

October 1, 2021

HOPE 4 Youth Board of Director September Update

Greetings on day 10 of my role with the organization. Thank you for your openness in postponing our September 27<sup>th</sup> board meeting allowing me time to dig in and present our *State-of-Operation* recap at our upcoming October board meeting. I thank you again for your belief in me and my experience to stabilize and build our HOPE 4 Youth mission. Our mission of *providing pathways to end youth homelessness* is powerful! The team and I, with your support, will ensure our vision and ultimate goal of ending youth homelessness is met.

In my first two weeks:

- I have met with our team at Hope Place, H4Y's Drop-in Center, and at our admin office. The colleagues in place are committed to the mission and look forward to building a cohesive team and community partnership enhancements. I have seen them in action with our youth and partners; they are strong, professional, compassionate, and empowering. I have met 1:1 with a number of our colleagues, but plan to meet with everyone within the coming weeks to understand what motivates them to engage with our mission.
- I have begun my 1:1 board visits. I am honored to work with you. I appreciate the transparency and candor being shared. This is the only way I can assess where we were and how to most impactfully move forward. For those I haven't met yet, I look forward to connecting in the coming weeks.
- I have reviewed the H4Y's Board of Directors by-laws and I am excited to expand the board of director membership to the by-law maximum of 15 board members.
- I was privileged to attend two fund-raising/friend-raising events: *The Darkest Night 4K*, and *Hunt 4 Hope*. I was humbled by the show of love, support, and boundless energy from the community. We are trending the highest level of -donations raised in three years for the 4K event. Hunt 4 Hope has now raised over \$100,000 in their six-year partnership with us; we believe we will hit over \$33,000 in revenue this year alone. In speaking to Matt and Greg, we are already set for next year's hunt! We are incredible thankful to you and our community.
- I am working with MMC the accounting outsourced firm hired to help in the financial department leadership transition. I am motivated by transparency and team accountability; I look forward to wrapping up the exploration phase of our work with MMC and move to financial management. I will have a full report of progress at our October meeting. I will share, we have some revenue shortfalls and expense overages due to the leadership transitions, however, our financial state is strong, and I have full confidence in our solvency in years to come.
- Since the August financials, we have received a number of grants and donations supporting our two September events. We are working on some important grants to end the year strong. I am impressed with how the program and advancement team works together to fulfill the grant vision and requirements. The Pohlad grant just open last week with an instructional meeting on October 4<sup>th</sup> of which we will be attending. We remain hopeful this gift renews.
- I have begun to unpack our options of revenue diversification. I believe we have incredible opportunities with community and corporate partners to come beside H4Y's mission in expanded and/or new ways.
- I am in the process of assessing our staffing needs in light of the current staff gaps and vision to outsource. I will have a full recap at our October meeting.
- Finally, I am in the midst of connecting with H4Y friends and partners in the community. I feel one of my greatest objectives will be to elevate the work HOPE 4 Youth is doing and how the community can stand beside our efforts to end youth homelessness together!

I appreciate you and your commitment to our mission. I look forward to working together.

LaChelle Williams – HOPE 4 Youth Executive Director

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