YSS Liaison Report – October 2017

Liaisons: Dave Morris, Evonne Fitzgerald, Mary Beth Golemo, Jonathan Kirner

Dave Morris and Jonathan Kirner met with YSS staff on 10/26/17 to go over updates and review funding requests and priorities for FY 18/19. YSS staff had a well-organized agenda and presenting were CEO Andrew Allen, along with Director of Strategy and Operations Belinda Meis, Division Directors Jason Haglund and Terri Johanson, Branch Director Gerri Bugg, Program Directors Hope Metheny and Julia Webb, and Controller Andrew Combs.

Need for Program: YSS provides a number of valuable programs and services to Story County youth and their families. Their services are divided into four areas: Treatment, Prevention, Child Welfare, and Transition. Their current priorities are:

1- Summer Enrichment. The primary goal is to reduce summer learning loss. The program served 200 youth in Ames and Nevada during 6 weeks in the summer of 2017, plus 81 youth served in Collins-Maxwell during a 4 week pilot program funded by one-time grants. Surveys and school data show that most students maintained or increased grade level reading while showing improvement in self-concept and attitude towards school. The program also provides meals. An increase in ASSET funding is proposed for FY 18/19 due to the loss of grants and an expansion to Collins/Maxwell which adds staff and increases the program length from 4 to 6 weeks.

2- Transitional Living Program. The goal is to promote self-sufficiency and skill development to homeless youth, and teach young moms the skills to meet their child's developmental needs. This will help end long term chronic homelessness and help these youth obtain living wage jobs. The average length of stay in the program is around six months. YSS is the only provider of these services for youth in Story County.

3- Mental Health Funding. A total of 1294 clients received mental health evaluations and/or mental health therapy during FY 16/17 from licensed therapists and substance use counselors, in office and school settings. Client ages range from 3 to 26. These services are intended to positively enhance the overall mental, behavioral and emotional functioning of individuals receiving these services. The hope is to expand these services to local college age Story County residents. YSS is the primary local provider of mental health and substance use services for low income and Medicaid eligible children and youth in Story County.

Other programs include Community Youth Development, Mentoring, Employment Assistance for Youth, Kids Club, Family Development, Child Safety, Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment, HIV Assistance, YSS Education & Prevention, Emergency Shelter, Crises Intervention, and Storks Nest.

Program Strengths: YSS strengths include an active board and a qualified and effective CEO. Board members provide governance, are financially accountable, and actively participate in the policy decisions, strategic planning, and long term goals of the

agency. YSS is active in responding to community needs and pursuing preventative measures for problems it identifies. Its awareness of concerns facing youth is a major asset. It has proven to be highly adaptable to the funding and public policy changes in the social service area.

Program Weaknesses: While YSS's diversity of funding is strength, the financial uncertainty of state and federal sources of income is always a major concern. The privatization of Medicaid in Iowa has caused some payment collection problems.

Financial Outlook: The YSS financial request from ASSET to support 15 programs for FY 18/19 is up $46,000 over what was awarded for the current budget year of 17/18. This is due to some needed program expansions and some grant losses. The total ASSET request from YSS for FY 18/19 is $634,189 in a proposed total budget amount of $21,080,764, of which $3,247,293 applies to Story County. YSS finished the most recent fiscal year (16/17) with a loss of $675,171. Health insurance premiums have gone up more than $300,000 and two major grants were lost totaling $365,000. Even though Medicaid accounts receivable have decreased to about $300,000 this year from over $600,000 last year, Iowa's change to Managed Care for Medicaid led to loses in the outpatient program. They are working diligently to try to break even this fiscal year by implementing cost saving measures, adjusting grant based budgets, and monitoring fee based programs closely.

Internal Management: YSS has a very knowledgeable and experienced management team. CEO Andrew Allen has an extensive YSS volunteer background, other business experience, and is innovative with a high energy level. YSS has an active board of directors that is not only supportive but evaluates and analyzes programs, staff, and future direction of the agency. They do strategic planning with quarterly, 1 year, 3 year, and 5 year goals. YSS takes service data collection very seriously, has many metrics by which they track client performance and outcomes, and these metrics reflect favorable performance or outcomes.

General Assessment: YSS is a well-organized social service agency meeting the needs of the youth and their families in Story County. YSS staff and board members truly care about the organization and the youth in our community. Each year YSS challenges ASSET funders to grow support to increase delivery of these important and needed services to our community, many of which are only provided by YSS. It is very beneficial to our community and for the youth served to have YSS in Story County.