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Wed, Jan 24, 2024 2:18PM • 44:31

## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

broomfield, Kohl elementary, special education, Special Olympics, FRIENDS, Health & human Services, Therapeutic Rec, families, year, program, community, worked, nonprofits, services, people, city, started, story, county, kids, happen, state, learned, special olympics, set, neighbors, John Ferraro, Rachel Robbins The Grove at Cottonwood, Colleen Stevenson (spelling?), 100 Women Who Care, Heart of Broomfield, Colorado Titan 100

00:00 David Allison

Would you start by sharing a little bit more about yourself?

00:00 David Allison

Well, obviously my name is Gina Coufal. I have been in Broomfield for 37 years. I moved here when my kids were small. I have three kids who have all grown up in Broomfield. We moved here because my oldest son, Joshua, has intellectual and developmental disabilities. So we moved into Broomfield so that he could attend Kohl Elementary. They had a great program there. And we built our house in The Outlook and I have been there ever since. I worked in the school system in special education. So I worked at Mountain View Elementary with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program as an interpreter tutor. I worked with Boulder Valley schools as a para educator; worked in multi intensive needs; Special Ed classroom, I worked as an employment coach, when a teacher that was in the district started the employment team to put kids with disabilities into a work situation. From there, as my kids were growing up, and as I sort of navigated the world with my son, and his special needs, it really sort of put me on a path to creating a more inclusive community; that became sort of my mission. I had been in special education, in school for special ed before he was born. So it was sort of a full circle thing where I now was experiencing everything through my own life experiences. But it really solidified where I was gonna go and what I wanted to do in the community. I knew we would live in Broomfield for as long as we could. I wanted to raise my family here. So I guess the best part of my story is that I did a lot of volunteer work in the early days, looking at different programs that would integrate special needs kids, with their peers, and sort of looking around for programs. Broomfield, being a small community, didn't have anything like that. I worked with a lot of kids from kindergarten through high school, so I knew that there was a need for them to be more involved.

I found out that Special Olympics happens wherever there's a volunteer to start a program. So that was my first endeavor, to create a Special Olympics program and that was in 1998. But in that same year, I started networking with other families. And there were four of us that kind of got together. We all had special needs kids, and we decided to kind of organize and start this group called "Friends". And I filed to be incorporated. FRIENDS, it's an acronym. It actually stands for Fun, Recreation, Inclusive Experiences, Networking, and Discovering the Spirit; and of course, "of Broomfield."

03:35 David Allison

Love it.

03:36 Gina Coufal

And so, that was sort of the way we got organized, and with the Special Olympics teams, we had a tremendous interest. We grew these programs and did a lot of hosting involving the high schools and things with mostly the athletic events that went on in the spring. Just to give you an example, at one point, these were all volunteers, but we recruited the City recreation staff, and they helped us put on this giant athletic event, which was the track and field, basically. And we would host these events. We did it for four years. And then we would have a big dance and dinner to celebrate. And it kind of got families out of the woodwork and started communicating with me about their needs for their kids outside of school. I found out a lot about how the systems worked and realized that I wasn't alone. Other families were looking for things and nothing was very obvious. There just wasn't a lot for us to tap into. So we just decided to create our own programs. And so between working in the school and special education and then also doing this on the side, it really helped to start this sort of momentum with families. Well, within a couple of years, we were working on Broomfield becoming its own county. So the big discussion was how do we centralize services for all of Broomfield citizens? I know they left the school district situation alone, yes. But in consolidating the four counties, it got me thinking about how we access services as families with kids with special needs and found out that that's not through a county function. That's not something that they knew a lot about.

We were fortunate enough to have a state contractor come in, Karen Bye (spelling??) , who set up our Health and Human Services Department with the new county of Broomfield, I met with her and said we need to understand how to centralize services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. As we were sort of split among or spread out among four counties, and I think six school districts, we were also split within the IDD service community across three community center boards. And those were sort of the larger agencies that had catchment areas that were responsible for case management and helping families get into the system and find providers. So it was sort of a single entry point. And we have this small town of Broomfield with families who, if you lived on this side of the street, you'd go to this agency and if you lived on this side of the street you would go to....and no one was really looking out for Broomfield. I also knew that it was hard to figure out how many families like mine were in this community, because it's not public knowledge. So I did a lot of research to find out how many students were registered in special education; how many of them were attending Broomfield schools, and just by default, started asking around and started to gather sort of a contact list through the Special Olympics program and through the school system. As we became a County, setting up the county functions, especially in Health and Human Services, I got great support from the contractors that came to help Broomfield. I also had a very supportive council member who also worked in the IDD industry, who connected with me, and the two of us started a movement to sort of educate the community about this population.

07:43 David Allison

Wow.

07:44 Gina Coufal

And so there was a Health and Human Services Advisory Committee. And so I got on the committee as a citizen, to be the disability representative to kind of share information that I was collecting and what I knew about how we might centralize services for these families as well. Went all the way to City Council, where we asked for Broomfield to also set up its own community-centered board, which would have been our own little, you know, regional sort of agency for just disabilities. They didn't really want to take that on, didn't really know a lot about it, and so they decided to allow for Broomfield to contract and become part of another catchment area that was already being served by a CCB. So because we were divided up between an agency that took on Boulder in the northwest area, that became our single entry point, so the state actually redrew the catchment area boundaries, so that all of the city and county of Broomfield, the citizens with disabilities, would have one access point for that. So that was a huge undertaking, because that hadn't been done in 100 years.

09:14 David Allison

Wow.

09:15 Gina Coufal

These agencies are, you know, located across the state. And they're pretty set boundary areas, and they usually follow county boundaries. Broomfield was just an anomaly. So at least now we had one single entry point for families.

09:29 Gina Coufal

As we increased our programs with Special Olympics, and as part of the county services for the community, we started looking at recreation and thinking, "you know what, we need to have a therapeutic recreation program within the City." So I went and visited neighboring community-based programs. They were super helpful. And I even had the ear of **John Ferraro** who was our then Director of Recreation Service, who had also been helping with our Special Olympics teams, and he and I put together a proposal for Council to say you need to fund this program. And they did.

So I was able to be a part of hiring Certified Therapeutic Recreation specialists, who would create therapeutic programs, recreational programs, alongside all of the other recreational services that we provided in the City, but specifically for this population. And so now we had Special Olympics, and we have therapeutic rec, but I was still trying to sort of work on this. How do we bring more services into Broomfield and the Medicaid funding that that provides for these services. And so I decided it was a good idea to hand over all the Special Olympics programs to **Rachel (Robbins)**, who is still at the City, doing the same thing, 20 Some years later, or however long it's been. And sort of gave that to her so that she could actually set up her programs as Special Olympics trainings. And it helped to get more folks coming through therapeutic Rec.

And then I shifted to look at what services we still need. At the same time my son was getting to be 21, of course, was in special education. If the team agrees, they can stay in the school until that time, but I didn't know what was next. So I took FRIENDS in the direction of, okay, we're, we're we've done our advocacy, we've gotten our single entry point, we have our Special Olympics and therapeutic rec, what's gonna happen to these kids when they become adults? So FRIENDS of Broomfield, which had become a nonprofit, as all that was happening, I decided to apply to become a provider-approved service agency through the state. So working with our community center board, they helped me with that application, FRIENDS became a service provider. So I set up a day program so that all the kids

that were coming out of schools would have a place to go when they graduated at 21, or even 18, if that's when that happened. So that was the start of FRIENDS sort of becoming what it is today. From a little advocacy group from four families, all the families kind of drifted off through the years and moved away, and so, I was kind of like that driving force to make sure this happened. Because my son needed it, our family needed it. And we've come a long way to bring about awareness in the community, the community has been extremely supportive of what we do and of our participants.

We started with five people in that day program, and now we serve on a regular basis, just under 300. About two-thirds of them are Broomfield residents, and they obtain services from us through a full-time day program, which runs Monday through Friday, where they do activities in the community. The goal of that program is to continue to build skills for becoming independent with activities of daily living, whether it's, you know, navigating the community, whether it's learning skills to be taking care of yourself, money management, computers, cooking, all of those things. So our classes are designed to do that. We have a residential program where we have people who are still living at home, learning skills to someday move out on their own. Some of them live in host homes. And then we have families who have become paid family caregivers, when there aren't host homes or other options available. And we do also have an independent program where we have folks that are living in their own apartments or their own condos, or their own houses actually that families have purchased for them, and living a more independent lifestyle. So we go in once in a while and help them keep up. We also have a supported employment program. And all these programs just kind of came about and we added them as the need required and so started putting people to work. We have about 40 people in that program. All but two of them are working in the community, making over minimum wage and working alongside non disabled peers, with job coaches, some without. And then we have a social program, which kind of went back to our roots, because that's the first thing we did, we tried. You know, how many people are gonna really be interested in this? So we tried doing some free social gatherings and stuff. So this social program has sort of, you know, been there all along, but we enhanced it. And then in 2019, we acquired another nonprofit that did only travel. So we expanded our social and travel program to include those kinds of opportunities, which was really amazing. And we've had great success with that, because people don't get to travel. And we have hired contractors that go with them, and they travel all over the country. So it's pretty fun.

And so, obviously, my life has really been about my story, in other words, has really been about what I do, what I'm passionate about, and then how, you know, how to bring about opportunities for this population in this community. That's just my calling. It's my mission. So my story revolves around that. I don't know when my life stops and FRIENDS begins, because it's so intertwined. I'm also a host home provider. So I have another young man that lives with us as well and is a roommate for my son, which works out great.

My two younger adult children have their own families, but my daughter did go into early childhood special education. So she got her master's and is now teaching in schools. My kids have always been involved in those things all along with their brother, and with me through all of the endeavors that we kind of experienced and the things that happened along the way.

I don't know what more you know, other than last night, at a Council meeting, they approved **The Grove at Cottonwood** complex to go in at Northmor Park, which will provide 40 apartments for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and other citizens that need affordable housing with wraparound services. So it was a huge victory for us. It's a very difficult thing because it's a change. The neighborhood is struggling with that decision and I understand it. But it's a great step in being a

more inclusive community. So I'm very excited about that. However, I mean, I guess you can tell me if this is more about FRIENDS, it's more about me: what else would you like to know?

18:14 David Allison

One of the things I just wanted to say, I love having this conversation with you, in part for a personal reason, which is that I have three daughters; and then a number of years ago, seven years ago now, we adopted our son, who has Down syndrome. So we just know that when you're talking about the family, yeah,..... it really is a family kind of responsibility in a way that it takes everybody. And just hearing about the services and your passion. It's just really touching.

18:52 Gina Coufal

Oh, I'm so glad. How old is your son?

18:57 David Allison

He's 8.

18:58 Gina Coufal

Well, good. And the only piece of advice I can give, because I talk to a lot of families, just by chance, because I've been in the community a long time, what I've learned, is that while we're not emotionally ready for them to be adults, or to grow, as you go through these different stages in school, just know that the things that need to be put in place for them to be ready for adulthood, need to happen by the time they're 14.

So just start thinking about that because that takes planning and to make sure you get that funding, either before, and he could probably qualify now for a children's support waiver with Medicaid, to get extra therapies and services. So that just goes right into but families that have not heard about that or don't know, they can do that, or don't qualify as a you know, with their kids at a young age can start working on those things. And so yeah, you probably already know all of that. So if you ever want to know anything in the future, you're always welcome to come back. And we'll have more of a personal discussion where I can say this is what I've learned and what you need to do to plan. Because I talk to a lot of families whose kids are ready to age out of school, and they go," And so yeah, there's a lot that can be done early on, just to prepare. And that's my biggest thing now is, along this journey of making sure things are happening for our families in these situations, specifically. It's kind of setting those things in place. So that it's there and ready for people, these resources and people there to navigate things with you. And that's really important to me.

Just last night with this housing complex being approved, I mean, it's huge, because there's nothing like it in this state. And there's very few of these types of communities around the nation. And it's hard to think about that stage of life. My son is going to be 40 in May, and he still lives at home with us. He requires full care and 24/7 supervision. He needs help with eating, with toileting, with all nine yards, he has seizures, he has mild CP. He, you know, the whole nine yards, he's great. And he is just such an amazing guy. And he's come such a long way. Because you know, as an infant, he was very, very sick. And so, we didn't even know what was to come. But it's just really satisfying to be able to take what I've learned to continue pushing for the things that need to happen, and then help families plan because our biggest fear, and it gets worse as you get older, is what's going to happen when I'm gone. And I don't want his brother and sister to feel obligated. They're both like, "oh, yeah, Mom, he's gonna come live

with us” and me, well, I'm gonna plan so that that doesn't have to be the case. You can feel comfortable that he's taken care of that things are in place. But you know, and we worry about all our kids in that regard. But particularly for our kids with special needs, the system isn't always very kind. And so I really am proud of FRIENDS, because we're very person centered.

We have made a lot of inroads in our tiny little community. And while it's a tiny community, I feel like we've also gained a really good reputation across mostly the Denver Metro area, but also across the state in terms of how we're able to do what we do. It's half because we have such a great community that supports us. But the other thing is to really think about how do we support people in their whole life, you know, not just coming here, we don't sit in front of TVs, we don't do videos, we are out in the community, we are volunteering, we are learning skills, we are engaging with the community. And that helps our participants feel empowered. They're not always the recipient, so that they can do everything, they can give back and they love that. Yeah. And so that's really my life story is to accomplish these things. I would say that, just bringing about the initial awareness of this population, and then getting the community center board established was huge. Starting the agency, we had an impact on getting the city ordinance for group homes; which we don't do group homes, but there wasn't a lot of talk about that.

24:05 David Allison

I just wanted to ask; you had mentioned that there was a City Council member who was involved. You remember that individual's name?

24:13 Gina Coufal

Colleen Stevenson.

24:15 David Allison

Wonderful. Thank you.

24:16 Gina Coufal

Yeah. She was very involved; this would have been in the late 90s to the early 2000's, 2001.

24:24 David Allison

Okay. Yeah. So right around the time that became a county.

24:27 Gina Coufal

Actually, yes. Because obviously our council became our county commissioners. But she, having worked in the industry for many years, said, Gina, if this is what you want to do, this is how you do it and she walked me through every step. I learned as much as I could, and that's where it started. So from there, we just had a lot of great community support that was willing to listen, and my kids going through the Broomfield schools had their peers, who were just embracing to all the other students that, you know, in our classroom, as you're probably experiencing, kids are great. And we need to learn from them, because they don't have the fears and the hang-ups that adults do, especially adults my age. And so it's been a great journey, and we're not done. We're going to build this 40 unit apartment complex and it's going to be awesome. It's going to allow people to be successful and to have the support that they need to to live independently so that families know there's something there for them.



We're going to continue to do host homes, because sometimes people are going to need that; they're going to need 24/7. We just last year started a behavioral support program. So we hired a BCBA. (??) And we're going to build out our behavioral supports, because kids and adults get, you know, an hour a week. Now we've got a therapist that's full time here. And she's infused in all programs so that all participants of our programs get the benefit of her knowledge, and she can be training our staff. So it's not like, I'm going to give you a plan based on an hour a week. Yeah that doesn't really work so well, because the things happen when you're not in that hour with them. And so that's just part of, you know, a characteristic of the programs, I guess I would say, that's one. And we're going to expand.

26:34 David Allison

I love it. And I guess as you're thinking about the expansion, or as we're talking about the expansion, tell me the story about this building.

26:42 Gina Coufal

Yeah. So this is a really good part of the story that I didn't tell you. When we decided to open the day program, my family purchased a home on Main Street, 305 Main, and we weren't going to house the program there. But, we needed a home base and I needed an office for myself and for the person I was gonna bring on to help me do that. I asked the City about it. They were all supportive, City Council. But they said, you know why you might want to talk to your neighbors. This will get to this building, believe me. It's a journey, though. I gotta tell you this story. So they said, talk to your neighbors, let them know what you're doing and make sure that this is all copacetic within the neighborhood, because we're right on Main Street, right by the tennis courts, you know, catty corner right there on Third. Bus Stop right outside, near, you know, the Rec Center, all that. So we did just that. It was July that year; we were going to open in September. And we had just all these kids, myself and a lot of Josh's friends had just aged out of school that spring. So the plan was I was working on this, so that when fall comes, we're ready to go. So in July, I have an open house at 305 Main, and I invited the neighbors and they brought some friends. And we had it set up. I had my families; we're going to have five to start the day program. So I had my families there. I had handouts, I said, this is what we're doing. We did a little presentation. And you know, it was really a nice thing. They toured the house, we had it all fixed up with office space and program space. Oh, they did not like that at all. They cornered me at one point, all of them to say, we just want to say this is not appropriate for this house. This is not appropriate for this neighborhood. And we just don't think that this is the right thing to do. And you don't have any permission to do this. And I tried to be kind and explain what it was like, scary, like what year are we living in? I understood they were fearful. Because a lot of them said to me, you don't know what they're gonna do. They run away, they run out in the street screaming, they steal from you, they vandalize your house, our property values are going to go down. And I would have never believed this. I've heard this has happened in other places. I would have never really believed it could happen until it happened to me. And I'm like, wow, I'm blown away.

So then, of course, I'm working with the City and they're talking to the neighbors and they said just go out. It was like an Erin Brockovich story where I was going neighbor to neighbor trying to talk to people to explain what we were doing. And they wouldn't open their door. They were passing out flyers. We had a Council meeting because it became such a deal with Council. They're like we need to figure this out. So we're gonna set this up as a meeting and a public hearing so we can hear everybody's side and you can, you know, counter what they're saying and explain and blah, blah, blah. Otherwise, we're not

going to let you do this day program. So we go to this Council meeting. And one by one, all these neighbors that have been gathered up from all these flyers that went around, went up and told all their scary stories about what was going to happen. And then one by one, all of our families, five families that were watching on TV, ended up coming, just so they could speak because they were so outraged. So then all of our families went up to tell their personal story; every Council member was in tears. I don't know, four or five of them talked about their own personal family members, a sister, a brother, a cousin, you know, a child that no one knew about. But they started sharing all these stories, basically admonished the crowd and said, We don't want to hear any more. This is not who we are, we'll discuss this. We're not making a ruling tonight, or whatever it was. So this is now August, I'm supposed to have an inspection on the house to get a program approval, the last step of approval, because I just kept going. Two days before, the inspector was supposed to come from the state to give us our approval to do this kind of programming, the City called and said, we've had way too much feedback, we're just going to have to ask you to wait and not open it in this house, we're going to need to have you find another location. So in a panic, I'm like, I gotta find something in two days that's ready to be inspected. And if you look, this is Saulsbury (sp??) . And if you go across the way, there's a little tiny house, right across the street. That was our first house that we had opened our day program in, because somebody in my church heard about what we needed. They had this little empty house, it's right by the Children's Garden Care Center. They're right across the street. And they said it's been empty for a year, it used to be a daycare center. You can have it and then we'll charge you pennies. So I rented it. We got in there, we cleaned it up, we painted, all the stuff. And they came and they inspected; we were good to go. We started with only five people. What's really poetic is that we're here, a stone's throw from where we started. But however, there's more to the story.

So after we had been there about a year and a half, we had grown from five initial individuals to probably about 12 to 15. In that year and a half. One of our folks jumped on.... somehow the floor got damaged. And we realized that one of the rooms, a really strange little room; I should have realized this, was a carport that had been covered over. So the floor broke through and there was dirt underneath. Well, when they came to repair the floor we discovered mold because there was, you know wood sitting on the dirt,

33:14 David Allison

On the ground. Yeah.

33:15 Gina Coufal

So we got out, you know, when they came to demolish it, and we thought we'd be back in the week, you know, then over the weekend, we'd be back the next Monday. Well, a weekend turned into a month and turned into eight months. So we left that little house, but in a panic, I had to move the program into my house. I had the state come out, I rearranged my entire house. I set up a computer lab and a learning lab up in my loft upstairs, offices in my dining room and oh, the offices were upstairs and the computer lab was my dining room. I had a big back porch, so it was in the summer. so I could use that as an activity area. We scheduled a lot of communities. And I also had my van and a bus at that time. And we did that for eight months out of my home. Finally my neighbors like "Gina, you really need to probably move on" and I'm, " yes I know, I'm looking for property" and we spent tons of time, myself and my board, looking for property that we could renovate, vacant lots, we looked everywhere My brothers were in construction so they were willing to help but we just couldn't find anything that we could afford.



Finally, a parent put me in touch with a guy that used to own a big real estate company here called Colorado and Santa Fe Real Estate. And he had a daughter with special needs and he owned a lot of commercial land. So he owned this little strip mall over on Alter (sp??) Street.

34:52 David Allison

Yeah.

34:53 Gina Coufal

And he said, I've got this one unit, you could pair it with the one next door. It's all one thing you know: Give you cheap rent, you can redo the inside however you need to. And it really wasn't bad. But we were between a drug testing center and an AMCO, I think, and it's not perfect, but it's something. So we said, Okay, we're going to be here for five years. So we ran FRIENDS, why families felt comfortable bringing their kids there, I don't know, I would have been, I don't know; our program was so good. That and we were in the community a lot. So, four years came and I said to my board, I need to start looking for some property. So we had a family, well, actually, I said, I'm going to start looking at other ways to do this. We had a family come and say, I don't want you to bring somebody in to do a remodel, we're gonna build what you need, we're gonna build it big enough for what you need for the future. And we're going to figure out the financing. So this Family Foundation gave us the money to build it up front. At the same time, we were doing a capital campaign. And we raised money, which covered about two thirds of the cost. So we had the funding to build the building, it took 18 months, while we were in Alter (sp??) Street, and watched it grow. Our participants were involved in the process from day one. The only thing we didn't put in that they asked for was a hot tub. Yeah, no, I don't think we need a hot tub (Laughter)

36:45 Gina Coufa

And so in that process, this building was built. And then through our capital campaign, and through some very generous personal pledges, we were able to start paying it back. So we paid off two thirds of the loan, because we had to, you know, two thirds of it raised through the capital campaign, and we are, we are prepared within the next month here to pay off the remaining balance of the construction agreement, which is what built this building. So we were able to build it. And in fact, you see all of this, you know, wainscoting and whatnot? I wasn't going to go to that extent, there's so many finishes that I would never have added but the donors were like, No, it needs to be nice. And it needs to be sturdy. So that's why the walls are.... because we have a lot of wheelchairs, I'll take you on a tour when we get done if you have time. And we thought that's going to preserve the drywall. But this building, the general contractor donated his time. We had a lot of trades that donated their time and charged us just for materials. We got a lot of materials from vendors like recycled carpet. This wainscoting, it was a woodworker who did all of our doors and we bought all of these doors. But he gave us all the lumber that was mixed pieces; behind this paint is like cherry and mahogany and whatever else it is, it didn't matter. It was all scraps, so we were able to do that.

We had a granite guy that had a boneyard. He goes, you can come in and pick anything out that you want from the Boneyard. And we'll just charge you to cut it.

38:38 David Allison

Wow. That's great

38:40 Gina

So we got just a lot of that support. This was a passion project. And it has been such a blessing. We wanted our participants to have a nice, warm, welcoming place to come every day. And we have so many that spend Monday through Friday here. We do not have a residential part of this building. Nobody lives in this building except some of the staff (Laughter), it feels like; but so yeah, that is how the building came to be.

And the City has been, you know, funding us through their nonprofit grant funds from the first year. The Community Foundation, always used to fund our ski and camp trips every year. Now they've kind of separated and so we're solely working with the City, because of the size of our grant. But yeah, just a lot of what has happened with FRIENDS is because of the community, but a lot of the continued support is because of how involved we are with the community. We volunteer at A Precious Child, at Joyful Journey, at FISH. I'm very close with the nonprofits, you know, directors.

Another piece of my story is along this journey too, so that nonprofits would get more recognition. I started the 100 Women Who Care chapter. And this is going on, I think our fifth year now. But it started with a meeting of everybody I knew, and had a little celebration and said, This is what I've learned that other counties are doing, other chapters in different places, we need to do this. and I had 52 People at the first meeting, 52 women. And of course, the goal is 100 women, and we've been over 100 since the second year. I'm on the steering committee, but I don't run it. You know, I let the community ladies do that. But that's another proud moment for me, because it's just something that has evolved. And it's such a simple thing to do. And it's the equivalent of the guys who give. So my husband's really involved in that, just as a member. So I think, I mean, just a servant sort of way to live, I think that I'm so grateful. Just have that be so clear for me, you know, sometimes it's hard to find your path and what you need to do. And Joshua, my oldest, helped me figure that out pretty early on. And so that's pretty great. Yeah.

41:42 David Allison

I really appreciated chatting with you. Yeah, a delightful story that you have, a powerful story and an important story. And thank you, for this community. Thank you so much.

41:53 Gina Coufal

Well, thank you. And I'm grateful that people have recognized that, you know, I mean, I think it was 2005, when we first opened FRIENDS, that the Heart of Broomfield awards recognized me for community service. That was amazing. That was a very proud moment. And two years ago, just to brag a little bit, but it's because of FRIENDS, because everything is related to FRIENDS. I was honored as a Titan 100, a Colorado Titan 100, which is a group of C suite people around the state that are recognized for their work in their field, either nonprofits, but mostly corporations and big businesses. But there are some of us in there with nonprofits. So that's been a real boost for me, because it's given me a whole new world of people to learn from, but also to talk to, and several of the Titans have told me their stories about their kids. In fact, there's a couple that are coming to visit, one this month and one next month, with their kids, that are looking to transition into the adult world. And so more than anything, I like just being involved so that I can tell people about that.

43:17 David Allison

I really appreciate it. I'm excited to tour the place.

43:21 Gina Coufal

Yeah, I don't know what else makes up a story, but I was gonna just give you this, you probably could see everything you need to see on the website. But yes, there's a video, I probably repeated a lot of that in the videos that we have, that we had done. A couple of really great ones just to commemorate, like this past year was our 25th. But we didn't really do a big deal for the 25th. I don't know why, I think we just got so busy.

43:44 David Allison

Doing the work.

43:46 Gina Coufal

So yeah, exactly. But I mean this, this just tells you what kind of happened last year in a little more detail. But we do a lot on social media. I have some great development staff that are really out there, putting things out there for folks to see. And the families love it because they get to see what their people are doing every day. And that's the other thing, we want to be very transparent with services because we want families to trust us and to know that their person is in good hands and doing good things.

44:20 David Allison

That's amazing. Yeah, it's a real honor to speak with you again.

44:24 Gina Coufal

Well, thank you. It's a real honor that you even thought to reach out. I really appreciate that.