

Building a Strong HR Culture

Shelley Popke, Mountain Heritage Museum

- Started as ED of Museum in January 2015
 - **Small independent non-profit**—not tax funded
 - **Museum HR Structure:** part time employees, hourly pay, no benefits
 - **Strategic Plan:** worked with board to pursue strategic goals, something was missing: **deliberately investing in the people** that are at the center of everything that we were doing to pursue our mission
- Change our HR structure to:
 - **Value human capital**
 - **Increase retention**
 - **Avoid burnout**
 - **Invest in workforce**
 - **Practice respect**
- At the Museum, intersection of various forces that have **historically not valued investment in human capital**
 - Nationally
 - **Non-profits nationally and Crested Butte**
 - **Museums**
 - **Women—wage gap**
 - View of non-profits as “charities” where all the funds should go towards the **services that we provide rather than payroll**
 - Because non-profit workers are working on behalf of a “**cause**” that **they are passionate about**, they should earn nothing or less (CB example of non-profits evolving)
 - Because we are working with such **limited budgets**, as much as we would like to pay staff better, we just can’t find the \$s
 - Just build it into the budget
 - Non-profits are **integral part** of our community
 - **Provide essential services**
 - **Economic drivers**
 - **Part of what defines us as a community**
 - People who work there deserve to earn a **living wage** and need to if we want our non-profits and our community to **thrive**

- Efforts 2015 / 2016
 - Look at how **general operating** was funded and increase those \$s to get the funds to give better salary increases and bonuses
 - Look for **grant funding** opportunities that supported payroll—either through general operating (rare; CFGV!) or writing grants that included payroll to increase hours
 - Change **fiscal year** to better evaluate financial status of organization when raises and bonuses were being decided
 - **Audit and financial review**—understand how funders look at financials and that payroll around **60-70% of total expenses is good**, reflecting strong culture (Museum at 63%)
 - **Increased hours** from one “full time position” to 2 and now working on 3
 - Looked into adding **health insurance** as benefit—currently costs lower through the ACA—disappointing
 - Include **Professional Development** funds for admin staff in budget
 - Continue **flexible schedule** culture and encourage staff to take advantage
 - **Culture shift in the board**
- 2017
 - Applied for help through the STEP program at the CFGV and worked with Tina Brudzinski and a board members to enhance our HR
 - Evaluated **job descriptions** / org chart
 - Adding **benefits: Aflac** and retirement through **Simple IRA** (employer match 1-3%); **important to consider pre-tax**
 - Create employee handbook where benefits, expectations, etc. are clearly articulated; update employee contracts; **clear communication and commitment**
 - Better and regular **performance reviews**
 - Fundraising to increase salaries and bonuses:
 - Received a **\$500 mini grant** through the CFGV to seed fund a benefits program for this budget cycle and will build into next budget
 - **Grants** that support payroll—build it in

- Talking to **donors** about supporting our general fund so that we can pay people better
- **Show appreciation**
 - Saying thank you
 - End of season parties
 - Adding complimentary Museum family membership for staff
 - Others share experiences or ideas?