

# Cascade Connections Strategic Plan 2024-2028

## People We Support

### Goal 1: Increase the impact of services provided by Cascade Connections in the community.

#### 1. Provide additional services in our community in inclusive settings.

##### Action Steps:

- a. Market Home Care services to the aging population living in Whatcom County.
- b. Attend information events for senior services held in the community.
- c. Support individuals currently residing in institutions to move into our community with the support of Cascade Connections to obtain community housing and employment.
- d. Increase the number of jobs created for individuals with disabilities served by Cascade Connections.

#### 2. Support people with disabilities to have full and meaningful participation in decisions that impact them.

##### Action Steps:

- a. Create an inclusion council made up of people who are receiving services through Cascade Connections.
- b. Inclusion council will offer feedback and suggestions to all aspects of Cascade Connections services including our Board of Directors, Marketing, Human Resources, Advocacy, Training and Leadership.
- c. Hire a self-advocate to be on Cascade Connections staff to provide training and advocacy support.
- d. Video "success stories" from people we serve to share their experiences in community participation and employment to share in written materials and digital marketing.

### Goal 2: Increase community participation and partnerships.

#### 1. Connect with transition students (18-22 years old) and their families to support engagement in adult services.

##### Action Steps:

- a. 51% of students leaving transition services from school districts are not engaged in adult services in WA State one year later. Cascade Connections will seek information statistics of Whatcom County services and seek to provide and track support to increase participation and engagement and support to families.
- b. Cascade Connections will participate in community education to market our vocational and home care services to individuals and their families.
- c. Cascade Connections will advocate as a part of the Community Employment Alliance for a consistent, equitable school to work transition across the State of Washington that provides a seamless transition into adult services.
- d. Cascade Connections will sponsor events and activities that will support families and students to recognize our name and feel more comfortable approaching conversations about adult services.
- e. Cascade Connections will determine if delivering Group Pre-Employment Transition Services is a service needing a new provider in our community.

## **2. Increase the number of jobs for individuals with disabilities in our community.**

### Action Steps:

- a. A learning pod for job developers and those seeking to become job developers to receive training and support for one another.
- b. Cascade Connections will create digital resumes for people we support.
- c. A collective goal of community members and providers will be used to market, advocate and educate others on the benefits of supported employment.
- d. Teach Interviewing Skills, Soft Skills, Healthy Relationships, and Financial Literacy to support people to achieve their goals.

## **Our Organization**

### **Goal 1: Growth management and infrastructure.**

#### **1. Provide robust and efficient technology solutions that support Cascade Connections' mission and enhance operational effectiveness.**

### Action Steps:

- a. Invest in reliable hardware, software, and cloud solutions that meet the organization's needs.

- b. Establish a dedicated IT support person and procedure to maintain consistency of operation.
- c. Conduct regular evaluations to assess the effectiveness of tech support and system upgrades by reviewing tech tickets issued and determine if there are trends. Adjust strategies and actions based on evaluation results.
- d. Ensure all technology solutions comply with relevant data security and privacy regulations.
- e. Choose technology solutions that can scale with the organization's growth and evolving needs.

## **2. Develop a growth management plan outlining the next step in building, strengthening and empowering organizational growth.**

### Action Steps:

- a. Develop a list of all tasks completed by each member of administration and leadership of each department. Identify the primary staff completing the task and a cross trained individual for every task.
- b. Create internal quality control practices by completing internal audits on a routine, scheduled basis. Report of findings and recommendations are presented in writing and action plans developed for improvements.
- c. Defining roles and responsibilities for all positions including, but not limited to, the level of authority to make decisions at each position level. Staff will be encouraged to make independent decisions in their actions based on the autonomy offered to them once they have met all of their training expectations.

## **Goal 2: Foster a cohesive and efficient organizational environment.**

### **1. Provide consistency and transparency in the development, implementation, and enactment of policies and information shared throughout the organization.**

#### Action Steps:

- a. Review existing policies within the Policy and Procedure Committee made up of organizational staff.
- b. Identify inconsistencies, contractual changes, legalities, gaps, and areas for improvement.
- c. Examine best practices in policy formulation and information management within the nonprofit sector.
- d. Enhance information dissemination by creating a communication plan for a consistent communication of policies and information throughout the organization.

# The Community

## **Goal 1: Increase community awareness, understanding and support for individuals with disabilities.**

### **1. Cascade Connections will be the pillar of services provided for individuals with disabilities in Whatcom County.**

#### Action Steps:

- a. Create and distribute educational materials (brochures, flyers, social media content) highlighting the abilities and contributions of individuals with disabilities.
- b. Organize awareness events such as Disability Awareness Week.
- c. Highlight Employers of the Quarter in our agency newsletter to showcase and support local businesses who are representative of an inclusive workforce.

### **2. Increase resources used to provide the valuable services Cascade Connections needs to achieve our mission.**

#### Action Step:

- a. Create a fundraising and friendraising plan for our board of directors. This will include individual networking campaigns, small group meetings and presentations in local churches and other large gatherings.
- b. Develop a script for board members and staff to refer to in discussions about Cascade Connections.

## **Goal 2: Increase our community development goals and accomplishments.**

### **1. Create partnerships with local employers and landlords to support the creation of increased inclusion in businesses and our neighborhood.**

#### Action Step:

- a. Create networking events for a small pool of community members over breakfast or lunch gathering to learn more about Cascade Connections and opportunities to partner with our organization.
- b. Actively participate in community organizations such as Chamber of Commerce, Whatcom Women in Business, Society of Human Resources, Intellectual and Developmental Disability Advisory Committee, Community

Employment Alliance, Community Residential Services Association,  
Association of People Supporting Employment First, and others as identified.