



In Our Do'ers Profile, we highlight some of the hardworking and talented individuals in public human services. This issue features **Frank L. Alexander, Director of the Boulder County Department of Housing and Human Services.**

Name: Frank L. Alexander

Title: Director, Boulder County (Colorado) Department of Housing and Human Services

Years of Service: I have been really fortunate to have worked in both nonprofit and governmental housing and human service agencies for the past 23 years. My experiences serving individuals and families have indelibly changed my life. I have been serving as the director of the Boulder County Department of Housing and Human Services (BCDHHS) since January 2009, overseeing the merger of the former Housing and Social Services Departments into an integrated human service agency with a variety of programs and services, including the Boulder County Housing Authority as an enterprise fund and blended component unit. Significant efforts have been applied during the integration process to develop an agile and flexible financial organization designed to provide point-of-service solutions that support the health and well-being of our community with a critical focus on prevention activities. BCDHHS has 500 staff members serving the community and an annual operating and capital budget for 2014 that totaled \$120,000; our housing assets are worth approximately \$90,000.

Prior to the merger of Housing and Human Services, I served as the director of the Boulder County Housing Department from 2004–2009 and in the Area Agency on Aging from 1998–2004, working in the elder abuse and ombudsman fields. Before moving to Colorado, I served the chronic homeless population, victims of domestic violence, at-risk children, and families experiencing homelessness in the Philadelphia area from 1992–1998. My education has included an M.P.A. from the University of Colorado, a Certificate in Gerontology from the University of Denver, and a B.A. from Trinity College.

Rewards of the Job: Every day is really an incredible experience. The work that we do is so real, so tangible, and so visceral that I never go home wondering if we are making a difference. The feedback that we get every day from the people we serve, and the community we are an integral part of, drives us passionately to a level of excellence that has changed us permanently as people and public servants. In particular, what I find most rewarding about my job is being in a position to support the transformation of the health and the well-being of our community by shifting programming and funding upstream into prevention-oriented and consumer-driven solutions that improve outcomes across the lifespan and simultaneously

significantly reduce high-cost institutional interventions. Every moment we have in every day has the potential to mean something significant. We are committed to strengthening families, building healthy communities, serving people in their homes, and preventing abuse and neglect by focusing on preventive supports, education and training, empowerment, and individually tailored services.

Accomplishments Most Proud Of: Following the merger of Housing and Human Services, our agency and dedicated staff collectively faced a very difficult financial situation, followed in rapid succession by the economic downturn, and two very significant natural disasters, the Four Mile fire and the 2013 floods. Our team's ability to revolutionize the agency's service delivery system and respond to the needs of the community with strength and agility has been really inspiring. We have all learned so much from one another and the people we serve that we believe that our collective social problems are truly solvable. In particular, our efforts to prevent child abuse and neglect and reduce out-of-home placement by focusing on promoting family stability within an integrated social determinants of health model, built on a strong

See Do'ers Profile on page 39

Every moment we have in every day has the potential to mean something significant. We are committed to strengthening families, building healthy communities, serving people in their homes, and preventing abuse and neglect by focusing on preventive supports, education and training, empowerment, and individually tailored services.

DO'ERS PROFILE continued from page 40

foundation of housing stability, are noteworthy.

Future Challenges for the Delivery of Public Services:

In my opinion, the evolution of effective practice will be driven by new and more deeply integrated business models across health, housing, and human service-s delivery systems. These integrated systems will be increasingly focused on moving up the human service value curve and supporting community-based prevention strategies. In order to reduce and eliminate the barriers that have limited proactive community development activities and front-end wellness and prevention services, we must collectively focus our efforts on supporting the development

of these new models of service delivery. Strengthening these business models will require new fiscal models and restructured financial incentives, realignment and coordination of disparate regulatory frameworks, support for improving community-based networks of care, and a recalibration of historic risk/reward calculations and the value of return on investment.

Little Known Facts About Me:

My work with individuals and families experiencing chronic homelessness and economic dislocation shaped my thinking and fostered my desire to become a public-sector professional and has fostered my passion for the child welfare field. On another front, my son just graduated from the

University of Colorado at Boulder and is now working in Denver at a fabulous advertising firm and my daughter is on her way to Boston University to play soccer and study political science and international relations!

Outside Interests: Life is full of new and amazing experiences! I love to spend time with my children, be in the mountains, on the beaches, visiting cities, being in the country, eating delicious food, skiing, swimming, playing basketball, being with small children and older adults, reading business books, talking politics, travelling, meeting new people, spending time with friends in deep conversation, listening to music, and most important, laughing as much as possible! 📷

YOUTH continued from page 6

Motivated by the value of engaging authentic voices in decision-making processes, the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services have plans to join together in 2015 to participate in town halls across the country, meeting with local school districts and child welfare agencies to improve education stability and outcomes. And, the newly minted Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act, signed into law by President Obama in 2014, was informed by input from foster youth.

Participants said sharing their experience with policymakers, and the public, is crucial to spur action on issues impacting foster youth.

“If they’ve never been through it, then they can’t know what I see that could be done to improve it,” explained Timothy Dennis, a 2014 Shadow Day participant.

Many thanks go to Timothy, Jason, Antoinette, and all of the young people across the country, who courageously tell their stories to help other children and youth have better experiences supported by improved policies. In the



Foster youth Latoya Mae Brown visits with former Congressman George Miller of California during the 2013 Congressional Foster Youth Shadow Day.

end, events and activities that engage the voices of the individuals who have experienced government systems first hand are transformational for individuals and for policies.

Congressional Foster Youth Shadow Day is made possible in collaboration with Casey Family Programs, whose mission is to provide, improve—and ultimately prevent the need for—foster care, and with generous support from

the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation. In 2015, Shadow Day will be held on May 20. For more information about Shadow Day or local programs that the National Foster Youth Institute may offer in your state, contact us at info@nfyi.org or visit our web site at www.nfyi.org. 📷

Marlo Nash is the executive director of the National Foster Youth Institute, a project of Community Partners.