



Sunrise Family
Resource Center
Strengthening Families

ANNUAL COMMUNITY REPORT

OCTOBER 2022

A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Over this past year, Sunrise Family Resource Center has continued to be a crucial support and resource for families in our community. Sunrise staff have more than met the challenges presented by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and uncertain financial times. Sunrise staff continue to successfully fulfill Sunrise's mission of "Strengthening Families".

This year, in addition to its ongoing programs, Sunrise participated in two major events:

- Together with the Vermont Arts Exchange (VAE), in June Sunrise put on a Family Fun Day at the North Bennington Skateboard Park. There were games, music, arts and crafts, and food. This was a fun and enjoyable day for all the families that came to it.

- Together with Coggins Toyota of Bennington, in September Sunrise put on a fundraising Golf Tournament. The golfers had a fun day winning various prizes, and most importantly, a significant amount was raised to help support Sunrise!

Our Board chair, Laurie Burdick, is stepping down after her years of service to Sunrise. We are very grateful for all that Laurie has done for Sunrise. We also welcome two new Board members - Kelly Krawczyk and Larry Cole. They each bring welcome energy, insights, and perspectives to the Board.

Our community benefits from having Sunrise in it. Our families are the bedrock of our community. Helping families stay together, gain independence, and thrive is a significant benefit to our community - a benefit that Sunrise provides to our community every day.

Thank you for supporting Sunrise!



Board Members (left to right):
Laurie Burdick (Board Chair, pictured separately), Chandler Poling (outgoing board member), Kathy Thompson (outgoing Secretary), Jonathan Cooper (Treasurer), Sharon Cave, Peter Lawrence (Vice Chair), and Linda Bow.

A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Sunrise Community,

I treasure having an office that overlooks our play yard where I hear sounds of laughter and joy on a daily basis. Walking through the play yard and being greeted by any number of little ones on a regular basis create a sense of awe by witnessing their never-ending delight in the world around them. A good reminder as to why we are all here.

The essential work that Sunrise provides can be a challenge for our community to understand. We tend to be known for our long standing child care center and our on-site high school diploma program, yet we do so much more. We basically have 3 tiers of services: Prevention, Family Support and Crisis Intervention. This is a great way to begin to understand how and why so many different families have access to services that meets their need. Besides the list of services, you will find in this report, we also have a monthly calendar of our offerings that we email to community partners, families and post on our Facebook page. Please let us know if you'd like to receive a monthly calendar.

We've had a jammed packed year with community activities! We teamed up with the Vermont Arts Exchange to provide monthly art workshops on-site and we culminated the experience with our first ever, free family event, "Summer Jam" held at the NorShaft Lions Field in North Bennington. Mobiles made by participants during one of the classes, hang from our porches. Coggin's Toyota chose Sunrise to become the beneficiary of their first annual Golf Tournament. It was a fabulous event, and we are very grateful to have partnered to raise funds on behalf of local families. This event was a perfect fit for this coming year as Sunrise takes a deeper look at tackling some transportation needs locally. We became the Fiscal Agent for the Warm the Children program, working alongside other community partners and volunteers to keep this needed program alive in our community after 30 years! We hosted a book swap on behalf of Shires Kids, participated in the Bennington College Food Summit Tour, returned to hosting our monthly Community Picnics, amongst other activities and family events.

Many of the families that we partner with continue to struggle with housing, transportation, addiction, mental health, childcare needs, high levels of stress, along with the high cost of simply living. I remain grateful every day for the amazing staff that come to work ready to tackle these extremely tough issues. They are hero's armed with compassion, kindness, advocacy and the ability to make things happen to improve the lives of families in our community. They are experienced and skilled in their field and the reason that Sunrise shines!

It's supporters like you that can make real change in our community. Thank you to all our previous and longtime donors. I hope you will consider making a donation today.

Most sincerely,



Denise Main
Executive Director



2022 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

TOTAL ASSETS

Current Assets:
Checking/Savings \$429,885.14

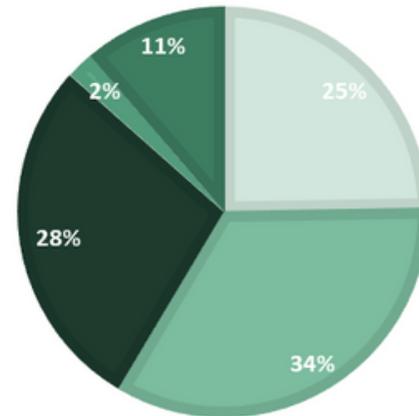
Current Assets:
Accounts Receivable \$587,788.50

Current Assets:
Other Current \$487,213.22

Fixed Assets \$37,767.41

Other Assets \$195,668.53

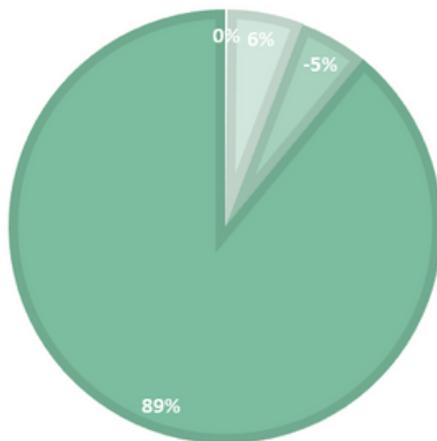
- Current Assets: Checking/Savings
- Current Assets: Accounts Receivable
- Current Assets: Other Current
- Fixed Assets
- Other Assets



Total Assets \$1,738,322.80

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY

- Liabilities: Current
- Liabilities: Accounts Payable
- Other Current Liabilities
- Equity



Current Liabilities \$3,139.56

Liabilities:
Accounts Payable \$109,768.36

Other Current
Liabilities \$(101,772.42)

Total Liabilities \$7,995.94

Total Liabilities & Equity \$1,738,322.80

Equity \$1,727,187.30

*Unaudited

"THANK YOU" TO OUR DONORS: *Fiscal Year (July 2021 - June 2022)*

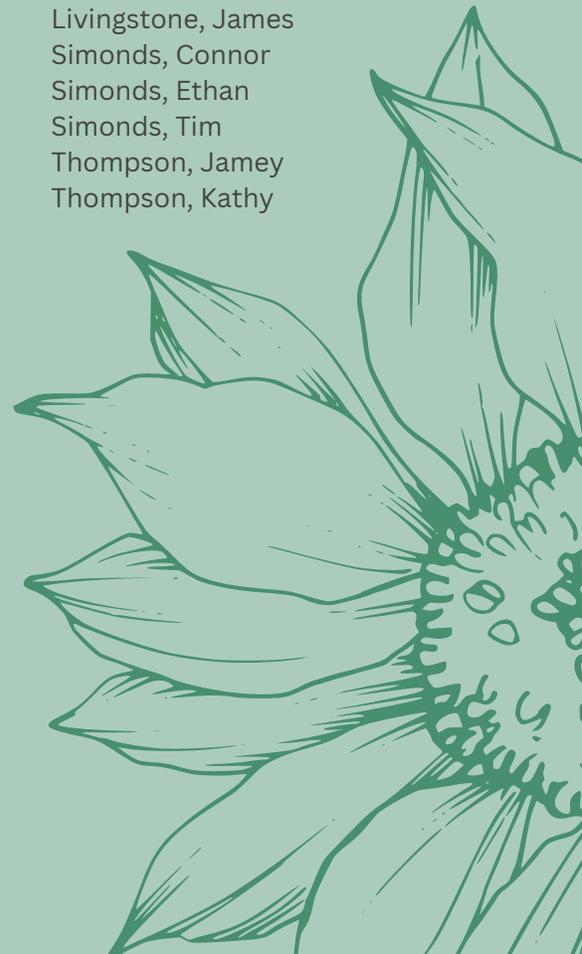
Adams, Pat
Amazon Smile Supporters
Anytime Fitness
Barker, Frank
Bashevkin, Al & Nancy
Benkoski, Brittney
Bennett, Linda
Bennington Quakers
Bisaccio, Kevin & Sarah
Blanchard, Mark & Dee
Bolton, Raymond
Bower, Richard & Nancy
Boyle, Chales & Marilyn
Briggs, Gary & Debbie
Briggs, Margaret
Burkhardt, Jane
C.L. White Glass
Carpenter, Colleen
Cohen, Judith
Colvin, James & Lodie
Cooper, Jonathan
Copp, Charles & Jennifer
Cormier, Anne and James
Cottam, Meg
Cross, Pamela
Davis, Flora
Day, Michael
DeLucia, Claude & Susan
Demasi, Mark
Disney, John
Donigan, Linda
Donovan, Peter & Nancy
Dundas, Richard
Federated Church of...
Fogarty, Danielle
Freeman, Clinton & Margaret
Gaghich, Tiffany
Garces, Tulianna
Gerish, Mary
Gingo, Charlie and Chris
Goodrich, Jan
Greater Heights Tree and Land Mngmt.
Green Mountain Power
Green Mountain Tile
GVH Studio, Inc.
Hannaford
Hanson, Dean
Harrington Matt
Harrington, Carol
Hattat, Javery
Haynes, Jean
Hearst, John
Holley, Jennifer

Howard, David & Diane
Howe, Robert and Cora May
Johnson, Leon & Patricia
Kenyon, Neil & Nadine Wisher
Kimball, Michel
Kimberly Farms
Krawczyk, David & Kerry
Lamy, Jonathan
Lane, Stephanie
Lawrence, Peter & Wendy
Loy, Frederick, Dr.
Lyons, Linda & Bill
MacDonald, John & Brenda
Main, Denise
Main, Patricia
McClintock, Lon
McGovern, Joseph
McGowan, Stephanie
McGuinness, Mary
McKenna, D.B.
McKenna, Brian
Mead, James & Anne Marie
Michl, Keith
Mook, Anne & Wesley
Mountain Telecom
Muir, Robert & Nancy
Mulligan, Susan
Murphy, Judy
Network for Good Supporters
O'Connell, Mary
O'Malley, Henry
Outwater, Meg
Patnaude, Armand & Jean
Pelletier, Rose-Marie
Perrotta, Christopher
Peters, Stephannie
Petrelis, Beverly
Petrelis, Theodora
Pezzulich Robert
Plante, Leo & Susan
Plunkett, Genevieve
Poggi, John
Propp, Louis, Dr.
Putney, Charles & Linda
Raskin, Barbara
Rogers, Dorothy
Rogers, Mary
Rogge, Alison
Sacred Heart St. Francis De Sales
Scanlon, Justine
Schwartz, Judith and Tony
Sedgewick, Michael and Lynn
Shea Funeral Home

Smith, Lacy
Sobel, Jane
Sperber Tool Works, Inc.
Stark Hose Fire Company
Stromgren, Alison
Stromgren, Robin
The Richards Group
Thomayer, Cynthia
Thompson, Bernadette
Town Fair Tire Foundation
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Benn.
Vanderkar, Judy
W&M Holdings, Inc
Wassick Tire Service
White, Alan
Winburn, Patrick, Esq.
Yucht, Jeff anf Suzy

"THANK YOU" TO OUR VOLUNTEERS!

Budnikas, Archie
Cross, Pam
Gaghich, Matthew
Hamilton, James
Hamilton, Mike
Kilburn, Art
Krawczyk, Kerry
Livingstone, James
Simonds, Connor
Simonds, Ethan
Simonds, Tim
Thompson, Jamey
Thompson, Kathy



SPECIAL AWARDS RECEIVED FROM GRANTS, FOUNDATIONS, FUNDS, AND TOWNS

- Vermont Community Foundation
- Vermont Foodbank
- Vermont Department of Agriculture
- Vermont Women's Fund
- Vermont Community Development Block Grant
- Town Fair Tire Foundation
- O'neil Foundation
- Bennington College, Community Response Fund
- Stewarts Shops
- Parent Child Center, Inc.
- Town of Bennington ARPA Funds
- Vermont Department of Health
- Vermont Children's Trust Foundation
- Vermont DCF and Department of Housing & Community Development
- Vermont Department of Labor
- Vermont Department of Buildings and General Services

Town of Arlington
Town of Bennington
Town of North Bennington
Town of Pownal
Town of Shaftsbury

Thank
You!

GRANT AWARDS & NEW OFFERINGS AT SUNRISE

Sunrise was recently awarded a Health Equity grant through the VT Department of Health, to address transportation barriers in the community. Some of the funding will be used to offer a "Family Support Shuttle", in partnership with Green Mountain Express. We were also awarded a 3-year Housing Navigation grant through the Emergency Rental Assistance Program, the Department for Children & Families, and the Department of Housing & Community Development. See below for more details on these free programs, open to anyone in the community!



In Partnership With **THE Green Mountain EXPRESS** Offer The

Family Support Shuttle



TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS
10 AM - 2 PM
BEGINNING OCTOBER 11, 2022

This is a new, FREE service, open to ALL in the Bennington community!



Transportation will be provided to and from local grocery stores and/or laundry mats.



This service is made possible with grant funding awarded to Sunrise, through the VT Department of Health. Questions? Call today!



Call Green Mountain 1 day ahead, to schedule your trip! 802-447-0477

The main focus of our Housing Navigation Program for the first year of this grant funding is to support unhoused individuals and families that are currently living in motels in their search for safe and stable housing. Housing has become a critical issue throughout the state of Vermont. There has been a consistent decrease in the amount of financial support that is available to eligible families, as well as a decrease in affordable housing options. Our Housing Navigator is available as a resource to anyone in the Bennington County community. She can help with housing searches, rental applications, and community partner referrals. Drop-in times are available every Thursday, from 10 - 11 am, at our 226 Union Street location. For more information, contact our Housing Navigator, Michelle Weyers at 802-442-0051 or by email at michellew@sunrisepcc.com

COGGINS CLASSIC 2022 GOLF TOURNAMENT

To Benefit Sunrise



Sunrise participated in a Golf Tournament this September and we would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to Valerie Harrington and everyone at Coggins Toyota, for choosing Sunrise as Coggin's first year recipient of their Annual Classic Golf tournament. This was a big lift to our organization and we can't thank them enough for leading us through this experience. We would also like to extend a huge, "Thank you!" to Maru Leon at the Mount Anthony Country Club, and to Susan Plassaince at the Bennington Banner for all their hard work on the Tournament. Also, to everyone that sponsored the event and came out to golf, "Thank you!". Valerie- not only were your skills evident throughout this experience, your grace and kindness was ever present, and your story beautifully shared. You are a true Rock Star, Valerie! *-Written by Denise Main*

Why was Sunrise Chosen?

I had some personal experience with Sunrise Family Resource Center. Five years ago, I moved to Bennington. I was a young mom, moving to a new town, with no connections, no solid income, and the desire to plant my roots and build a life – Sunrise helped connect me with care providers, events, and assistance during the first few months of my relocation. They helped me get on my feet. They helped me find affordable, reliable, safe childcare so I could find a good job and go to work every day.

For those who aren't familiar, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is a theory of psychology explaining Human Motivation. It is presented in a Pyramid starting at the base with Physiological Needs such as Clothing, food, and shelter. Followed by Safety Needs such as health programs, employment, and other resources. These bottom two levels are considered BASIC needs, in order to reach Love, Belonging, Esteem, and Self-Actualization – basically reach your fullest potential and become your best self – your BASIC needs must be met and consistent.

Sunrise has been connecting families and children with the Physiological Needs, Safety Needs, and MORE for them to grow and develop their way through the pyramid and supporting families and children to become their best selves while making our towns and communities a better place.

-Written by Valerie Harrington

SUNRISE ADVISORY COUNCIL & DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION



The Sunrise Advisory Council is a group comprised of parents/ caregivers in Bennington County, that meet for two hours once per month to provide valuable input and support Sunrise staff in decisions about programs and services provided to the community. The Council started operating this past spring and they have been busy representing Sunrise in various capacities. The Council hosted a Mental Health Awareness Booth at a Sunrise Picnic and all members participated in an Economic Dignity Project Event. Sunrise recently created a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, and as part of this initiative, the Council installed a Juneteenth Story Walk. The Council is continuing to grow and is actively recruiting new members.

-Written by Katrina Hastings

SMILES IN OUR EARLY CARE & EDUCATION CLASSROOMS



FAMILIES AT THE CENTER

Sunrise was awarded funding for three-year implementation of the Families at the Center Program. Families at the Center is a new program with a goal of increasing social capital and leadership skills for Vermont families. This initiative encompasses both Bennington and Rutland Counties as we are partnering with the Rutland County Parent Child Center. Local agency navigators and families come together monthly to build relationships and expand community knowledge. Funding came from the William K. and Dorothy J. O'Neill Foundation in Cleveland Ohio, the Vermont Community Foundation in Middlebury Vermont and the Town of Bennington ARPA funding approved by the Selectboard.

-Written by Katrina Hastings

Early Care & Education
A NAEYC-accredited **5 Stars child care program** for infants and toddlers ages 6 weeks through 3 years. We have **22 infants and toddlers in our classrooms**, playing and growing inside and outside with our dedicated staff.

We are open to the public, M - F, 8:30 am - 4:30 pm.

Family Supported Housing
FSH reduces the incidence and duration of child and family homelessness by supporting homeless families with minor children needing to transition to, and sustain, stable housing through targeted case management, service coordination, and coordinated access to affordable housing. FSH provides intensive, **customized case management services to families.**

We have a community-wide Menstrual Products Bank.

Monthly Offerings

- Housing Navigation
- Playgroups
- Parent Education
- Parents as Teachers, Group Connections
- Making Meal & Memories
- Budgeting Class
- Resume Writing Class

Do you know about all of our programs and offerings?

Youth Development Program
Sunrise serves youth, ages 14-23, as they **transition from foster care to independent living.** The YDP Coordinator works with individuals on **life skills** such as: cooking, budgeting, furnishing an apartment, driving, housing/job searches, applications for **post-secondary education, parenting,** and referrals.

We have a community-wide Diaper Bank.

Child Care Referral & Child Care Financial Assistance
Sunrise assists families in **finding child care** in regulated VT programs, registered/licensed Child Care Homes and licensed Child Care Centers. We also **help eligible families access funding to pay for child care** for children 6 weeks up to the age of 13 (or up until the age of 19 if the child has special needs).

We have a community-wide Bed Bug Mattress Covers Bank.

Learning Together Program
A state-approved **alternative high school completion program** for pregnant/parenting youth up to the age of 24. LTP offers a **core curriculum, individualized instruction, and parenting/life skills education** in a supportive setting.

We have 4 buildings in downtown Bennington, on Union Street.

Service Coordination
Referrals from the Agency of Human Services Field Director for complex cases where families or individuals have multiple needs and/or service providers; commonly served are **those at risk of becoming homeless or in need of housing.**

We have a Pantry with food, household goods, clothing, shoes, toys, and books.

Parent Education Offerings
Sunrise's Parent Educator supports and promotes parent education and activities throughout the year, such as county-wide **Playgroups** and **Parent Education** classes.

We are 1 of 15 Parent Child Centers in the state of VT.

Family Advocacy Program
An intensive, **home-based service for families at risk of having a child placed outside of the home.** FAP also works with families that are **working towards reunification** with their child(ren). Families may be referred by The Department for Children and Families (DCF) or members of the community.

Children's Integrated Services (CIS)
Sunrise is the fiscal agent for the Children's Integrated Services (CIS). We house the CIS Coordinator, Specialized Child Care Coordinator, and 2 Family Support Workers. These staff members **provide family support, home visiting, and Early Childhood Family Mental Health to families with children, prenatal through age 6.** Home visitors work closely with families to **identify their strengths, support their children's growth and development,** and locate community resources.

Learn more on the web: sunrisepcc.com

Do you have questions? Give us a call at 802-442-6934, or email us at sfrc@sunrisepcc.com

CELEBRATING DEDICATED STAFF

"How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard." -A.A. Milne

Sunrise's Early Care and Education Program has been so lucky to have Rita Yarnal as a part of our amazing team over the past 8 years. Rita said goodbye to Sunrise on September 16th and will be making her move to Florida to spend her days with her daughter and grandson. As we are so sad to see Rita go, we know that a part of her heart has been in Florida with her family since their move two years ago. It is difficult, if not impossible to sum up Rita's contributions over her 8 years of dedicated service. Her contributions will always be valued and remembered. Rita's hard work, commitment, and dedication to the children and families at the early care and education program are worthy of much admiration. She met each day with a positive attitude and a smile. Rita treated each child and their family with great admiration and respect. Always being sure to give them a smile and ask about their lives in a kind way. She is so loved by many, even long after the children graduate from our program. Rita is the epitome of a team player, always doing whatever is needed to make the day run smoothly and put smiles on the children's faces. Rita will be deeply missed by all that she has worked with as a colleague and especially as a teacher. We wish her the best in warm, sunny Florida and know that whatever path she may follow, she will be amazing and so loved!

-Written by Anne Simonds

2022 STAFF ANNIVERSARIES

5 YEARS:

Danielle Longtin
Rick Morse
Carli Scribner
Michelle Snow
Cyndi Thomayer

10 YEARS:

Ashley Paquin

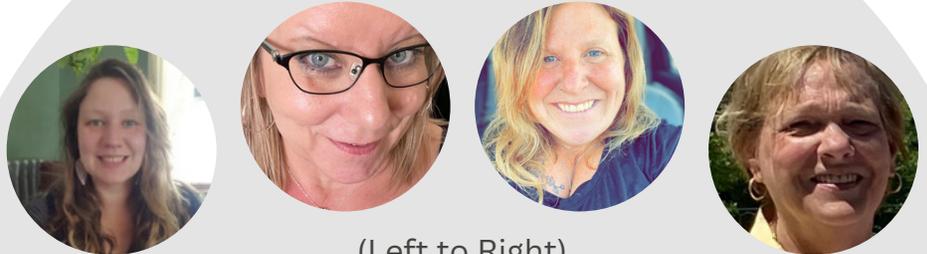
20 YEARS:

Kelly Belville

35 YEARS:

Denise Main

WELCOME NEW SUNRISE STAFF!



(Left to Right)

Katrina Hastings- Social Capital Coordinator, Danielle Bacon- CIS Family Support Worker, Amy Shepard- CIS Family Support Worker, & Bonnie Kilburn- Early care & Education Cook

RECENT STAFF INITIATIVES

This past year, Sunrise staff have worked to overall our onboarding process, have continued adopting the National Family Support Network's Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening and Support, have formed a Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) Committee, and completed pertinent trainings on gender identities and DEI.

BONNIE PRENTISS MEMORIAL AWARD



Beginning in 2008, Sunrise employees have nominated one of their peers, annually, to be presented with The Bonnie Prentiss Memorial Award. This award was created to honor the memory of Bonnie Prentiss, Sunrise's beloved Early Care & Education Teacher, who died of cancer in 2007. Staff members select a colleague that they believe best embodies the qualities that Bonnie possessed.

I am so honored to present this year's Award to Sunrise's Parent Educator, Tiffany Racicot. The Bonnie Prentiss Award is voted on by staff to choose an individual that really embodies all the wonderful qualities Bonnie Prentiss possessed. Tiffany has been with Sunrise since June of 2021, and it is incredible to think what she has accomplished in that year, all while having a genuine smile on her face. For only being here a year, Tiffany really dove in headfirst! To name a few things Tiffany has achieved over the last year- Tiffany has started three playgroups all in which have been successful and provides fun activities for our community. Tiffany has facilitated many parent education classes/workshops where her creativity and knowledge really shine. She has overhauled the Welcome Baby bag program, holds a Coffee Club group that has had an incredible turn out and continues to grow. I know that Monday mornings are tough for myself, but when I have time to pop into coffee club, Tiffany welcomes everyone with open arms, and that changes your whole day. Bonnie Prentiss isn't based upon what you do here at Sunrise, it is based upon how you do it- Tiffany is dedicated, encouraging, friendly, empathetic, supportive, a great advocate, and knowledgeable. Tiffany always has a positive attitude and is continually willing to lend a hand when needed, to staff and the families we support. I have worked with numerous families who make it known that they enjoy Tiffany's upbeat, positive personality and that she has truly made a positive impact on their life in some way or another.

Sunrise is lucky to have you, Tiffany- you are incredibly deserving of this award, and I am happy to present this award to you on the behalf of the staff at Sunrise.

-Written by 2021 Bonnie Prentiss Memorial Awardee, Carli Scribner

CELEBRATING SUCCESS IN OUR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Over the past year, **Asher** has obtained his Learner's Permit and Driver's License, gained work experience, and was accepted to college. The Youth Development Program financially supported a trip to Jamaica so Asher could meet his birth father for the first time. Asher recently moved into an apartment in NY where he is attending college and playing on the college basketball team, which has always been a dream of his! Asher continues to stay well connected to YDP and utilizes the support from afar to continue accomplishing his goals.

-Written by Caitlin Harrington



Yeager started working with the Youth Development Program while living in Bennington and now has successfully transitioned to living back in his home state of Alaska where he is living in his own apartment. The Youth Development Program was able to help support with a pilot preparation training course and Yeager reached out recently to say that he is very close to obtaining his pilot's license and flying almost every day!

DISTINGUISHED INDIVIDUAL COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

I wish to nominate Tiffany Sausville, field representative for Vermont State Housing Authority, for the Individual Community Service Award. In my five plus years with Sunrise and the Family Supportive Housing Program, I have firsthand observed Tiffany's skill working effectively and cohesively with many organizations, property owners, and families in the Bennington Community.

She is a strong force in the mission to end homelessness and she never hesitates to go far beyond her essential job functions to help house and keep families stably housed! For example: In January 2022, she jumped in to assist a Shires Housing property owner and a Sunrise Family Supportive Housing Coordinator to help save 5 families from losing their project-based voucher. Vouchers that were being terminated abruptly and unfairly with no explanation or prior outreach, to the families, Sunrise Housing Coordinators or Landlord. As we were doing everything, we could do to prevent this from moving forward. It was Tiffany's inclusion in one email that made the difference. She advocated and took action to bring the details of the issue to the correct persons at Vermont State Housing Authority. I know without her additional efforts the evictions would have moved forward making 5 families with children homeless! The families were able to remain stably housed and are still housed. This was not in Tiffany's normal responsibilities of her work, but her compassion, sense of fairness, and her willingness to work outside the box to help families, is an exceptional quality she possesses that we do not always see. She is a valuable reliable, appreciated go to person for many in our community. She is an exceptional partner always going above and beyond. It is because of Tiffany's diligence, compassion, and strong work ethic I nominate her for this award.

-Written by Rick Morse

DISTINGUISHED COMMUNITY PARTNER SERVICE AWARD

I wish to nominate Felicia's Inc. for the Community Partner Service Award. Felicia's inc. is a non-profit located in Rupert, Vermont whose mission is to distribute diapers, wipes, and feminine products to those in need within Bennington County Vermont. Felicia's Inc. is one of our resources we utilize to support our diaper bank here at Sunrise. When called with a specific diaper size in need, they are delivered within 48 hours with multiple sizes, wipes, and feminine products. I am always greeted by Jackie Haft founder of Felicia's Inc. and other staff with a genuine yes, we can deliver the sizes needed, and more. The staff at Felicia's Inc. embody the willingness to support others. The continued support from Felicia's Inc. will guarantee that Sunrise will be able to provide such an integral basic need for families and children within our county.

-Written by Kelly Belville



COMMUNITY PARTNER SERVICE AWARD

We wish to nominate Trisha Wright Family Engagement Specialist SVSU for the Community Partner Service Award because Trisha demonstrates the qualities of teamwork, passion for her work, and commitment to the families that she/we serve. What we appreciate about Trisha as a partner is her accessibility; she returns calls and messages in a timely manner. She cares about the families she works with and recognizes professional limits and boundaries. She is also just great to deal with; she takes her work seriously, but she doesn't take herself too seriously. Trisha exemplifies the commitment to strengthening families that is at the core of what we strive to do every day.

-Written by Carli Scribner & John Winchester



INDIVIDUAL COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

I wish to nominate Tammy LaFlamme at Green Mountain Express-coordinator for the Individual Community Service Award because Tammy shows kindness and patience toward others (including me while I learned my new position as CIS Childcare coordinator) Rides along for transports to support the children and drivers and was compassionate toward a particular family who had to learn an entirely new way of life. This family is a refugee family from Afghanistan, and their children attended Head Start needing transportation-their first-time attending childcare in the United States; Tammy helped arrange transportation for shorter days for their adjustment period and was sad to see them transition to the bus but happy for them. Tammy also showed kindness toward a family when she was able to adjust pick up and drop off times to accommodate a family and spent time at the bus station with their infant when a parent was not home yet. Tammy really shows kindness and compassion in her work. It is apparent that Tammy wants families to succeed and cares about children.

-Written by Christine LaCroix-Coulter



COMMUNITY PARTNER SERVICE AWARD

I wish to nominate The Richards Group for the Community Partner Service Award. For many years Wills Insurance, now known as The Richards Group has provided Sunrise with all of their insurance needs. The personalized service David Newell provided really made the relationship feel like a partnership. From hand delivering the completed renewal applications (which are copious for a non-profit) for final review, to ensuring they reflected our most current needs, or taking after hour calls on his cell phone when we had a question. As a Pillar in the Bennington Community, David was always willing to make an introduction or run with something that Sunrise had happening or needed. And Kate Mahar, who must have her email set to auto check, because she is just so quick and accommodating when we need a COI or have any other administrative issues to address. She is both knowledgeable and quick. I feel so fortunate to have her on the other side of the email transmission.

With David's recent retirement, Eddie Lewicki has now stepped into our contact role for the agency. It is obvious that Eddie has followed closely in David's footsteps. From our 6am phone meetings which are both light and funny-a great morning conversation over coffee-to a frantic text for something, Eddie's commitment to Sunrise and our various endeavors is heartwarming. Despite The Richards Group being a conglomerate of sorts, both Eddie and Kate have a knack for making us feel special, recognizing and respecting the important work we do in the local community and joining us to that end. This type of relationship is so important to the growth and wellbeing of any not for profit. We are truly fortunate to have Kate, Eddie and the entire Richards Group supporting all the good work we do here at Sunrise.

-Written by Cyndi Thomayer

COMMUNITY PARTNER SERVICE AWARD

I wish to nominate Cat Blanchard, VNA for the Community Partner Service Award. Cat goes above and beyond her "duties", every single day with families. It is her norm, not an exception. Cat develops strong relationships with families and because of that, she is helpful to other service providers in meeting and encouraging relationships with the same families. Families trust her-she is dependable, honest, and helpful. I have seen Cat step-in and support families after-hours, on holidays, and for hours at a time because she is always interested in keeping children safe and healthy all of the time, not just 9am-5pm. Cat seems to do her work tirelessly and I'm not sure how she does it.

Besides being a VNA nurse doing home visits, she is also a wife, mother and foster-parent.

-Written by Lori Yunger

INDIVIDUAL COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

I wish to nominate Dale Coppin for the Individual Community Service Award. Dale is committed to serving our community and supporting Sunrise in many different ways. Dale has been involved with the Grateful Hearts program, helping to feed families locally sourced, nutritious meals throughout Bennington County. He was key in developing the program, and delivers meals to food shelves, Sunrise, and other agencies on a regular basis. Dale has been involved with the Twilight program at MAUHS for many years and is now involved with the Frost program. Dale works with youth who have difficulties maintaining in traditional classrooms and gets them involved in community service projects. He is always open to helping Sunrise families with projects that impact their living conditions and ultimately their outlook. In the past Dale has worked with youth in Twilight to install carpeting and do minor repair work in homes. When a person's home cosmetically looks good and safety issues are addressed, it definitely can boost confidence and strengthen relationships with service providers. Dale was diagnosed some time ago with cancer and has continued providing services to the community throughout his journey. Dale shares his mantra, "it's a great day to be alive" with his students and everyone that he comes in contact with. Dale is consistently a strong advocate and positive role model to the youth and families in our community. He goes above and beyond to improve quality of life for everyone he comes in contact with.

-Written by Lori Yunger

INDIVIDUAL COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

I wish to nominate Nicole Campbell for the Individual Community Service Award. Nicole Campbell is the Founder and Executive Director of Shire Kids, a local non-profit organization, founded in 2019. Shire Kids is "dedicated to improving access to books and early literacy programs for children in Southern Vermont". Nicole shares her love of family and children in her daily work. She fiercely believes that all children in our community have the right to learn and that fostering a love of reading early on is key to a successful future. Shire Kids is the local affiliate for Southern Vermont for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, which mails "free books to registered children from birth to age five every month". Nicole also collaborates with community partners and organizes free Community Book Swap events throughout the year. She can often be found sorting, stacking, and hauling books of all shapes and sizes. These events bring local social service agencies and the community together to ensure children have access to age-appropriate books. In addition, Shire Kids offers Imagination Library Story Time at local preschools and libraries. These engaging readings of recent Imagination Library books allow children to participate in fun activities together. Nicole is an inspiration for those wishing to turn their passion into their profession. She is a strong advocate for children and families in our community, and her hard work and dedication should be celebrated!

-Written by Sarah Livingstone





"I felt saved when I found Sunrise, after an extremely challenging transition in my family dynamic."



"Sunrise has helped my family with many different things and has always supported my family."



"Making Meals & Memories is a great program- I think it's great to get kids cooking and expose them to new foods."

"This is a wonderful place for any help with any area... we hands-down recommend these Playgroups!"



"Sunrise is a great resource... I love what Sunrise does for my family and our community."

Pictured from top row to bottom row: Making Meals & Memories family night- "Under the Sea", Vermont Arts Exchange at Sunrise, Making Meals & Memories family night- "Earth Day Every Day", County-Wide Playgroups, Parents as Teachers Group Connections- May 2022. (Family quotes were submitted for our Parent Child Center Survey.)