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?