

Organization: NAMI-Wood River Valley

Project Title: Grant for Two Part-Time Contractual Staff

Grant Amount: \$23,448

1) **Objectives & Outcomes -**

Because of the WRWF funding, we were able to hire and retain two contractors to assist the executive director with facilitating support groups and outreach. One, focused on suicide prevention and teen outreach, and the other, assisting with admin and adult/family support. We increased hours in January 2020 to our vital programs coordinator, Brittany Shipley, who oversees all of our work with adolescents. This includes the facilitation of Bluebirds support groups and summer camp, as well as the weekly Survivors of Suicide Loss Support Group. She has specialized in suicide prevention, and due to the recent increases in suicidal ideation in our community, her work has also included lethal means campaigns with pharmacies and gun shops.

Our second coordinator has evolved to the needs of the organization and the schedules of those coordinators. Since we have gone virtual, Wendy Norbom was brought back as she established the organization and peer support group over ten years ago. She assists with peers with ongoing stable support from the comfort of their own homes. She is also aiding them in managing thoughts of suicidal ideation in a judgment-free atmosphere.

2) **Impact -**

Over the past year, the Bluebirds grew to nearly 100 teen participants in 5 schools before COVID-19. These enrollment and participation rates remain steady to date, except for Carey, where the enrollment rate has tripled. One of our Bluebirds was self-harming, and they disclosed that they no longer were cutting because they finally feel like they belong, and gained tools to cope with their emotions.

Our peer groups are growing to nearly a dozen participants a week because of the significant change in the intuitive, personal connection Wendy has with peers. She gives much of her time and energy to ensure follow-up and continued maintenance of wellness beyond the meetings and check-ins throughout the week. She is currently working with one peer daily who has suicidal ideation, and another dual-diagnosed peer who is learning to reenter the community after isolating and living in his addiction.

3) **Photos -**



Amber Leyba-Castle, shown here July 4th Parade in 2019, is the founder of the Bluebirds, the teen support group. She is holding a sign with the official motto of the Bluebirds that she coined when she was a sophomore in Wood River High School, she is now an incoming sophomore at Idaho State University majoring in Psychology.



Every Fall (2019), the Bluebirds decorate pumpkins while discussing their emotions as the weather & change of the seasons might impact our wellbeing.

Because our peer groups are strictly confidential, we cannot provide a photo or testimonial.

4) Budget (one table) -

Expenses	Amount requested from WRWF	Final Grant Amount from WRWF	Actual Expenditures
Bluebirds Contractor July-Dec 2019	\$10,200	\$7,816	\$10,400
Bluebirds Contractor Jan-June 2020	\$10,200	\$7,816	\$15,600

Support Staff (July 2019-June 2020)	\$10,400	\$7,816	\$15,600
TOTAL	\$30,800	\$23,448	\$41,600