

Behind the Veil



VAIL COMMUNITIES
CULTIVATING HOPE FOR MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

Happy August!

From everyone here at Vail Communities - we hope you've had an enjoyable and relaxing summer. We can't believe it's already August - where did the time go? As we head into the fall, we hope you'll continue to support our mission and community.

In case you missed our first newsletter back in July, "Behind the Veil" is a snapshot of all the exciting things happening at Vail Communities. In this newsletter, we hope to provide program updates, upcoming events, agency-wide news, and feature some of our incredible staff members!



June 30-July 2, 2025 — Washington, D.C. — #NAEH2025

Our Rapid Rehousing team left feeling both inspired and challenged. The message of hope, paired with actionable strategies, was a powerful reminder that meaningful progress is achievable, even in the face of shifting policies and persistent barriers. While Hennepin County was frequently highlighted as a national leader, our staff reflected on the disconnect between those accolades and the realities on the ground. Still, hearing firsthand from communities all over the country offered a valuable perspective on the strengths of our local system and the innovations that set it apart.

The conference also offered practical takeaways for our day-to-day work. Staff noted how important it is to communicate effectively with those who may not be as familiar with the complexities of homelessness - whether that be partners, funders, or the general public. We also gained insights into how to build stronger partnerships with landlords, especially in a tight rental market, to expand housing opportunities for our clients. Being seen as a national leader comes with a responsibility - not just to sustain our efforts, but to push for even greater creativity, collaboration, and bold solutions that can serve as models for other communities. The team returned with a renewed commitment to working toward solutions with creativity, perspective, and joy. We are proud to be part of a national movement working toward a future where systems truly support everyone.



On Your Mark, Get Set, Ragnar!

Vail Communities is running the Ragnar Relay to support our Clubhouses! The run is August 8th-9th from St. Paul to Duluth, totaling over 207 miles. Consider donating today to support our mission and individuals living with mental illness: <https://www.givemn.org/story/04u0ze>.

Conference Recap - Rapid Rehousing Team

Staff Spotlight

Trisha Horning



This year marks a decade of dedication, growth, and impact for Trisha Horning! Starting in a direct support role as a Case Manager, Trisha quickly stood out as a compassionate leader and advocate for individuals living with mental illness. Over the years, she advanced to Case Management Team Lead and in October of 2022, Trisha was promoted to Manager of Integrated Partnerships.

In this role, she builds and strengthens partnerships with Health Care Systems and Managed Care Organizations to expand access to care. Her efforts are focused on supporting individuals with mental health, substance use disorders, and co-occurring diagnoses, while addressing systemic barriers that often stand in the way of care and support.

As Trisha continues to foster meaningful partnerships and meet the evolving needs of the community, her leadership and vision remain a driving force behind Vail Communities' work. Thank you, Trisha, for your impactful work and leadership!

Meet our new Uptown Clubhouse Manager! Sarah Knispel



Sarah Knispel is a licensed social worker and public policy advocate. She previously managed the Fort Greene Park Social Wellbeing Team, a Fountain House pilot project, and coordinated NAMI Minnesota's public policy work. Sarah has mental illnesses, so she's motivated to create spaces and systems where people with mental illnesses are socially connected, respected, and supported. She loves the Clubhouse Model because of its focus on ending social isolation and the way it uplifts the agency and self-determination of each Member.

Sarah is especially excited to work at Vail because of what impressive, powerful partners Vail Members and Staff were at Mental Health Day on the Hill and in other advocacy work. She's eager to support a Clubhouse in her area and help connect the Clubhouse to the broader Uptown neighborhood. Sarah volunteers doing mutual aid and writes in her free time. She lives in the Wedge neighborhood (just a short bike ride from the Clubhouse) with her partner and her cat, Bagel.



Thank you for reading!

