

# 2021

## Annual Report

Foothills  
Gateway<sup>INC.</sup>

301 W. SKYWAY DRIVE



Since 1972, Foothills Gateway has improved the lives of thousands of people with cognitive disabilities and their families in Northern Colorado by helping to conquer challenges and achieve their maximum potential.

Foothills Gateway strives to empower every ability and highlight the achievements of the human spirit of all ages.

**Foothills Gateway, Inc.**  
301 W Skyway Drive, Fort Collins, CO 80525

[www.foothillsgateway.org](http://www.foothillsgateway.org)  
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# CONTENTS

Letter from the Chief Executive Officer	1
SOAR - Skills. Opportunities. Activities. Resources.	2
Waitlist Movement	3-4
Flying Pig 5K	5
Adult Care Services (ACS) and Children's Extensive Supports (CES) *	6
START - Systematic, Therapeutic, Assessments, Resources, Treatment Services	7-8
BrightStart Begins at Foothills Gateway	9-10
Family Support Services Program	10
Donations/Volunteers	11
Financial Information	12

*\* These articles were initially written for the FGI Focus employee newsletter by FGI staff members. They were edited for length and to protect the privacy of staff before being included in this report.*

Foothills Gateway, Inc.  
301 W Skyway Drive, Fort Collins, CO 80525



[bbb.org/charity](http://bbb.org/charity)



Three Year  
Accreditation



## Letter from Erin Eulenfeld, CEO

Throughout 2021, Foothills Gateway, Inc. successfully managed all aspects of services and supports during a full year of the COVID-19 Pandemic. While there were many challenges to surmount during the year, there were also many accomplishments. As you read through this Annual Report, you'll see that staff submitted articles which highlight some of the agency's many accomplishments during the year.

Our hard-working and dedicated staff continued to focus on meeting needs and getting services and supports to individuals and families. Programs and services were expanded, and new programs were introduced to meet the needs of those served. Legislative changes during 2021 happily added more HCBS-DD (Comprehensive) resources so that additional people waiting for those services were able to come off the waiting list and start receiving services! Other legislative changes during the 2021 session resulted in modifications and changes to the Prevocational Services program and Non-Medical Transportation services which resulted in the development of new implementation and transition plans.

In addition to the pandemic, 2021 was a challenging year, too, due to the "Great Resignation" and the resulting workforce shortage. This aspect of the pandemic year also impacted many of the direct services Foothills Gateway provides causing program closures and/or modifications based on the reduction in staff. Foothills Gateway took proactive steps to manage this crisis and increased pay rates and provided additional financial incentives to staff with the goal of stabilizing our workforce.

As we look back on 2021 and look forward to Foothills Gateway's 50th year, we will remember the accomplishments and challenges of 2021, and anticipate 2022 with renewed energy and excitement for the future!

All the best,

*Erin Eulenfeld, M.S., CRC*

Chief Executive Officer



### **FOOTHILLS GATEWAY ADMINISTRATION**

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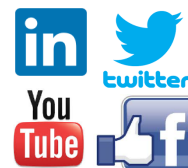
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### **DONATIONS**

**To learn more about making a donation to Foothills Gateway, please visit:**

**[www.FoothillsGateway.org](http://www.FoothillsGateway.org)**





## **SOAR - Skills. Opportunities. Activities. Resources.**

Many changes have happened in this past year. From the pandemic to staffing difficulties, but we still found room to grow. In September 2021 we created a new program named SOAR - Skills. Opportunities. Activities. Resources.

The SOAR program is a specialized habilitation program that is a non-paid program, originally developed to assist with gradual transitions out of the prevocational program. There is a vocational flavor and focus in this program which offers a heightened emphasis on peoples' varying skills, abilities and interests while supporting those who are on a path towards community integrated employment. There is no limit on how long a person is able to receive these services. Eventually, as restrictions ease from the pandemic and staffing crisis, there will be a volunteering component to this program.

Currently, we have a total of 10 participants. Ideally, we will one day be providing these services in a more dedicated space, however currently we are limited, but those in the program are resilient, patient, and flexible! Staff are thoroughly enjoy working with the SOAR group day to day, offering insights, creative ideas, and delivering quality services! There is already a waiting list for those interested in receiving SOAR programming.

Once fully staffed, we will be able to start multiple SOAR groups. Each group will have no more than five participants, allowing staff to come along side, support, and build skills during program time. Staff have been incredibly motivated, dedicated, and innovative. We plan to continue to grow options for those in the program, building on literacy and daily living in a station format, and we hope to include a technology station in the future. Our goal is to keep people engaged and stimulated in age appropriate and focused activities, with an emphasis on soft skill building related to community integrated employment. People receiving these services have stated, "I like going for walks, playing ball and bingo!" "I love being with my friends." And a parent commented that, "It's great exercising his hands !" We have seen strides in a few folks who are expanding their skills and abilities which has been ultra-rewarding all around. One example is someone who is typically non-verbal now using a few words to communicate after receiving encouragement from his staff and family!

*We look forward to the days to come when we are able to expand, design ,and introduce new adventures!*

## Waitlist Movement - (FINALLY!!)

For the first time in many years there was significant movement in the Developmental Disabilities Waiver waitlist. The Home and Community-Based Services Waiver for Persons with Developmental Disabilities (DD) provides access to 24-hour, seven days a week supervision through Residential Habilitation and Day Habilitation Services and Supports. The service provider is responsible to support individuals in services to find living arrangements. Living arrangements can range from host homes settings with 1-2 persons, individualized settings of 1-3 persons, and group settings of 4-8 persons, as well as residential supports for participants who live in their own home or who live with and/or are provided services by members of their family.

Since July of 2021, a total of 58 DD offers were made (41 were allotted to FGI from HCPF to start to clear the waiting list, additionally 11 Emergency Requests were approved, and 6 CES to DD Waiver transitions). Marla Maxey, the Comprehensive Case Management Director stated: "The DD waiver has had a waiting list for all the 28 years I have worked at FGI and was also in place prior to my employment. Foothills Gateway had some years where there was no funding for new admits and other years we might have had funding for 5 to 9 people. The hard work of individuals, families, advocates, CCBs, and Legislators has really made a difference. Foothills Gateway had the ability to fund more than 40 people this year and potentially even more next fiscal year. This an exciting time. While we recognize that provider capacity is making things move slower than we would like, we are still appreciative of all the hard work and the increased ability to get DD waiver services and supports to those who really need it."

While this was very exciting, COVID-19 and staff shortages made this a challenging situation and Case Managers had to be flexible with scheduling virtual meetings, file reviews, meet and greets, and working with provider agencies to arrange home visits for persons enrolling in order to make an informed decision. We also had turnover within our own DD waiver case management team and new Case Managers had to learn quickly on the job and jumped right into the admission process and working with families.

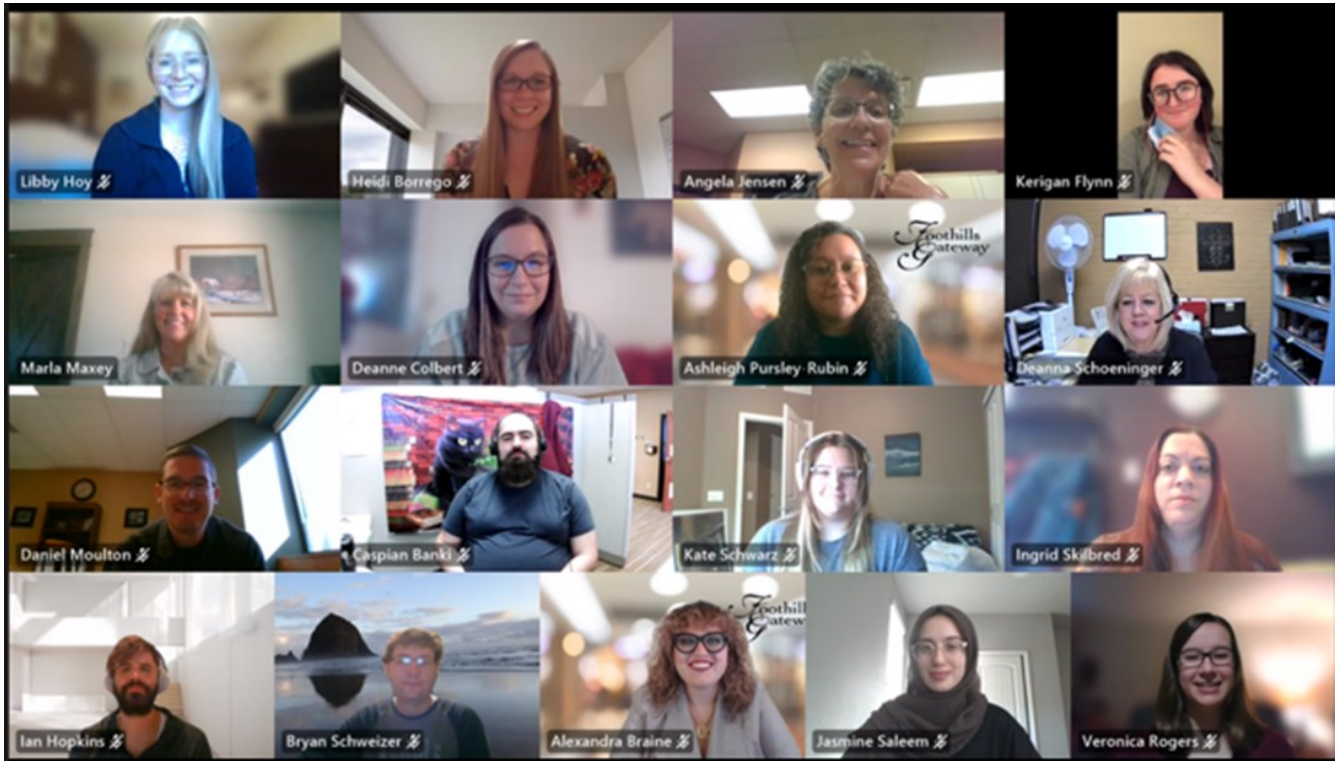
Heidi Borrego, an Adult Case Manager, had this to say: "It has been exciting getting so many new admits. It's been fun to meet with new individuals and their families to try and find them the supports they've been waiting for. It has also helped me as a Case Manager to ask some questions I had never thought of asking and to find new answers and learn about even more supports. There has been a challenging side to having new admissions as well. A lot of places have been experiencing staff shortages and there don't seem to be enough providers for the amount of people that need them. Families and host home providers continue to be responsible for providing most, or all, of the support an individual needs and they don't always get the rest and breaks they need to take care of themselves. The majority of the families are very excited to be starting the process of getting more services though."

Jasmine Saleem who started as a Case Manager in July 2021 had this to say: "As a Case Manager, I've had a very positive experience admitting families into the DD waiver. One family I've worked with has been on the waitlist for 15+ years! It is always so fulfilling to be the Case Manager who can complete the enrollment process, especially when some individuals have been waiting for so long. The DD waiver provides significant relief to the individuals in our service and their families. It is an amazing feeling being able to play a role in these people finally receiving that much-needed support."

*Waitlist Movement - (FINALLY!!) - Continued...*

One of the families Jasmine helped enroll in the waiver had this to say: “The main thing that the DD waiver means to me at this time is it allows me to be paid for caring for my sisters. I’ve always known I would take over care of them when the time came, but worried how I could handle the financial aspect. This has given me peace.”

It has been amazing and exciting to watch everyone work together with so much flexibility to help get individuals much needed supports and services!



216



Number of people Case Managers enrolled in services during 2021

People waiting for Adult Services (SLS & DD), for Family Support Services, or waiting for specific services as a safety net as of December 2021

409



## Flying Pig 5K

A global pandemic could not keep the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Flying Pig 5K grounded for a second year! While the 2020 race was cancelled because of the quick onset of the pandemic, 2021 gave us another shot and we were ready to make it happen!

On April 11, 2021, almost 200 runners and 26 volunteers gathered at Spring Canyon Park to make this race soar once again. To ensure that everyone who wanted to participate could do so in the way that was most comfortable to them, a virtual race option was also available.

While the scale of the event was impacted a bit because of Covid-19 and its impacts, the event still raised \$16,445. These funds directly supported families enrolled in the Family Support Services Program, as well as on the waiting list for those services.

The Flying Pig 5K is the only program-focused fundraiser Foothills Gateway holds each year and we could not have success without our amazing sponsors and volunteers. Thanks to all who made the 2021 event a triumph, even in the face of challenging circumstances.



235



Number of individuals to whom Foothills Gateway provided Family Support Services

Number of adults/children/families that received Case Management services and supports

2,954



Number of children served in Early Intervention Services in 2021



1,007

12%

Foothills Gateway's percentage of expenses directed to administration and general purposes



## Adult Care Services (ACS) and Children's Extensive Supports (CES)

The Adult Care Services department operates in a turn-of-the-century home in Fort Collins, and provides respite care for individuals whose families are the primary caregivers of loved ones with developmental disabilities, providing 24 hour care for their family member. This service is offered to individuals who are either on the waiting list to begin to receive services or are currently receiving funding through Supported Living Services.



When caretakers have a reliable resource for respite, the whole family unit benefits. It should also be recognized that the effective provision of respite care is a delicate balance, with the goal of making individuals feel at home in unfamiliar circumstances and maintaining familiar routines so that when they are reunited with their caregivers, the time away was enjoyable and the transition back home is smooth and welcomed by all.

The team in ACS is described by their supervisor, Cynthia Hansford, as passionate, aware, energetic, loving and grateful in their amazing understanding abilities. She told us, "Great and strong working relationships take time spent together to build - and it never ceases to amaze me the impact these DSPs make. The individuals remember them, look forward to seeing them for their next stay and become so excited when they come back to ACS. The staff's commitment to get to know the individuals and discovering the important details about what can make a person's care that much better."

The adaptability of ACS is much like that seen in the CES staff. Our Children's Extensive Services staff works directly with children and families to ensure a vision of community inclusion every step of the way in a child's development. The individuals served require near-constant supervision and therefore thorough understanding and complex care. That being said, these DSPs work most often in homes, creating relationships in the most intimate place in people's lives.

Under the same supervisor as ACS, CES is equally applauded, as Cynthia detailed that, "There are many people that are part of a child's 'tribe' and I admire and appreciate the role our DSPs have within the 'tribe'. Outside of the therapies children are involved in, DSPs play a critical role in promoting consistency and helping the child continue to work on skills that are so important to their development. The ways in which the DSPs in CES support each child through challenging moments and days; they are successful with helping them find the amazing things they can do, enjoy, and accomplish as well as the joy in discovering new experiences in their journey growing up - you cannot beat it and I am so grateful for each of the DSPs in CES."

# START – Systematic, Therapeutic, Assessments, Resources, Treatment Services

START began in September 2017 as an additional component to the Cross System Crisis Response Pilot program that was implemented in August 2016. The pilot program was a collaboration with the mental health system/SummitStone Health Partners to ensure that individuals with co-occurring diagnoses (IDD/mental health) received accessible and appropriate care. This was accomplished by building capacity within systems; the community crisis center, hospitals, schools, local communities, DHS as well as with local law enforcement.

Through START, we work towards assisting individuals and the systems in which they are involved to achieve what we call PERMA (Positive emotions – feeling good; Engagement – being completely absorbed in activities; Relationships – being authentically connected to others; Meaning – purposeful existence; and Achievement – a sense of accomplishment and success). Our goal is to ensure that the individual, as well as members of the system, understands how to work effectively with each other.

START uses the Tertiary Care Model. Through primary, secondary, and tertiary interventions used as part of a solution-focused approach, we work as a system to build capacity and help to resolve immediate, destabilizing situations which allows for hope and change. Following is a breakdown of some important concepts in this model.

**Tertiary Phase** - “Facing the odds” Providing the system with START emergency on-call information and in person crisis response, developing a Cross Systems Crisis Prevention and Intervention Plan (CSCPIP) to the system with tertiary interventions.

**Secondary Phase** - “Beating the odds” This includes meetings with other system, crisis-planning development, face-to-face outreach, phone consultation, crisis mobilization, and assisting the family to identify areas of increased stress for the person and the system; once identified, we utilize a team approach and primary interventions.

**Primary Phase** - “Changing the odds” This requires consistent outreach with the system. Advocating for wellness activities (increased exercise, community integration and inclusion) and reframing the system of support regarding their views/perceptions of the person.

**PERMA**– It is important to understand that there is a difference between being well and doing well. The purpose of PERMA is to ensure an overall wellbeing, both mentally and physically. Engaging in lifelong activities that help create a sense of accomplishment, purpose, and to bring joy to our lives.

## **In 2021 the following START outcomes were measured:**

- Emergency Department Utilization: 6
- Law Enforcement Interface: 0
- Crisis Center Usage: 0
- Psychiatric Inpatient Hospitalization: 1
- Medical Hospitalizations: 0
- Maintained Current Setting: 5

## *START- Continued...*

**Positive Emotions** – This element of the model is one of the most obvious connections to happiness. Being able to focus on positive emotions is more than just smiling, it is the ability to be optimistic and view the past, present, and future from a positive perspective. This positive view of life can help us in relationships and inspire us to be more creative and take more chances. We realize that in everyone's life there are going to be highs and lows. When we only focus on the lows, it increases our chances of developing depression, therefore, through START, we aim to focus on the highs and positive aspects of life.

### **In 2021, the following services were provided:**

- Crisis Service Response: 31
- START Coordination: 15
- New Referrals: 3

**Engagement** – It is important to be able to find activities that require our full engagement. It is important for us to learn, grow, and nurture personal happiness. Everyone is different and we all find enjoyment in different interests. The goal is to focus on highlighting this. It is important to shift the systems' thinking about how to make this possible rather than acting as if it is impossible.

**Relationships** - Relationships and social connections are one of the most important aspects of life. Human beings are social and thrive on connection, love, intimacy, and strong emotional interactions with others. Building positive relationships with parents, siblings, peers, and friends is important to provide support in difficult times.

**Meaning** – Having a purpose and meaning is a need for all of us to live a life of happiness and fulfillment. Meaning gives people a reason for their life and a sense that there is a greater purpose.

**Achievement**– Having goals and ambition in life can help us to achieve things that can give us a sense of accomplishment. The system works together to encourage and help people experience new opportunities.

START is a lifespan service for individuals with IDD and behavioral health support needs. The goal of START Services is to improve diagnosis and treatment, support effective services, create service linkages, promote health and wellness for the individual with IDD and the caregiver, and decrease the need for emergency services.

Through the work of the START program, we have explored new ways of doing things, shared our knowledge with others and learned from each other. We have discovered 'what is' and learned to get rid of 'what isn't'. We have helped create a new model and are always analyzing what helps and continue to build upon that. START has provided a new approach which allows us to have open dialogue while providing the needed support and the tools for those who are experiencing significant challenges at that moment.

## **BrightStart Begins at Foothills Gateway**

In the summer of 2020, Early Intervention Colorado determined the need for a rule change as a response to the COVID budget crisis which impacted eligibility for the program. Foothills Gateway Early Intervention supports children from birth to age 3. On July 13th, 2020, the eligibility criteria for Early Intervention in Colorado changed from a 25% delay qualifying a child for services, to a 33% delay as the new criteria.

Foothills Gateway knew this would mean a decrease in children who were eligible for Early Intervention services. We were concerned about those children found ineligible since they did show a delay in development and knew they could potentially be eligible for other programs at Foothills Gateway, and possibly be eligible for Special Education preschool services as well. Foothills Gateway Early Intervention decided to track these children and follow up with their families to determine if they were still concerned about their child's development or interested in pursuing other programs.

In February of 2021, a presentation was made to the Foothills Gateway Board of Directors about Early Intervention which made them aware of the rule change and our concern that there would be children with developmental delays who would fall through the cracks. The Board of Directors asked Early Intervention to submit a proposal for a program to support these children with developmental delays who were not eligible for Early Intervention under the new criteria. After trying out several different names for the program, BrightStart was born!

The program was tailored so that it would be distinct from Early Intervention, while still offering a coaching model and support by a Special Education teacher with knowledge of early childhood development. We partnered with Julie Daniel, an Early Childhood Special Education specialist and doctoral student. The proposed program included two, 60-minute home visits per month and developmental books for the family. We received approval to begin BrightStart in fiscal year 2021-22 and began enrolling families on July 1st, 2021.

Julie said, "Since the conception of Bright Start, I have been able to work with many unique children and families. Using a strengths-based approach in the home setting, I am able to partner with families to model and provide strategies that help their child reach their full potential. The greatest joy of all is witnessing infants and toddlers meet developmental expectations and close the gap on delays".

Since July 2021, we have provided supports to 16 families. Families have a plan that outlines the concerns and priorities for their child, and we focus on meeting them "where they are" and walk alongside them to watch their children grow. We have referred three children back to Early Intervention for evaluation, supported a family with the transition to Special Education preschool, and enrolled families in other programs that can benefit them.

One family said—"Our family and our 23-month-old son were lucky enough to participate in the BrightStart program to focus on his verbal communication development. After communicating our concerns with a team of compassionate and knowledgeable experts, we quickly began a comprehensive plan that was developed for our child's unique stage

## *BrightStart Begins at Foothills Gateway - Continued...*

and personality. Upon our first meeting with the BrightStart staff, we felt comfortable, cared for, and affirmed. This program allowed us to gain tangible skills for our child who was “in between” developmental milestones. In the process, we were able to learn more about our son’s strengths and watch him grow in his language! The ability to increase our child’s own confidence while being empowered as parents was immeasurable! We are so grateful for programs such as BrightStart and hope future families may benefit from their support as we have!”

We have been so fortunate to have the support of the Foothills Gateway Board of Directors and the FGI leadership team in developing BrightStart and providing services to these children and families.



### **Family Support Services Program**

For the Foothills Gateway Family Support Services Program (FSSP), 2021 brought positive changes. During the year, with the recommendation of the Foothills Family Support Council, the program authorized increased funding for families. This gave the program the opportunity to use state dollars to meet additional respite, therapy, and medical needs as well as assisting with large purchases including home and vehicle modifications.

From February 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021, over \$248,725 of additional funding was added to Family Support Plans. Without implementing this strategy, these funds would have likely reverted back to the state instead of benefitting families in Larimer County.

FSSP also offered time-limited enrollments to all eligible families. In addition to offering supports to families on the waiting list, this option also allowed families residing with an individual enrolled in a Medicaid Waiver program or Early Intervention to access FSSP funding for services that did not duplicate the services offered in Early Intervention or the Medicaid funded programs. By authorizing time-limited enrollments, the program was able to serve an additional 41 families.

By the end of December 31, 2021, the program provided \$776,555 in services compared to the prior year’s total of \$447,046 – an increase of \$329,509.

Finally, FSSP Case Managers put an increased effort into having conversations with enrolled and enrolling families about services in order to match the family’s needs to FSSP services. Case Managers also worked to support families in accessing payment for services. This included discussing direct payment to providers and information on how to upload receipts through the FGI FSSP portal. Some of these conversations also led a few families to realize that FSSP was not currently needed. Ultimately, this allowed the program to enroll new families as these families decided to terminate from the program. As the program moves into the next year, FGI strives to improve outreach, accessibility, and communication about the program, while being bolstered by comments such as this: “Foothills Gateway provides a wonderful service that helps those of us who would not be able to give our child all the services they need. It’s a big relief and we are so happy for Foothills Gateway’s support.”

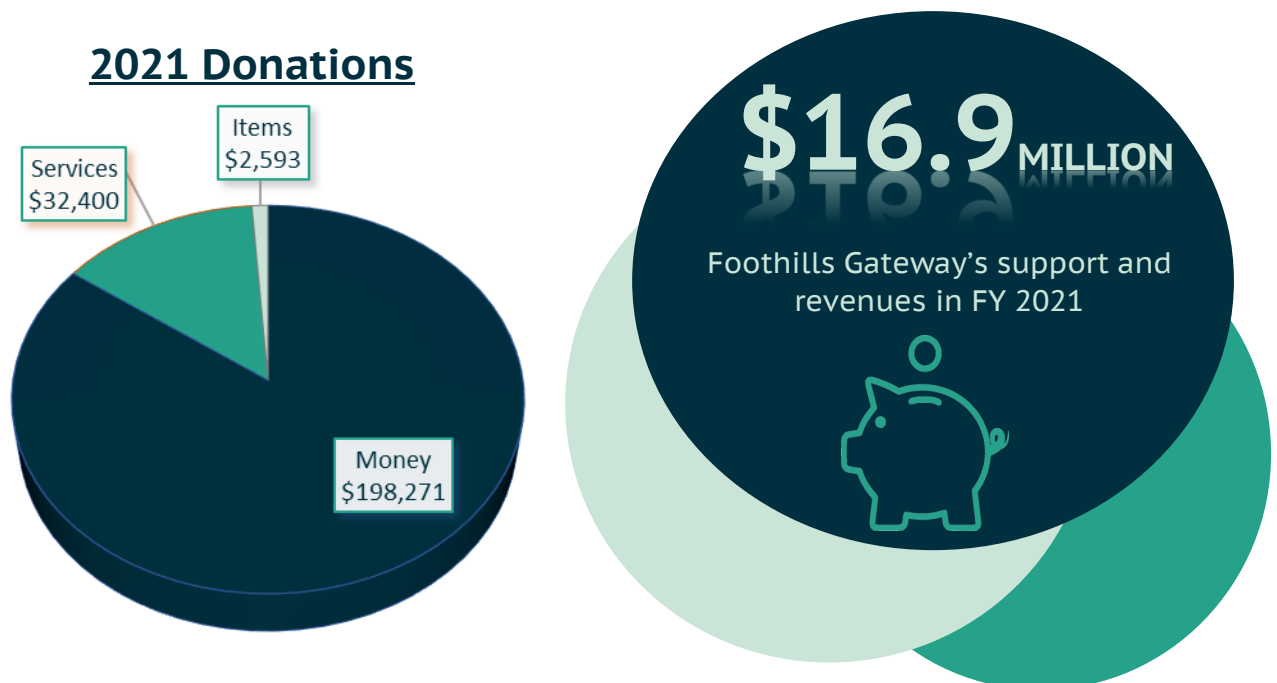
## Donations/ Volunteers

The Northern Colorado community continues to show up for Foothills Gateway in many ways and we are so grateful for this steady support in the midst of one of the most challenging periods in our organizations' history.

The pandemic continued to impact our ability to welcome volunteers into our building. Because of the building closure, volunteers who typically spent time with people receiving services in the community and in Day Programs were unable to provide this service. Regardless, we have done our best to maintain these relationships and look forward to the day when these dedicated volunteers will return.

The Foothills Service League continued to demonstrate their creativity and resourcefulness as they found new ways to raise money for Foothills Gateway. While League-sponsored social events, like the Ice Cream Social and Holiday Gift Shop, continued to be put on hold through the pandemic, their membership continues to express their support and anticipation of resuming their large fundraising events as soon as possible.

Donations made to Foothills Gateway help provide services beyond the basics of standard funding and its restrictions, resulting in a better quality of life for people with disabilities. In 2021, donors gave more than \$232,000 in cash, services, and items to support Foothills Gateway's programs, people receiving services, and facilities.



### TO MAKE A DONATION

To learn more about making a difference in the lives of people with disabilities at Foothills Gateway, Inc., visit [www.FoothillsGateway.org](http://www.FoothillsGateway.org)



## Financial Information

### STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

As of June 30, 2021	2021	2020
<b><u>Support &amp; Revenue</u></b>		
State of Colorado (includes Medicaid F	10,676,243	13,001,136
Larimer County	4,725,333	4,724,262
Other Government Agencies	0	379,578
Public Support	193,960	207,860
Other Revenue	<u>1,312,557</u>	<u>959,137</u>
Total Support & Revenue	<u>16,908,093</u>	<u>19,271,973</u>
<b><u>Expenses</u></b>		
Program Services	10,500,106	11,353,471
Case Management Services	4,748,247	4,989,171
Other Program Services	<u>785,862</u>	<u>1,090,690</u>
Total Program Services	16,034,215	17,433,332
Management and General	2,175,253	2,076,694
Fundraising	<u>9,029</u>	<u>5,309</u>
Total Expenses	18,218,497	19,515,335
Changes In Net Assets before Other Changes	<u>-1,310,404</u>	<u>-243,362</u>
Forgiveness of PPP Loan / acc'd int	1,948,686	
<u>Changes In Net Assets</u>	<u>638,282</u>	<u>-243,362</u>

### STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As of June 30, 2021	2021	2020
<b><u>Assets</u></b>		
Current Assets	8,350,993	10,255,413
Land, Building & Equipment, Net	1,338,989	1,610,708
Other Assets	<u>3,485,758</u>	<u>2,959,500</u>
Total Assets	<u>13,175,740</u>	<u>14,825,621</u>
<b><u>Liabilities and Net Assets</u></b>		
Current Liabilities	1,659,281	2,982,456
Long Term Debt	<u>-</u>	<u>964,988</u>
Total Liabilities	1,659,281	3,947,444
Total Net Assets	<u>11,516,459</u>	<u>10,878,177</u>
<u>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</u>	<u>13,175,740</u>	<u>14,825,621</u>

#### **FUNDRAISING EVENTS**

Foothills Gateway hosts numerous fundraising events throughout the year. For a list of scheduled events, visit:

[www.FoothillsGateway.org/Events](http://www.FoothillsGateway.org/Events)

#### **DONATIONS**

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