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From our dedicated workforce, to our community
and the people we support, we are

Stronger Together





Message from the President

It is unlikely that anyone will soon forget the tumultuous times and events that defined the year 2020. The COVID-19 virus has changed every aspect of our lives and our country has been further divided by another bitter election and the fight for social justice. This year has truly been unique and while the challenges we have faced are epic, Venture has continued to do all we can to support people living with developmental disabilities and autism as we have for nearly half a century. Doing this in a time when a global pandemic continues to wreak havoc in every community in our country has certainly made this vital work more complicated than ever before. However, it has also revealed what has always been best about the human services industry: an unending commitment from countless people to continue helping others who need it, regardless of how difficult it is to do that.

Now more than ever, it seems both appropriate and necessary that we all make a conscious effort to notice and pay attention to the many good things that are still happening all around us. As you will see in this annual report, there have been many such things here at Venture this year. Literally overnight, we completely reinvented the way we support people in homes and day programs while also asking our amazing workforce to do things they had never done before. We all had to become experts on the fly in personal protective equipment, social distancing, infection control, remote meetings, and virtual programming. Each department in this agency immediately changed the way they conduct business and rose to the occasion with incredible professionalism. Our Nursing department was nothing less than extraordinary, our Facilities department volunteered to do more than we had any right to ask of them, and our HR and Finance departments moved seamlessly to create new systems to

support our employees as they tried to manage the crisis. And through it all, our Program Directors, House Managers, and Direct Support Professionals did what they always do; they put aside their own needs and worked around the clock to keep people safe. Looking back now, I am convinced that what could have been the darkest of times was in fact our finest hour. It is indeed humbling.

So what comes next? I wish I had a crystal ball so I could tell everyone when this pandemic will finally be behind us but it seems instead that we will have to live with it for the foreseeable future. We remain prepared to do what we need to do to keep the people we support safe and provide them with a good quality of life. If need be, we will reinvent ourselves again if that's what it takes to do this. Regardless, we look ahead to 2021 with a sense of hope. Venture will continue to advocate both locally and nationally for our employees until they finally get the recognition they deserve. We will also partner with other agencies and our trade associations to fight for social justice and inclusion as we seek to ensure that everyone is truly respected and valued. In addition, we will continue to be thankful for the donors and sponsors who supported us throughout 2020 even though we could not hold either of our fundraisers. Working with our ever-supportive Board of Directors, Venture is looking ahead to 2021 as a year of opportunities and growth in spite of the challenges that surely await. Rest assured, this agency is still prepared to do what we do best — help people.



Mike

Mike Hyland
President & CEO

Venture's Core Values at Work: COVID-19 Response



ALL HANDS ON DECK

They say it takes a village. COVID-19 has put our village to the test and each of Venture's departments has performed remarkably well on behalf of the people we support and our amazing workforce. On the front lines, our Direct Support Professionals put their lives on hold and risked their health to provide services by living in our residential programs during the beginning of

the pandemic. More than 200 staff members offered to stay in the homes for two weeks or longer. Staff from our temporarily-closed day programs stepped up and began working hours in our residential programs to help out. The people in our homes have done well despite sheltering in place with new people living there for weeks at a time. From baking cookies to participating in Zoom sessions and playing board games, our DSPs have done a great job engaging people in meaningful activities.

What's happened behind the scenes is nothing short of extraordinary. Folks from all corners of the organization stepped up and pitched in to keep 40+ programs running in a crisis. In a single weekend, program directors transformed operations from shift coverage to shelter-in-place staffing. They worked the phones, and were quickly overwhelmed by the collective generous nature of our staff. They performed nothing short of a miracle — all 44 programs were staffed within 72 hours. They have continued to manage staff coverage, listen to concerns, inform parents and guardians, and provide leadership all while completing the many administrative tasks that their normal jobs entail.

Throughout the pandemic, our behavioral health team has supported people from afar. They've been in touch via Zoom and FaceTime, continuing to work on behavioral supports. They were among the first to jump back into the programs when it was allowed. Folks from Facilities

and Transportation orchestrated complicated logistics to make sure programs had vital supplies delivered to them. Our quarantine centers were set up and furnished at a moment's notice. Our nursing staff developed COVID protocols and set up procedures for our quarantine center. They even made their own PPE when we had difficulty finding it. Our accounting staff pitched in too. They put procedures into place to make sure that individuals would



...outstanding teamwork contributed to Venture's successful management of an unprecedented crisis."

still have access to their money and made sure that our house managers had the means to stock homes. IT staff have been busy getting us up to speed with Zoom and other technology that has been instrumental to keep things going. Our human resources team has helped employees with unemployment claims and personal issues and has continued to prioritize employee recognition and outreach. The professional development team quickly revamped their procedures so our staff can still receive essential training.

Upper left: New safety protocol signs are installed throughout Venture properties.
Below: Hand made PPE.





The team at one of our Sturbridge residential programs takes their essential superhero role very seriously!

All of this has been done with impeccable grace and a generosity of spirit that truly embodies Venture's core values. What a team we have! They say there's more to come, but we'll be fine. Our village has got this. – Pam Sampson, Chief Program Officer

RAPID RESPONSE

The weekend of April 3, 2020 will always be a shining example of leadership at Venture. When we were notified of our second positive COVID-19 case, we decided to immediately quarantine all 44 residential programs. We asked staff to leave their families, other jobs, and outside lives to remain at a program for 14 days without leaving or accessing the community for any reason other than a medical emergency.

When the decision was made to implement something so unprecedented, the Program Directors were tasked with notifying staff members and coming up with a plan with very little notice. Although this was a daunting task, especially late on a Friday, everyone worked collaboratively to create a 14-day schedule that would begin immediately. Essentially overnight, the residential department had to completely overhaul a system that had been in place for decades. All throughout Saturday they continued working on which staff would be staying where for 14 days, which staff were not able to stay, and which staff would be willing to go to another program to help. This required selfless teamwork, leadership, organization, and reassurance. They worked late into the evening and all day Sunday. This included many hours of phone calls, meticulous planning, and constant communication.

This never would have been possible without such an incredible commitment to care. This experience was a humbling reminder of the dedication and hard work that goes on behind the scenes. There is no doubt that this outstanding teamwork contributed to Venture's successful management of an unprecedented crisis.

– Christa Tuft, Regional Program Director

76%

of direct-care employees
worked overtime

211

employees sheltered
in place with residents for
two weeks or more

4,736

face masks

31

gallons of hand sanitizer

\$44,871

spent on cleaning and
disinfecting

672

hours spent sheltering
in place

\$3.4M

spent on overtime

Staff Spotlight

" Time and time again the people who work at Venture rise to the challenge at hand in order to provide a good life to the people we support in all of our programs.
— Mike Hyland, President & CEO

" Shout out to Team Venture. Thank you for all that you are doing for the clients and staff to keep them safe and well informed. From making masks, to delivering food, continued advocacy for needed funds, sacrificing their own needs for the well-being of the folks they support. So very proud to be a part of such a great organization.
— Venture Employee

" Thank you Venture staff for doing everything you can to make each day fun, safe and educational under the current circumstances. — John Twining, Guardian

" Great job done directing all of us parents through this pandemic!! — Suzanne Irons, Parent



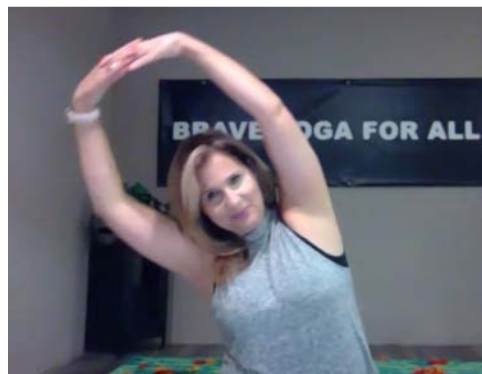
Adapting & Connecting



With all the folks we support hunkering down at home, we had to start getting creative about ways to continue working on skill development and connecting with others. Early on during the shelter-in-place protocol, the IT department sprang into action to be sure administrative staff

members and all residential programs had the resources needed to participate in online meetings, trainings, and more. Residents who were unable to accept visitors connected with their family members on video chat. Our yoga instructor quickly adapted her program to utilize Zoom, setting up a yoga studio in her home. What began as an experiment with just a handful of participants has grown to a weekly virtual gathering of nearly 40 people practicing mindfulness. The incredible and dedicated staff members from our three day programs have been hosting Zoom meetings for the folks still unable to attend in

person, including bingo, Zumba, human rights education, safety skills, guided craft projects, social skills, cooking, sign language, and more. We later added Zoom classes for music therapy and adaptive exercise with certified personal trainers through our partnership with Unified Health and Performance, an inclusive gym based in Lancaster, MA. When people were not able to attend their programs and activities, Venture brought their programs and activities to them.

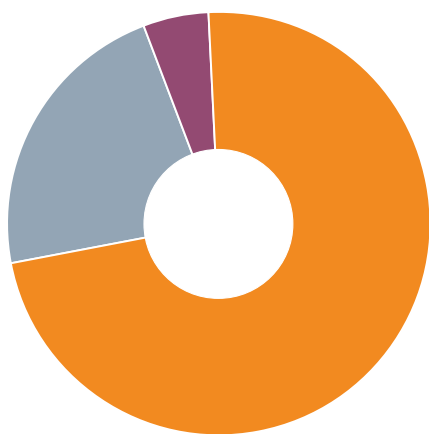


Classes like music therapy (left) and yoga (above) continue over Zoom.

Statement of Activity

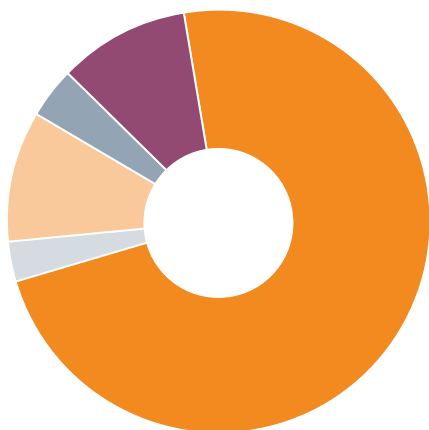
REVENUE SOURCES

- Department of Developmental Services / **73%**
- Misc. Government Contracts / **5%**
- Other / **22%**



EXPENDITURES

- Residential Services / **73%**
- Other Support Services / **10%**
- Facility & Operations / **4%**
- Administrative Costs / **10%**
- Other / **3%**



Venture Community Services is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides support to individuals facing diverse challenges through a compassionate and dedicated workforce using innovative practices that encourage independence, empowerment, and opportunity. Federal Tax Identification 04-2593315

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- Tiffany Breau
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Thank you for your continued support

We would like to extend our gratitude to the many donors and corporate sponsors who continued to support the agency despite the cancellation of our fundraising events.



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How can I help? Donate at venturescs.org.

This year was an unprecedented one for the human services industry. Consider making a donation in honor of an exceptional direct support professional or contributing to our annual Giving Tree Program.