



THE LOOP

A COLLECTION OF STORIES FROM AROUND NEVADA

SEPTEMBER 2022

ISSUE 18

VOLUME 2



Greetings from WestCare Nevada,

Welcome to the latest issue of The Loop! We are proud to share with you another installment full of recent happenings, community collaboration, and examples of how we are Uplifting the Human Spirit through the life-changing services that we are so fortunate to be able to provide!

With September being such a pivotal month of recognition for those within the field of nursing, we wanted to give special recognition to the dedicated staff of our **WestCare Nevada nursing team!** From administering medication to advocating for the best care possible for those that we serve, and so much more, our WestCare nurses and nurse practitioners are an absolute asset to our programs and for that, we would like to say, "Thank you" and hope that you enjoy reading about how they got into this field and why they chose WestCare. In the same spirit, we recapped our recent involvement in a nursing career fair at the **Arizona College of Nursing** to add to this cherished team of clinical professionals!

Meanwhile, a place for Veterans to get back on their feet after their selfless service to our country, our **Reno Homefront GPD** transitional living facility recently received a new coat of paint – lifting the spirits of their staff and Veterans in the process.

Community partnerships make the work that we do possible as this field is only as strong as the organizations that occupy it and the support that they are able to provide to each other, which strengthens our services across the board and pays dividends for individuals and

families in need. One such example is the **Nevada Housing Coalition (NHC)**, which our development team was so kind to share about this month. Through their work, they are able to gather local community-based organizations together to learn how they can expand their capacity to provide affordable housing for individuals and families who lack housing or are at risk of losing their housing.

Last but certainly not least, it goes without saying that our state is incredibly proud of both of our alumni groups, who keep recovery and the bonds of support that have been built within our programs present in the lives of our graduates through their regular events while inspiring our current clients through special activities at our facilities. Recently, our Las Vegas Alumni Group held their **2022 Beast Feast** events at both **Harris Springs Ranch** and the **Women and Children's Campus**, and we hope that you too will be inspired by this example of the selfless work that they do for their brothers and sisters in recovery.

Until we meet again and celebrate all things **Recovery Month** in our next issue, thank you for all that you do to Uplift the Human Spirit and take care.



Leo Magdichian, LCSW, LCADC, Vice President



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Spotlight: Our Nursing Team

With September playing host to various observances that spotlight the dedication, efforts, and service of those within the diverse field of nursing such as National Clinical Nurse Specialist Recognition Week observed from September 1 - 7, we wanted to shine a special spotlight on WestCare Nevada's amazing nursing team!



Brittany Nadin, Registered Nurse

Becoming a nurse has been a rewarding and fulfilling experience. Nursing offers many career paths within the profession allowing us to serve many different populations and learn various specialties. It was not until I joined the WestCare family in 2021 that I became extremely passionate about working with patients struggling with substance abuse and mental health. Being able to connect with and help a very vulnerable population and put them on a path to recovery has given me a purpose. I am confident that I will continue to support, treat, and advocate for this population for the rest of my nursing career.



Janice Disuano, Staff Nurse

As a nurse who has worked in the fields of mental health and substance abuse for over five years, I love doing what I do because there is no cookie cutter way to address the disease of addiction. Everyone is different. Therefore, everyone has a unique way of handling the process of recovery from drugs and/or alcohol. I, the nurse, get to be the voice and advocate of the client who chose to take that leap into sobriety. The starting point of admitting one that has a problem with drugs and/or alcohol is where the nurse comes into play through things such as the administration of medication and being an ear to listen. I love doing what I do because I get to take part in that. Addiction has no stereotype and it is something that requires a great amount of strength to go through because it can impact anyone at any time. The nursing component is a key factor in assisting with a client's journey to make them as comfortable as possible. As a nurse, I love doing what I do because it helps the client move through the process in hopes of obtaining sobriety - one day at a time.



Marlynn Larivee, Administrative Nurse Practitioner

I first started with WestCare as a clinical intern during my Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) rotations with my amazing mentor, Pat Palmer, who had been with Westcare for over 10 years and had raved about the inclusiveness of WestCare and the value that they held for their employees. Prior to this experience, I worked on hospital floors as an RN and felt undervalued and overused. I completed my FNP-Board Certification (BC) and was contacted by my mentor to become part of the WestCare family! I have been with WestCare ever since and was even encouraged to complete my Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Degree Certification. This has allowed me to assist clients with co-occurring disorders and springboard them to their optimal physical and mental health. I stay with WestCare because they accept everyone wherever they are in recovery regardless of how many times they've tried in the past. I also stay because of the endless emotional support and understanding given without judgement or expectation from my WestCare family.



WestCare Nevada Attends the Arizona College of Nursing Career Fair!

By Henzel Alenton, Director of Nursing, CTC Nursing Department

On Aug. 10, Mr. Leo Magrdichian and myself were proud to be on-hand for the **Arizona College of Nursing's** most recent career fair at their Las Vegas campus. It was our honor to set up a booth and introduce WestCare and our mission to the new graduates while attracting potential hires. Our hope with attending such events is to raise awareness about the correlation between substance abuse and mental health amongst students and future nurses, thus mitigating the stigma of addiction. Through this event, we are also hoping to increase WestCare's nursing staff and expand our organization as well as our network of community partners.

I do what I do because I take delight in seeing people become a healthier version of themselves.





Reno Homefront Receives a Makeover!

By the Team of Reno Homefront GPD

In August, our **Homefront GPD** transitional living program for Veterans received a beautiful facelift! Sending many thanks to WestCare Foundation from all of our Reno Homefront clients and staff for the much-needed paint on the facility! The colors really stand out and have changed the environment from outdated to updated!



Beast Feast 2022: Las Vegas Alumni Group Re-Establishes Enrichment Efforts for Current Clients

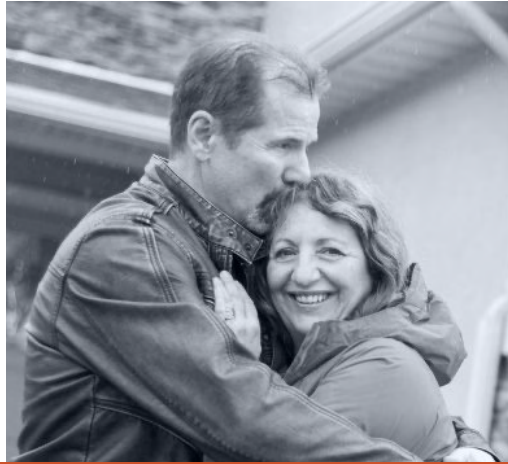
By Leo Magrdichian, Vice President of Operations

The **WestCare Nevada** Alumni Handbook states that, "The basis behind the Alumni is to give all of WestCare's graduates an opportunity to stay connected through a support group of individuals with a common goal - recovery." In addition, it continues by identifying that, "one of the keys to recovery is the willingness to be of service to those individuals who are seeking recovery and give back what was freely given to us. We accomplish this goal by hosting several events a year at WestCare Nevada's facilities, allowing all graduates the opportunity to share their experience, strength, and hope with the residents and show them that we can maintain our sobriety and have fun in recovery."

Well, that certainly became a challenge over the past couple of years as the COVID-19 pandemic kept outside visitors, including our alumni, from entering our residential facilities. This month, however, a modified version of one of the typical events took place and it was nothing short of a success. This year's "Beast Feast," which included less alumni attendees and which required a negative COVID test the day of the event, went off without a hitch at both **Harris Springs Ranch** and the **Women and Children's Campus** the following day. BBQ (*Steak and ribs*), side dishes, outside games, and an outdoor meeting is how the days' events went, and it was evident that this was a long-time-coming based on the overall reaction by both clients and alumni.

When we consider the benefit of positive social interaction, undoubtedly one of the most important aspects is improved mental health. Meeting and greeting also promotes a sense of safety, belonging, and security. There is also evidence that being social can help you live longer, so let's definitely hope and pray that events such as this will continue in the future and that both our alumni and the clients receiving treatment will continue to reap the benefits.





The Nevada Housing Coalition (NHC)

By Andrew Moran, Development Director

At WestCare Nevada, we have joined many organizations and clubs in the community that have opened the door to countless ideas and opportunities. By joining like-minded organizations, we are able to network with professionals and leaders, further enhance our skills, and gain experience in communication organization and team building.

This month, I'd like to discuss the [Nevada Housing Coalition \(NHC\)](#) and how instrumental they are in finding a place to sleep for our unhoused brothers and sisters. WestCare joined the coalition two years ago and the many relationships that we have built since then have been priceless. Every year, they host the [Nevada Housing Conference](#) in which they bring many different organizations, advocates, and ideas together. Our team is proud to say that we have been to all of them since their inception!

[Per their website](#), the NHC's mission is to, "Create sustainable solutions to community awareness, capacity building, and advocacy to ensure housing options for all Nevadans." Their mission statement continues, "Every state in the U.S. lacks a sufficient supply of affordable housing for the lowest income residents, but Nevadans, more than any other state population, face the greatest challenge in finding affordable and available homes." According to the [National Low Income Housing Coalition's 2022 GAP Report](#), there are only 18 affordable and available rental homes for every 100 extremely low-income renter households in Nevada.

WestCare is a part of the coalition and has many community benefits. According to the NHC website, "communities thrive when people have access to stable high-quality affordable housing. Pathways to economic mobility become achievable as education, health outcomes, safety rates, and overall engagements improve. Neighborhoods and communities become stronger and more secure, and in short, everyone benefits."

[As described on their website](#), the NHC is "Committed to raising awareness and building the capacity of our communities to create high-quality dignified and attainable houses for all Nevadans."

[Congresswoman Susie Lee](#) addressed the lack of affordable housing in the state and advanced solutions for all Nevadans during a recent roundtable discussion. "Our underserved communities' low-income households are seniors, Veterans, workers, and children – they are all of us. Together, we will work to ensure that every Nevadan has a safe and stable place to call home," said Lee.

In the last two years, I have seen so much growth in our coalition and appreciate being a part of this movement. I had the pleasure of working with Executive Director of the NHC, Christine Hess. Christine holds a certification from the National Development Council as an Economic Development Finance Professional. She works alongside Communications and Outreach Coordinator, Amanda Lakin. Amanda is tasked with engaging NHC members and nonmembers across Nevada's diverse affordable housing ecosystem. Lastly, their Project and Grant Coordinator, Juawana Grant, works on statewide capacity building. Juawana previously worked in permanent supportive housing.

The next housing conference will be held at Peppermill Reno Oct. 19 - 20. If you would like to get involved, their newest program is called [ElevateNV](#). This affordable housing capacity building initiative was made possible by a grant from the Federal Loan Bank of San Francisco.

The goal of ElevateNV is to build the overall capacity of Nevada-based organizations to expand affordable housing for those who need it most. Interested funders, developers, housing and service providers, and government and tribal officials are welcome to attend their Supportive Housing Academy sessions, Affordable Housing development training, and Project Catalyst program with the goal of assessing readiness and sharing knowledge about housing solutions to create more opportunities for supportive housing in Nevada. For more information, please visit www.nvhousingcoalition.org/elevatenv.

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journey
online!

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