheelchair van, many times people are just left at home, or they must leave their motorized chair behind. This limits a person's freedom to be able to move about the community without having someone pushing them.



Mark Hildebrand has been served by Cascade Connections' supported living program since 2015. Mark is a member of the Cascade Connections Board of Directors. Mark is an active community member and wanted more access to that community for himself and others who use motorized wheelchairs. Mark challenged the Board of Directors to set a goal to raise the funds to purchase a new wheelchair van in 2017. Cascade Connections took on this goal and began to share the need with others.

Cascade Connections' mission is to empower individuals with disabilities to enhance their quality of life. They accomplish this mission by supporting people to both live and work in Whatcom County. If you can't get out your community, how can you become a part of it? The freedom to move freely within our community allows people to have power and choice over their lives and to choose who to build relationships with and how to spend their time. Mark knew that Cascade Connections buying a new wheelchair van would not only

create greater opportunities for himself, but it would also create those same opportunities for many others as well.

Mark created a campaign with the support of Cascade Connections. There are many needs in our community and everyone was concerned how we would be able to reach this goal in such a short period of time. On November 17, 2017, Cascade Connections partnered with Haggen Food & Pharmacy and KISM to present the Third Annual Hamster Ball. This event kicked off the fundraising campaign, and allowed many local community members to learn more about Cascade Connections and the campaign that Mark had created. In addition, many community donors contributed during Giving Tuesday, the Tuesday following Thanksgiving which is known as an international day of giving. By December 4th, Cascade Connections had exceeded that goal and were able to purchase the much needed van.

Mark and Cascade Connections cannot thank the community enough. The generosity of our local businesses and community members is extremely humbling. Every contribution, small or large, has made a difference in the lives of those served by Cascade Connections. Together, opportunities for everyone are possible.



Hamster Ball Success



As the Title Sponsors, Haggen Food & Pharmacy and KISM presented the Third Annual Hamster Ball benefitting Cascade Connections on Friday, November 17, 2017. Guests of The Hamster Ball shared an evening of fabulous wine, beer, chocolate and culinary experience that featured Haggen exclusive wines, Masquerade Winery, a variety of wines from Dickerson Distributing Inc. and beer from our local Kulshan Brewing Company. Culinary specialties included a variety of cheeses available at your local Haggen Food & Pharmacy stores and BIJA Chocolates. Haggen Market Street Catering also served up a fabulous array of tasty treats to get everyone in the mood for the holidays.

This event would not have been possible without the generous support of our community and the following sponsors and donors:

- Cascade Dafo, Inc.
- Environmental Pest Control, Inc.
- Express Electric
- Farmers Equipment Co.
- FastCap
- F.I.L.P. Painting
- HUB International
- Lynden Door
- Lynden Lube
- Lynden Sheet Metal

- Marlin's Auto Service
- Northwest Health Care Linen
- Oasys
- Rice Insurance, LLC
- Rusty Wagon
- Stremmler Gravel
- Van Loo's Auto Service
- WRS

The entertainment of the evening was provided by local band, The Penny Stinkers. Guests were able to eat, drink, dance, bid on items in a silent auction and of course support a great cause. Cascade Connections' 2017 goal was to raise enough funds to purchase a desperately needed wheelchair van that would be used to create opportunities for individuals who are supported by Cascade Connections. With the support of local businesses and community members who attended the Hamster Ball, or had heard of our campaign through social media, Cascade Connections was able to not only raise the \$40,000, they were able to exceed that amount and order the van within a month.

Thank you to everyone who has supported Cascade Connections and our mission of empowering individuals with disabilities to enhance their quality of life. Together, we are creating opportunities for everyone!

Donations for Businesses, Churches and Foundations/Civic Groups:

Eaglemill Farms, Harbor Lands Co, Kroger, Lynden Lions Club, Network for Good, Patti Rowson Consulting Inc, Saturna Capital, Amazon Smile Foundation, First Christian Reformed Church

These people made a donation in memory of Carol Van Mersbergen:

Sherman & Doris Bajema, Arlen De Young, Kenneth & Mary Jane Haak, Lynden Manor, Lois Polinder, Donna Timmer, Darryl Vander Haak, several Anonymous donations

Update on Pine Street Home

There's an old saying that goes, "When God closes a door he opens a window."

This was our journey as Pine Street Home closed its doors as an Adult Family Home on Oct. 31, 2017, and reopened Nov. 1, 2017, as part of Cascade Supported Living in Lynden.

Pine Street Home had operated for ten years as an adult family home, serving six individuals. However, increasing regulations and inadequate funding made it impossible for Cascade Connections to continue operating it as an AFH.

We were troubled by the changes and worried about the future. And that's when we got to work.

Through the efforts (and prayers) of Cascade Connections' representatives, five Pine St. residents were accepted into the DDA Core Waiver program, a generous funding source that provides for supported living and vocational services. Residents could choose to remain with Cascade Connections or choose another program.

If you're doing the math, you may realize that one more resident needed an answered prayer. This gentleman was not eligible for the Core Waiver, but wanted to remain living with his longtime friends and roommates. We requested permission from DDA to have him remain at the house with supports from private care providers and backup from Cascade Supported Living.

No one could have foreseen that our prayers would be answered in this way. Often people eligible for the Core Waiver wait over five years for this funding and are forced to find interim measures to receive the care they need.

Two residents chose to move to Bellingham and closer to work and family. The remaining four residents stayed in Lynden.



The next step: finding affordable housing in Lynden since Pine Street Home was scheduled to be sold after it was closed. This is also a formidable task as residents needed single-level housing, and the ability to access public transportation and other services.

A community member surprised us all when he purchased the home, providing our next blessing. The new owner decided to rent the house to the four remaining gentlemen. If there were even one more person living there, state rules would not have allowed this arrangement. Residents now could remain in their home, close to bus lines, work and, of course, Woods Coffee. This also meant the "move" to supported living did not involve any moving any furniture!

Pine Street Home staff remained with the Supported Living program in Lynden, providing valuable help and resources to Supported Living staff being trained with the Pine Street Home residents. Change is never easy, nor is it seamless. But every step of our path has been paved for us.

Thank you so much for your continued prayer support. We truly recognize that it is your prayers during these times of crisis that keep Cascade Connections' doors open.

God's plans are much better than ours!



Cascade Connections has a new Facebook page! Please visit us at:

www.facebook.com/cascadeconnections

and  Like US!

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



Spring 2018 Newsletter

Cascade Connections

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Make A Difference Day

We would like to thank all of the volunteers from the Third Christian Reformed Church who helped to make the Cascade Christian Home beautiful on Saturday, October 28th, "Make a Difference Day". They cleaned gutters, beautified the flower beds, planted new flower bulbs, sawed a large tree, removed many stumps, painted many walls, cleaned the garden plaques, trimmed hedges, operated power tools/equipment, moved a big pile of bark with the tractor, and more. What an amazing job!

We would also like to thank Ferndale ACE for donating 5-gallon buckets of paint and Vander Giessen Nursery for donating two rhododendrons!

Lastly, a very special thank you to our board member, Larry Stegink; Jacki Matter, from the church; and Becky, the Cascade Christian Home's Program Coordinator, for arranging everything. You sure made a huge difference!



EMPLOYER OF THE QUARTER

SPRING 2018

CASCADE CONNECTIONS
opportunities for everyone

VOCATIONAL



A Child's Life Learning Center has been chosen as Cascade Connections' Employer of the Quarter - Spring 2018.

For several years, A Child's Life Learning Center, located in ALife Church on Meridian Street has partnered with Cascade Connections, giving several Cascade Connections' customers a chance to not only

experience informational interviews and site tours, but the opportunity to grow into professional childcare workers.

A Child's Life Learning Center's vision includes creating a community-oriented environment where children are respected, nurtured, encouraged, and valued. They have a total of eight classrooms and serve children ranging in age from 12 months to 5 years.

The Director and Supervisor of A Child's Life, Elaine Price, has been with the learning center for two years. She is very hands on and stresses the importance of children getting positive interaction and love. She tells Cascade Connections that she is very pleased with the Cascade applicant that she hired in 2016. After completing all Washington State required certifications and classes, along with a background check, that particular worker signed up to volunteer at A Child's Life to get hands on work experience. Elaine was so impressed with her skills and attitude that she decided to hire her as a support staff, and she thinks it was a good decision. "Our Cascade employee fits in and has been very reliable, available, teachable, and faithful to our center and the needs of the kids and teachers. She's a great team player."



Elaine said, "Cascade Connections provided job screening and training. Chris from Cascade was amazing at always checking in to see how things were going and if our employee needed help with anything." Elaine has valued the partnership between A Child's Life and Cascade Connections. "Everyone deserves a chance to do what they love!"

Thank you, A Child's Life Learning Center for partnering with Cascade Connections, honoring diversity in your business, and providing quality jobs for people with disabilities!



Here are quotes from the Cascade Connections' customers who are employed at the A Child's Life.

"I have enjoyed watching and learning from great workers like Cynthia, Aly, and Rebecca. I've worked there for 2 years and I've grown so much as an employee. I enjoy working with children and I'm excited to go to work each day! I've wanted to work with children since high school."

"I feel like Cascade helps me if I have any issues; they help me find solutions."

THOSE THAT ARE DOING IT RIGHT!

CASCADE CONNECTIONS
opportunities for everyone

VOCATIONAL



Since 2005 Cascade has been selecting employers in our community who are doing it right by honoring them with what is known as the Employer of the Quarter. In order to be selected by our team as the employer of the quarter these employers have had to have made an impact on our mission. They have helped us to empower individuals with disabilities to enhance their quality of life by providing them the opportunity for meaningful employment.

What does it mean to do it right? It means these employers have been open to looking at their hiring practices a little differently. They have been willing to work with our employment consultants to create partnerships that will benefit their business and our applicants. Together we are changing the face of employment in our community.

Please join us in thanking all of the former recipients of the Employer of the Quarter in Whatcom County for helping us to provide Opportunities for Everyone.

Anvil Corporation
Avamere Bellingham Healthcare
BAAY
Cascade DAFO
Costco
Denny's
Downtown Bellingham Partnership
Family Care Network
Fred Meyer
Haggen
Hannegan Home and Farm

Marshalls
Millard Mall Services
Northwest Health Care Linen
Rusty Wagon
Safeway
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Soy House
Target
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