Mission, Values, Governance, and Staff

MISSION: The Center for Chronic Illness (CCI) promotes well-being and decreases isolation for those impacted by ongoing health challenges through support and education. CCI offers free, in-person and virtual support groups facilitated by licensed mental health professionals. *During the COVID-19 pandemic, all support groups were held virtually.

VALUES: Compassion, Respect, Empowerment, Inclusion, Community

GOVERNANCE: CCI had eight board members during the 2020 year, including: Adam Halpern, MSW, LICSW, Karan Dawson, RPh, MS, PhD, Ansley Hack, MSW, Alison Ryan, MSN, RN, FNP-C, Shane Larson, CFP, Deepa Yerram, MD, Caroline Kasman, and Nichole Leibov.

STAFF: Allison Fine, MSW, LICSW served as the executive director. Carrie Pope, Bartja Wachtel, Angela Farrar-Small, MSW, LICSW, M.Div., Alicia Sloan, MPH, MSW, LICSW, Natalie Hopkins, MSW, LICSW, and Kerry Heckman, MSW, LICSW were the contracted support group facilitators.

2020 Financial Report and Growth

This year presented innumerable challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic transformed our daily lives in previously unimaginable ways. We are grateful to report that we made it through the 2020 portion of the pandemic intact with unprecedented growth.

In 2020, the Center for Chronic Illness brought in $98,320 with $48,505 in expenses. On December 31, 2020, CCI received a $35,275 corporate donation earmarked for new 2021 rare disease programs. In 2020, CCI also received a $5,000 grant from the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation, a $6,320 grant from the Paul Glaser Foundation, and a $1,000 grant from the Awesome Disability Foundation.

Our organization continues to be supported by the community as well as grants, corporate donations, and sponsors. In November 2020, we hosted our first virtual wine and chocolate tasting fundraiser, raising over $8,000.
Isolation is a familiar concept for those impacted by chronic illness. Unfortunately, many in our community were at higher risk for complications from COVID-19 and had to stay even more isolated in order to stay safe. We watched our number of program attendees grow exponentially as those in the chronic illness community looked for ways to connect virtually. In 2020, attendees joined our support groups from over 40 states as well as from Canada and the United Kingdom.

At the start of 2020, CCI was offering six in-person and six web-based support groups. In March 2020, things quickly transitioned when the COVID-19 pandemic began, and we shifted all of our programs online. Because we already offered virtual programs on the Support Groups Central web-based platform, this made our virtual transition fairly seamless. We combined our community and Seattle Children’s Hospital parenting support groups and created one group online for parents living anywhere to attend. Our two community Living Mindfully groups became a twice monthly national Living Mindfully virtual group.

With the financial uncertainties wrought by the pandemic, we decided not to begin any new programs during the 2020 year.
Thank You to Our 2020 Supporters!

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Alan Wittenberg
Deepa Yerram
Gitte Zweig

Many thanks also to our anonymous donors, monthly donors, corporate sponsors, grant funders, and community partners!
Top 5 of 2020

1. Successfully combined and transitioned six in-person support groups to virtual meetings
2. Received our largest grant in the history of the organization from the Paul Glaser Foundation $6,320 and our largest number of grants in one year - three!
3. Increased income from donations, more than doubling funding from 2019
4. Hosted our first virtual fundraiser and largest fundraising event to date and shared some delicious, local wine and chocolate with our community
5. Stayed home and safe, wore our masks, met virtually, and helped to protect our vulnerable community from COVID-19