

# A Word From the Executive Director



Dear family and friends of Third Way Center,

Happy August. August is ***National Wellness Month***, so please take care of yourself!

“Success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he has overcome,” Booker T. Washington

I love this quote. It makes so much sense. I think about resilience and not giving up, or getting up when you fall down. We don't all have the same opportunities; that is a given. We do not have a choice in who we are born to or how we were raised. We do not always know when we need help. At Third Way Center, we believe that, for the most part, our clients and their families do their best. If given the opportunity to understand, to face those incredible obstacles, and figure out what they need to do about it, to find their justice, they can begin to heal. I believe, to a fault, that everyone, no matter their age, intellect, or will, has the ability to change. We now know that even the brain can grow and change. Think about how powerful it can be for someone who feels hopeless, has been in 25 placements, has had 5 suicide attempts, and has no one who wants them to be seen without judgment. Their stories are compelling. They need a chance to take on their obstacles and lots of support. This is not easy by any means; however, we all need to be seen and heard- it is human nature. And we have to face what gets in our way, or it will continue to do so. These kids are so resilient when given the opportunity.

It is pretty well known that mental health issues amongst adolescents have increased. As we frequently discuss, there are more kids in need of services than services available. There are so many contributing factors, so much complexity in our culture and in our society. From the beginning (and I have worked here for 40 years), we have always said the kids are getting harder, and that too has always been true- the kids continue to get harder. The system doesn't help. As stated previously, there are currently 6 RAEs (Regional Accountability Entities) responsible for managing the Medicaid funds that pay for our Colorado youth in care. This is a big change for Colorado.

In response to the shortage of care for adolescents, Third Way Center is renovating its Bannock program to meet the needs of the most difficult youth in Colorado. As some may remember, our Bannock program was a girls' program and closed during the pandemic due to workforce issues. After careful consideration, we are designing a 14-bed co-educational program for high acuity youth. The Capital Campaign is underway. Feel free to donate and help make a difference for the most vulnerable youth in Colorado.

*With Gratitude and Appreciation,*

*Renee*