



WYNNER Newsletter January 2019

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You Made Last Year a Success. Thank You!

Executive Director, Jennifer Warren, reviews 2018

Older and wiser. That's how I would describe WYN as I reflect on 2018, our **33rd year of existence**.

We, along with other leaders in the youth development community, have learned even more about how experiencing difficult things in childhood can affect the nervous system, immune system, and even the brain itself. **The effects of trauma in childhood have been compared to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).**

Yet, even as we have learned more about the harmful consequences of childhood trauma, we have learned about the power of relationships with stable, supportive and nurturing adults to heal trauma. We have discovered that **nurturing adults and environments help youth heal from prior experiences while building resilience** to regulate their emotions and bounce back from future tough situations.

With this incredible and empowering knowledge in mind, **WYN took action to better meet the needs of local youth**. We are humbled to say that, because of our incredible donors, WYN was able to respond to our youth's needs in two important ways in 2018:

- We added a team member to expand WYN's school-based mentoring program.
- And we created a new high school program to support our students' personal and academic success, especially during the difficult transition from middle school.

Throughout 2018, WYN also continued to tackle a demon that is on everyone's mind--**opioid addiction** (and addiction of all forms). We know that:

*"In some cases, addiction develops in the trauma survivor's attempt to self-medicate. Rather than thinking about or reliving the event, the individual may use drugs, alcohol, or other substances or behaviors to numb feelings of fear, powerlessness or depression or to cope with intrusive memories." From David Sack's "Emotional Trauma: An Often Overlooked Root of Addiction." 22 June 2017. *Psych Central*.*

With a powerful combination of education, awareness, and decreasing access to substances, **WYN is working to ensure that our children stand a better chance in the fight against addiction.**

Though we are doing so much heal and prevent childhood trauma, so much more must be done to give children in our community their best shot at achieving their dreams.

In the year to come, WYN hopes to further answer the needs of our youth by:

- Hiring a Certified counselor who will cultivate resilience and healing in the students WYN serves
- And expanding WYN's therapeutic after school program to Kindergarten through fifth graders so that there is a seamless continuum of care from the time a child enters school until the time they graduate. Early intervention is key to making lasting change.

If you are interested in helping to make WYN's vision for 2019 a reality, please contact us. We look forward to dreaming with you!

The successes of 2018 were possible because of *you*, our volunteers and supporters. Thank you for walking hand in hand with us last year.

Best wishes for a great 2019,

Jennifer Warren
Executive Director



Happy National Mentoring Month!

As we celebrate National Mentoring Month and the start of a new year, one of WYN's incredible mentors shares a story of a memorable moment that taught both mentor and mentee a valuable lesson. We hope the story brings a smile to your face! May we all remember to embrace the journey and seize the present moment a little more in 2019.

"A few weeks ago, my mentee and I decided to head out to the Beech Mountain Recreation Center to play some basketball. We had a little trouble finding the Center but made it around 6:15. Assuming they'd be open at least until 8, I had not called ahead. Upon our arrival, we discovered they'd be closing at 6:30.

Disappointed, we decided to drive back to Boone. My GPS, however, decided to take us on some back roads and **we quickly got lost**. The next hour or so consisted of us trying to find our

way off Beech Mountain. We almost hit one deer and saw other wildlife - a dog, a cat, a rabbit, and a possum. **Perhaps we were in the midst of a safari** that we were unaware of? Also on this particular evening, the fog was quite thick making it difficult to see the road and street signs. At one point, my GPS took me onto a back road that was literally more of a creek.



Eventually, we called the Beech Mountain Police Department and they were able to graciously give us directions off the mountain. **Three hours after we left, we made it back to Boone having practically spent all of that time in the car, while playing no basketball.**

As I reflect on that experience, I realize that sometimes we can be overly focused on the destination. My evening on Beech Mountain with my mentee showed me that **the destination can sometimes be irrelevant.** *We should pay more attention to the journey - it is sometimes all we have.* We could have been upset about not playing basketball...or getting lost...or maybe feeling like we were wasting time...or even failing. But **we chose to frame our predicament as an adventure - joke about our situation, work together in figuring out the correct route, and face our numerous challenges.** Mentoring has given me a new friend. Mentoring has given me new perspectives. And mentoring continues to teach me life lessons. Whether we are being challenged or having everything go our way; **may we all take a few deep breaths, laugh, and embrace the journey."**



Informative billboards like the one above are now visible in Ashe and Avery Counties, thanks to WYN's Substance Abuse Prevention team.

Utilizing the CURES Grant to promote proper disposal of unused and/or expired medications, the prevention team is pleased to have been able to put up **one billboard in Ashe County that has 139,300 weekly impressions** and **two billboards in Avery County with 56,700 weekly impressions**. The Prevention Team has also placed ads in **5 local papers within Ashe and Avery with monthly totals of a 68,000 readership and 800,000 page views**. Currently, permanent medication disposal locations are being advertised using a variety of mediums to reach diverse populations.

Furthermore, in both Ashe and Avery Counties, **247 lock boxes and 732 element medication disposal bottles** have been handed out. By dissolving medications placed within them, element medication disposal systems allow individuals to simply dispose of their unused medication in the convenience of their home.

**Come support us and other
local non-profits!**



**Rotary Charity
Chili Cook-Off**

Saturday, January 26th

11:30am - 2:00pm

**Blowing Rock School
Gymnasium**



Tickets at the Door:

\$8/Adults

\$5/Kids 5-12 / Under 5 Free

Please consider sustaining WYN's life-changing youth programs with a gift today! Every dollar

makes a difference. *Thank you.*

[Give Today](#)

