



**PERSEVERANCE**

**NEWSLETTER** SUMMER 2020

# FROM THE CEO



“I have felt a real, powerful sense of awe as to how the Tennyson community is supporting so many with so much uncertainty.

COVID-19 has brought increased isolation and anxiety to our kids and

families. It has heightened the risk of neglect and abuse for kids stuck in unsafe homes. It has demanded herculean grit from our campus kids and staff.

And yet, time and again, I witness compassion, agility, and perseverance in our children, families, staff, and supporters. A relentless focus on doing what’s best for kids and families, and absolute dedication to making sure that our services and programs – as well as basic resources – continue to be available to our clients throughout this pandemic.

Our Residential staff have impressed with their adherence to health and safety standards. Our school and Community-Based teams shifted beautifully to telehealth, providing offsite families and children with the needed technology to stay connected and to heal. Staff have come together in new and brilliant ways

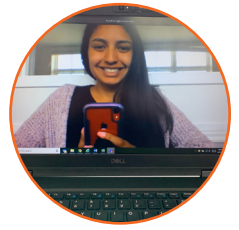
to find quick, comprehensive solutions to the complex problem of COVID-19. Our donors, Board, and committees have leaned in as well, showing nimbleness and courage in tackling this new world alongside us.

Notably, our community pivoted rapidly in agreement with us when we made the decision to convert our annual Mile High Country Q & Brew into a virtual concert and fundraiser. They showed up and gave financial contributions and kind words during #GivingTuesdayNow. And they shared messages from the heart from afar for our kids – to make sure that Tennyson children know that they are never alone, and always loved.

In these unprecedented times, we see the best qualities of this community rise to the surface, while what no longer seems to matter falls away.

Thank you for being part of this charge into an unknown future, and for the strength and hope you bring to our kids, families, and staff every day.”

Ned Breslin  
President & CEO,  
Tennyson Center for Children



Tennyson staff members utilizing telehealth technology and a Tennyson supporter sending our children words of encouragement.

# THE TIGER'S ROAR



*The Tiger's Roar is a publication created and distributed by the children of Tennyson. Check out this story from a Tennyson student:*

“I am going to talk a little bit about the Warren cottage. I have been in there for over one year. We have had a lot of staff stay and go and same with the clients. Certain aspects remain the same, but some are different from other areas. Some things that are the same are that we do room transitions after every activity. The reason we do this is so we can get our mind and head back in a space where we can be appropriate with the group. Some things that we do that are different are we do a lot more peer play with our peers during movies. The staff are supportive of us and what we are dealing with in our lives. The staff that work in there now are Mr. Keith, Ms. Emily, Ms. Max, and Mr. Nathan. We also go off campus a lot so we can learn how to be regular people in our society.”



The front door of Warren cottage.

# STAFF SPOTLIGHTS



## Emily Sledge, Community-Based Services

“When I was a teenager, the many ways that I was struggling to cope with my big emotions were overlooked by the adults in my life. My parents loved me but didn’t quite know what to do with me or how to help. Because of that, I wasn’t able to get the help I needed until I was in college and in a position to seek out and pay for my own therapy. Therapy, for me, has been an invaluable and life-saving experience. It has taught me to care for myself, show myself compassion in difficult moments, relate to others in a healthy way,

process trauma, and live a more present life in the direction of my values. I wish that I could have begun that process at a much younger age and that my parents could have walked that road with me.

I became a therapist so that I could give kids what I didn’t get at their age. I want to equip young people and their families with the skills they need to live embodied, connected, and fulfilling lives where they are able to hold their strengths and struggles with self-compassion and create safe, meaningful

relationships with others. Tennyson is my very first job out of graduate school and although this pandemic has thrown us all off, I have intense gratitude for the opportunity to finally be doing what I’ve dreamed of doing for so long.”



*Art from the campus kids' "Chalk Walk" in April.*



## Ronnie Vasquez, Community-Based Services

“I used to work at Tennyson over 18 years ago as a YTC because I really enjoyed working with kids and helping them to lead better lives. I didn’t stay with Tennyson for all the years between then and now, but I did come back after many years and a variety of experiences. Coming back was easier than I thought because I enjoy the work that Tennyson does. I appreciate the vision that

Tennyson has for changing not only the individual lives of kids and families, but also to change the system as a whole. I came back to Tennyson in a leadership position. Even though I don’t work directly with the kids themselves as often, it is very rewarding to develop and strengthen the skills of our staff and supervisors. Helping staff members be a better version of themselves so they can better help

and support the kids and families is amazing.”



*Encouraging words from a Tennyson supporter.*



## Jill McNeil-Garcia, Executive Assistant

“After what seemed like a lifetime in the casino industry, it was time to make a change. I wanted to give back and was drawn to the non-profit sector. Not 100% sure what

direction I wanted to head – Tennyson found me! I felt a calling from the minute I walked in the door. The kids, families, and staff inspire me every day I come to work. I hope that with even the

smallest things I do, somehow it makes a difference in just one child’s life. That’s what drives me each day. I know I’ve found my place, my purpose, and my home at Tennyson.”



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*"WE ARE TENNYSON" words from campus kiddos during their April "Chalk Walk" created to inspire and support one another.*

## DONOR SPOTLIGHT



**CONSTRUCTION**

"PCL Construction is proud to support Tennyson Center for Children. As an employee-owned company, we not only build communities using brick and mortar, but also build hope and support in our local communities where we live and work.

**"PCL Construction is proud to support Tennyson Center for Children."**

In over 110 years in the construction industry, we have constructed thousands of schools and universities throughout the U.S. and Canada. It's organizations like Tennyson that fill these buildings with love and warmth, as well as hands-on programs and services that help ensure all children are set up to succeed later in life.

'Together we build success,' isn't just a tagline at PCL, it is our motivation to connect with the right partners to ensure bright futures for the communities we serve."