



# THE LOOP

A COLLECTION OF STORIES FROM AROUND NEVADA

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For most, there is no other way to look at the holiday season between Thanksgiving and the New Year other than that of a festive time of year. The observances associated with this time period, (*Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa*) all signify a time of happiness and rejoicing, a time to reflect on and grow deeper in our beliefs, and a time to come together, give gifts, and celebrate the many blessings in our lives.

For others, this same holiday season can be a period of painful reflection, feelings of sadness, loneliness, an increase in substance use, and worsened mental health symptoms. The *"Holiday Blues"* starts in November or December, usually subsides after the new year ends, and there is no recognized condition or diagnosis. However, Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is different. It is a form of Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) and the symptoms are much more severe and can be debilitating.

This is why for the month of December, we have chosen to highlight our Maryland Pkwy facility, specifically, our **Community Triage Center (CTC)**. For us in Nevada, this location serves as our center, "hub," and feeder from the community to the other programs associated with WestCare Nevada's full continuum of care. The staff here at this location serve anywhere between 225 - 250 individuals every month and their overall dedication is nothing less than remarkable. Our CTC staff provide crisis stabilization and withdrawal management services, by assisting and guiding individuals in early recovery. This is by far our most fast-paced location and there is no doubt that it takes a truly dedicated individual to

commit themselves to serving this population and to viewing a crisis as an opportunity to help, serve, and make a difference by *Uplifting the Human Spirit* of some of the most vulnerable individuals in our community.

In this issue, you will read some reasons behind the decision several employees (*Michael Howard, Lead BHT; Tonda Boyd, Case Manager; and Caren Lopez, BHT*) have made to work here, you will meet another CAC member, Mr. John C. Jeppsen, and you will get a firsthand look at the respect that these dedicated staff have for one another by reading various kudos that have been written to each other.

I want to remind each and every one of you that you too can make a difference in the lives of the people around you and I challenge you to do so by giving your time, offering a helping hand, showing compassion, and treating everyone with whom you come into contact with, with dignity, respect, and love. I will even ask that you make a stronger effort to reach out to people that you know are alone during the holidays because you just might help change their feelings of sadness and depression into tidings of comfort and joy... For isn't that what this time of year is all about anyway?

Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, and Happy Kwanzaa to all.



Leo Magrdichian, LCSW, LCADC, Vice President



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## Program Testimonies from CTC Staff



**From Michael Howard, Lead Behavioral Health Tech, CTC**

I have only been a lead BHT for a few months, but in that time, I have been exposed to more of what we do for our clients and what the amazing staff that I work with do on a daily basis. What we do here is nothing short of a miracle. We here at the Community Triage Center (CTC) save lives everyday and we do it with a passion that I have not seen anywhere else that I have ever worked. The support, compassion, and empathy that is shown to all of our clients is nothing short of admirable. We work every day to provide an environment of support, hope, and the idea that our clients have a partner to walk their difficult journey with. This is something that they cannot find anywhere else and is why they come back to us when they are struggling and need support. Sometimes, they have to come back more than once, but that is ok because we would rather have them come someplace safe than to be alone in their struggles. We help to give them back their humanity and their sense of self-worth, which they lose when they are on the streets being marginalized by a community that, on a good day, pretends as if they are not even there. We fulfill a need that is critical in the environment we live in and the support that we provide is vital to the lives of those who live in our community. We change lives every day and we inspire those who are in need and we work hard to make sure that every client is treated with dignity and respect. It is what we do on a daily basis and what we will continue to do as long as there is one person out there who is struggling, alone, and in need of what we all take for granted on a daily basis. This is our passion and what drives us every day.

*"I cannot think of one person that I would like to give kudos to. I must give it to them all for being so dedicated and willing to do what is asked and to work more than someone should have to. They are all amazing and deserve to be recognized for all of the above and beyond things that they do. They are all incredible individuals and they are always there when the CTC needs them. I wish there was something that we could do for them all as they deserve to be recognized for the incredible people that they are!"*

– Michael Howard, Lead BHT, CTC



**From Tonda Boyd, Case Manager, CTC**

I have had the pleasure of working as a Case Manager, here at WestCare's Community Triage Center (CTC) for one year now. The perspective of my role is very much a crucial part in being able to help the populations that come through our doors. Besides substance abuse, the clients seen for case management here also suffer from mental health issues, homelessness, physical complications, may have been displaced from their residences in another state, and may have been targeted victims of street violence, domestic abuse, and sex trafficking. Patience, empathy, and the responsibility to ensure continuity of care through linkages and referrals is what I strive to do each day that I come to work. Uplifting the Human Spirit has definitely been my calling. Leadership, cohesiveness, caring, and the seasoned staff here at WestCare have also helped me along this journey of being a case manager.

## Get in touch

### WITH THE COMMUNITY TRIAGE CENTER

A team member is ready to answer questions about our program and ways to support

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**Nevada Community Action Council (CAC) Member Spotlight:  
John C. Jeppsen**

**John C. Jeppsen** is a shareholder in the Las Vegas office of Greenberg Traurig, LLP, an international law firm with approximately 1,750 attorneys in more than 30 offices across the United States and in Latin America, Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. Jeppsen focuses his practice on corporate and securities law, public offerings and private placements, mergers and acquisitions, and other sophisticated finance transactions. He regularly advises public companies on Securities Exchange Commission (SEC) reporting obligations including Sarbanes-Oxley compliance, stock exchange listing rules, and corporate governance matters.

A Nevada attorney for more than two decades, he has been involved in leading numerous multi-million-dollar

transactions for a multitude of clients in the real estate, hotel-casino, manufacturing, and retail industries. John collaborates with Greenberg Traurig's Corporate and Securities/M&A Practice, which is comprised of more than 350 lawyers.

In addition to serving as Chair for WestCare Nevada's Community Action Council (CAC), John is a member of the Executive Committee of the Business Law Section of the State Bar of Nevada. He has also been recognized by the Best Lawyers publication in their directory of top lawyers that practice Mergers and Acquisitions Law. In addition, he was named one of Nevada's Legal Elite by Nevada Business Magazine.

A native of Salt Lake City, Jeppsen received his J.D. from the University of Utah College of Law; his M.B.A from the University of Utah; and his B.S. from Brigham Young University. He is licensed to practice law in both Nevada and Utah. In his free time, he enjoys road biking, mountain biking, boating, golfing, running, and spending time with his family. His dedication and commitment, over the years, to our organization is amazing and we are thankful. John currently lives in Boulder City with his wife, Jody. Together, they have four children.

*"Marquitha Rudolph's (Mar) dedication in stepping up to ensure coverage is astonishing. Mar is constantly coming early when staffing is short, always smiling, and never leaves a job undone. Although Mar is a recent hire, it is as though she has worked here for years. A definite asset to this team."*

- Benjamin McGehee, BHT, CTC

*"I would love to give Kudos to Tessa Kaiser. This is a coworker that has always been there when I have needed her. I can always ask her a question and if she does not have the answer, she will go above and beyond to find the answer. Tessa, it has been a pleasure to have you on my side and thank you for all that you do."*

- Michelle Murphy, Case Manager, CTC

*"I would like to give Monica kudos. Whenever I call her and asked her a question, she doesn't cease to get me the information that I am requesting. Thank you, Monica."*

- Tammie Cherry, Case Manager, CTC

*"It has been a pleasure working with Elizabeth Kelly. Elizabeth comes in early, leaves late, and is always approachable and willing to help our staff and clients."*

- William Armbricht, Counselor I, CTC

*"Tara Meirs' ability to calm our clients is amazing. You can tell she has a passion in what she does on a daily basis. When Tara interacts with a client, she engages the client. They always leave to see the nurse in a better place than when they arrived."*

- Benjamin McGehee, BHT, CTC

*"I would like to give kudos to Deleon. He is always in good spirits; even when the front is hectic, he has a smile on his face."*

- Ashanta Fulmore, Counselor II, CTC

*"It has been a pleasure working with Elizabeth Kelly. Elizabeth comes in early, leaves late, and is always approachable and willing to help our staff and clients."*

- William Armbricht, Counselor I, CTC

*"I would like to give kudos to Jessica. She has been very helpful during the transition to my new position. Any time that I had a question, she was right there to help."*

- Ashanta Fulmore, Counselor II, CTC

*"I'd like to recognize Caren Lopez. She always flies just under the radar, but always works until everything is done, never asking for help. She stays late and comes in early - whatever she is asked for. She always does her half of the work or more. I never have to worry if anything is getting done. She sticks to the rules even when a client is cursing her out or throwing something. She is unshakable, strong, and I am proud to work with her, and she is the most reliable coworker I have ever had."*

- Tara Meirs, BHT, CTC



"I would like to give a big kudos to Ms. Monica Brown. She is a very dedicated worker, wherever and whenever we need help, she never says no. Along with doing her billing tasks, she finds time in her busy day to assist the BHT's with their daily duties as well. Her ongoing fight with her health makes me look at life in a whole different manner. She struggles, but even through her sickness, she still holds down the fort. Her dedication makes me strive even harder day to day. Monica has worked for WestCare for over eight years and I cannot even begin to appreciate her or thank her for all that she does to keep our facility in full force. Yay for Monica!"

- Jayrita Stallworth, BHT, CTC

"My kudos goes to Monica because I believe she handles the front desk exceptionally well. She makes sure with an eagle eye that no clients take any food or drinks to the room. While doing her job as an admissions specialist, she can discharge clients, answer the phone, make sure that rules are followed, and although she is stern with the clients, she treats them respectfully."

- Caren Lopez, BHT, CTC



## Partnering with Pathway from Poverty

By Andrew Moran, Development Director, WestCare Foundation

"Nearly 45% of U.S. children live in poverty," stated Clark County Commissioner, Marilyn Kirkpatrick, during a recent presentation on her program, Pathway from Poverty. She saw a need and founded the program to create community and safe spaces for children and families and to help Southern Nevada's families escape the cycle of poverty. Pathway from Poverty is a group of public officials including metro police and various nonprofit organizations who all share the same goal of making Nevada a safe community for all. "As a group, we offer caring citizens, businesses, and organizations ways to get involved in efforts to help disadvantaged children and families find a pathway out of poverty and into different circumstances," Kirkpatrick said.

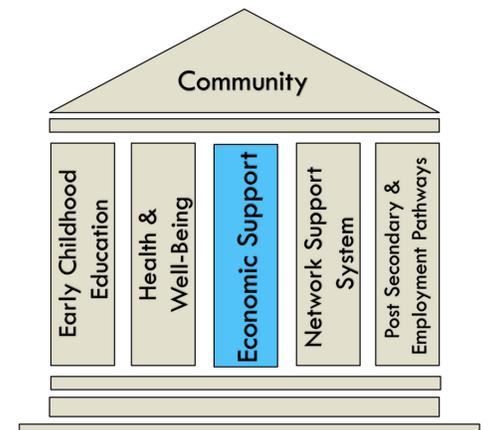
Their main objective as a group is to fight poverty in three ways:

1. Widening career opportunities for those who are underprivileged
2. Connecting low-income youth with employment and mentoring programs
3. Facilitating economic mobility for single parents in poverty

Kirkpatrick explained that they use a two-generation approach to combat poverty together while simultaneously putting the entire family on a path to economic security. Opportunities for families are essential to the economic well-being of our entire community and allow policymakers the chance to break the inter-generational cycle of poverty and replace it with opportunity.

With our community being the foundation, there are five "pillars" for the program that are necessary in ending the cycle of poverty:

1. **Early Childhood Education:** Increases the likelihood of a better quality of life, a higher potential salary, and employability in adulthood as well as a lower chance of being arrested for a felony.
2. **Health and Well-Being:** Being mindful of one's health decreases chances of chronic health problems as well as serious mental health conditions. Meanwhile, enrollment in health insurance increases the likelihood of a parent seeking of care when needed for their family.
3. **Economic Support:** Increased family income during early childhood can have a profound impact on children's lives. Providing access to financial literacy education, transportation, and groceries also increases a household's overall quality of life.
4. **Network Support System:** When children and parents are connected with mentors, faith-based support, and are involved in their community, they become more centered. Graduation rates can increase, attitudes can improve, stronger relationships are forged with peers, teachers, and parents, and the likelihood of abusing drugs or alcohol decreases greatly. As interpersonal networks expand, so does ones' access to available resources.
5. **Post-Secondary and Employment Pathways:** With access to mobile workforce units, career assessment and coaching, training, and internship opportunities, individuals are able to become self-reliant, contribute to their communities, and build not only the income, but confidence to break the cycle of poverty.



The 5 Pillars from Pathway from Poverty by Commissioner Marilyn Kirkpatrick

Our WestCare development team has continued to spread the word about our services and getting involved in the community. As a result, we have made countless valuable partnerships such as with Pathway from Poverty and continue to find new ways in which we can positively impact those that we serve. We are happy to be a part of this important group and look forward to helping place Las Vegas and Nevada among the best communities in the nation!

To read more about Pathway from Poverty, please see their presentation at: <https://westcare.link/pathwaysfrompoverty>

Connect with us in Nevada

Get in touch with our Marketing Department to learn more about what is happening in WestCare Nevada at [marketing@westcare.com](mailto:marketing@westcare.com)