

TUMBLEWEED TIMES

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Fall 2022 Newsletter

LASTING CHANGE FOR VULNERABLE YOUTH

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Tumbleweed



Update on Christian

In our last newsletter we told you about Christian's story - going from years of homelessness to an associate's degree! Your support helped his dream come true. He has now moved to be closer to his family and re-establish relations. We wish him continued success!

Antonio's Story

Adam Toland, Youth Housing Demonstration Project (YHDP) Manager

Antonio has been working with Tumbleweed in various capacities for the past five years. He has been a client in our Chafee program, at our Langlas Resource Center, and most recently, in our Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project (YHDP). At the height of the pandemic, Antonio was living in a homeless shelter, and desperately needed to get a place of his own. Through Tumbleweed, he learned he qualified to live in one of our supported living apartments. He moved in and we began working on life skills including cooking and cleaning,

and with general case management he began to better navigate his community to get his needs met.

We are incredibly proud of Antonio. His story is the gold standard for how Tumbleweed improves lives and creates lasting change. He has a brighter future ahead of him and we look forward to seeing everything else he will accomplish. We are happy to report that very recently, Antonio was able to secure his own apartment and has been employed consistently for longer than he ever before.

Reaching Riverside Students



Tumbleweed is proud to sponsor essential school planners for more than 500 students at Riverside Middle School for the 2022-23 school year. This is one way TW reaches out to students to provide information about our programs. TW supports our community's goal to increase graduation retention rates in Yellowstone County by using its United Way funds to let students know we're here 24/7/365.

Identity Protection Policy To protect the identities of vulnerable clients who are mentioned in some of these stories, names have been altered. *Altered names will appear in Italics.*

An Intern's Perspective

Alexis Davidson, Doctor of Occupational Therapy student at Rocky Mountain College is completing her capstone experience at Tumbleweed.

My experience at Tumbleweed thus far has been unforgettable. The resources and services provided allow at risk youth to work towards changing their lives and gaining their independence. This is done through many avenues.

Tumbleweed's Steve and Missy Langlas Resource Center offers a safe space for youth to escape the elements and gain access to a hot meal, clothing, hygiene, shower, laundry, and a food box. Additionally, each youth is provided with case management, to address the youth's needs. This could include obtaining their birth certificate, ID, social security card, SNAP, housing, employment, education, learning life skills: the list is endless.

The staff at Tumbleweed meet youth where they are, and I have had the pleasure of seeing this firsthand multiple times throughout my first week at Tumbleweed. One specific encounter really stood out to me: *Heather*, a youth who has been

experiencing homelessness for nearly two months entered Tumbleweed in need of finding sober living housing. Georgia Cady, TW Executive Director, along with Adam Toland, YHDP Manager, contacted community partners to get her into sober living housing. Unfortunately, there were no openings that day; however, *Heather* was placed on wait lists. With the issue at hand not yet solved, Georgia - with me along to learn - drove the youth around to additional community partners to find *Heather* safe lodging while she awaits a sober living placement. Fortunately for *Heather*, lodging was eventually found. Personally, I had never seen individuals go above and beyond for someone they had just met.

This encounter showed me that the TW staff will do anything in their power to help the youth, and these services and resources provided are very much needed. I'm extremely excited to continue witnessing the impact Tumbleweed has on youth!

Message from Executive Director Georgia Cady



With all the exciting things happening at Tumbleweed since my time as the Executive Director, I was recently taking inventory of the things that go unnoticed and unsaid about the work we do. Tumbleweed is known for meeting youth where they are and helping them to grow to their best potential. What many don't understand is how important it is for me to also meet the staff where they are, and help them to grow to their best potential. Tumbleweed is about growth on all levels, Board of Directors; executive, management, and support staff; cases managers; volunteers; donors; and the clients we serve. I am grateful to be a part of Tumbleweed. ***Thank you for joining us on our journey.***

—What's Been Going on at Tumbleweed?—



Charlie Reed (Above & Beyond Awardee), Makayla Burch, ED Georgia Cady, Kristin Rapacz (Volunteer of the Year Awardee), & Taren "Irish" Standish. Absent is Awardee Audrey Reed.



Tumbleweed staff excited to celebrate our Tumbleweed youth and volunteers at the May Open House.

Montana Chafee Foster Care Independence Program Recent Success

Tony Sandoval, Chafee Foster Care Independence Program Manager

Meghan, a Chafee program participant graduated from one of our Billings high schools, and now has a full-time job as a baker. She began working with the Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) voucher program. The next step in Meghan's journey is to have her own apartment by the end of August. She's working hard to make this happen.

The FYI initiative makes Housing Choice Voucher assistance available to Public Housing Agencies like Tumbleweed in partnership with Public Child Welfare Agencies. Under FYI,

Tumbleweed is able to provide housing assistance on behalf of youth at least 18 years and not more than 24 years of age (*have not reached their 25th birthday*) who left foster care or will leave foster care within 90 days or are at risk of becoming homeless at age 16 or older.

An FYI voucher issued to qualifying youth limits housing assistance for the youth to a maximum of 36 months. In addition to rental assistance, youth must be provided supportive services to assist their path to self-sufficiency.

Message from Board President Ben Flanagan

It is a very exciting time at Tumbleweed and an honor for all of us board members to serve our community's youth. Our programs are running as efficiently as ever, thanks to our hard-working staff and leadership. Keep an eye out for new exciting Tumbleweed events coming to our community soon. Also, don't forget to call or stop by to see what volunteer opportunities we have. Our community support has been awesome! Please keep it up so we can further our mission of ending youth homelessness in our community. **Thank you for your continued support of Tumbleweed!**



How Your Gift Helps Our Youth & Young Adults:

- **\$50** Transportation to work or school
- **\$100** For one unhoused youth: life skills classes, personal care/hygiene
- **\$250** Access to a crisis counselor 24/7 or food for a month
- **\$650** One month's rent for a youth
- **\$1,000** One month's rent, groceries, and utilities for a youth; or housing applications & deposit, bed & linens

DONATE TODAY!



Scan this code - or use this donation form to give by mail.

You can make a difference in a youth's life. Ways to give:

\$1,000 \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 \$25

Other amount, please specify \$ _____

My check is enclosed Credit Card Donation

Please make check to: Tumbleweed

Number _____

Exp. Date _____ CVC _____

Signature _____

Thanks for your support!

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Tumbleweed

Lasting Change for Vulnerable Youth

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We thank all our financial and in-kind donors, and our volunteers for their time and energy. We make every effort to properly acknowledge donors mentioned in our publications. We apologize for any mistakes and ask that you contact Amy with corrections or comments.

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