

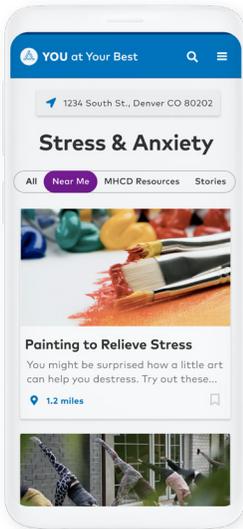


Mental Health Center of Denver

REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

Late Fall 2020/Early Winter 2021

INNOVATION TECHNOLOGY LAB MARKS FIRST YEAR



Last year, the Mental Health Center of Denver became the nation's first – and only – behavioral health center to launch its own innovation lab. Innovation labs are more commonly associated with edgy companies that focus on bringing new ideas, products and services to market. Why did MHCD decide to **“boldly go where no mental health center has gone”** and launch an innovation lab?

According to Alires Almon, Director of Innovation, “MHCD’s Innovation Technology Lab may be unique in the mental health space, but we are tackling universal issues that impact the entire industry. I’m proud of our organization for recognizing that fast tracking technology and innovations can accelerate more equitable access to care.”

Almon, who was brought on board to run the Lab, believes the first year has been extremely fruitful. Through its Innovation Engine process, the Lab **reviewed 30+ prospective innovations and projects and has six in production**. Almon is especially pleased that two are ‘staff-engaged projects,’ meaning staff brought these ideas to the Lab. “Innovation is a team sport,” Almon noted.

Early in the new year, the Innovation Technology Lab will launch **You@Yourbest**, a new 24/7, online platform created to help people who are not in service but interested in improving well-being to set goals, explore personalized and curated resources and engage with MHCD.

“We believe **You@Yourbest** can significantly broaden our reach and help move the starting line forward for people who might need services,” said Almon. This will further expand the organization’s Digital Front Door and introduce MHCD to more people in the community.

Another important goal of MHCD’s Digital Front Door is to expand access to behavioral health services. Approximately one in five people in the Denver area has a mental health disorder and of those only 40% receive the help they need. According to a report recently issued by the Colorado Office of eHealth Innovation, funded by the Colorado Health Institute, **84% of mental health services have been provided via telehealth during the pandemic**, so the need to expand access via technology has never been greater.

One of the critical barriers to expanding access to services is the fact that the behavioral health workforce has been shrinking over time. **For every psychiatrist that enters the field, two more are retiring**. To begin to close the access gap, we need to leverage technology to reach five times the number of people through our Digital Front Door.

Are you, or someone you know, interested in finding out more and providing funding to help us to build the Digital Front Door? Contact Vice President & Chief Information Officer Wes Williams at wesley.williams@mhcd.org or Director of Philanthropy Stephen Edmonds at stephen.edmonds@mhcd.org.

TOTAL COST: \$2,000,000

From MHCD*	\$375,000
Raised to Date**:	\$200,000
Funds Needed:	\$1,425,000

*Commitment already invested.

**Grants funded by Colorado Health Innovation Community, Office of eHealth Innovation & Rose Community Foundation

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHT

When restrictions due to COVID-19 hit our community last spring, the effects of safer-at-home and stay-at-home orders hit the hospitality industry hard. Hotels stood largely vacant, restaurants shifted from dine-in to take-out and caterers were faced with cancelled events. While the majority of Epicurean Catering's staff had to be furloughed, the remaining management and culinary staff got busy creating new pick-up and take-out options. **Only weeks into what has now become months of the pandemic, Epicurean Catering owner Larry DiPasquale reached out to the Mental Health Center of Denver to see what they could do to help the people we serve.** He and his wife, Jill, had been introduced to the work of MHCD in the fall of 2019 as guests at our Gifts of Hope event.

To assist residents at MHCD's supportive housing complex, Sanderson Apartments, Epicurean donated and **delivered a full meal, sized to provide leftovers for an additional meal, to each of the 55 residents once a week for a month.** The weekly deliveries by Epicurean staff were eagerly anticipated by residents.

As restrictions continued over the months, the Epicurean team also made several deliveries of freshly made quart-size containers of tasty soups for each of the residents. This provided tenants with something extra in their refrigerator or freezer to enjoy and helped their meal budgets go farther, as some of the residents have experienced job furloughs and layoffs.

Founded in 1984, Epicurean Hospitality Group remains committed to its core values of excellence, innovation, integrity, teamwork, smart growth and community. We thank Epicurean and its owners and staff for demonstrating their commitment to the well-being of others during these challenging times.



GIFTS OF HOPE LIMITLESS



More than 230 people joined us on October 7th for our first-ever virtual Gifts of Hope - Limitless - celebrating all the ways Mental Health Center of Denver continues to push past boundaries to increase access to services. Originally scheduled as an in-person lunch event, COVID-19 precautions, including the need for participants to be socially distanced, required that we pivot and hold the event via Zoom.

Presentations during the first half of the hour-long event were prerecorded while the breakout sessions in the second half of the event took place in real time. Attendees learned about telehealth services, our pharmacy program, 2Succeed in Education & Employment and our Support Team Assisted Response (STAR) program. Event sponsors and donors contributed \$82,000 toward the work of the organization.

COLORADO GIVES DAY

December 8, 2020 marked the 10th year for Colorado Gives Day in Colorado. A total of 2,828 nonprofits in the state benefited from an outpouring of generosity totaling \$50 million.

We are especially grateful to the 143 donors who contributed over \$39,000 to the work of our organization.



COMING UP



Along with soon welcoming a new year, our community will also welcome the opening of the Behavioral Health Solutions Center, Denver's first Crisis Stabilization Unit, Crisis Triage Center and Transitional Housing Unit all in one facility.

Located in the Sun Valley neighborhood near 10th & Federal Boulevard, the Solutions Center is a collaboration between the City and County of Denver and Mental Health Center of Denver. It will provide first responders with an alternative to taking individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis to hospital emergency rooms or jails. Look for more information around the opening in our next Report to the Community.