

# BELOVED COMMUNITY

*Making Connections, Building Community, Changing Lives*

*“Loneliness is the only real disability”*



## Approach

- **Authenticity**- every experience is personal
- **Challenge Your Comfort Zone** – an opportunity to test things out in an informal way
- **No More Waiting** – shift from waiting to doing
- **Organic & Grassroots** – nontraditional funding without restrictions about how to do the work
- **Learning Together** – acceptance and openness to others willingness or unwillingness to participate

## Values

- **Doers, Not Takers** – giving back to the community and building skills
- **Enhancing Lives** – connecting with community, family and other resources
- **Comfort** – Free to be yourself in an environment where you are accepted
- **Beloveds Have the Answers** – the programs is not the answer
- **Rooted in Community** – as opposed to other service systems

## Legacy

- **Empowerment** of Beloveds and their families
- **Heart Connectedness** – personal connection allows miracles to happen
- **Shared Humanity** – creating space for people to build relationships and encounters
- **Tender and Giving Heart** – people with disabilities can make one's heart more tender and giving
- **Abundance** – community has what it takes to support Beloveds

## Impact

- **Community Identity** – being a member of a community, someone's friend, a volunteer
- **Small Victories** – no need to explain or justify disabilities to involve Beloveds in the community
- **Autonomy** – gaining independence in developing relationships

## Mission

“Beloved Community builds community by facilitating shared experiences for people with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities. Through these experiences, we challenge stereotypical and oppressive attitudes and social norms about neurodiverse people, engage each person's gifts in community, and create a sense of value and belonging for everyone.”

## Roots

The Beloved Community began in 2015 as a grassroots demonstration project funded by the Department of Health (DOH) to address the length of time individuals with IDD wait for services provided by the Developmental Disabilities (DD) Waiver in New Mexico. They became a nonprofit organization in 2018.

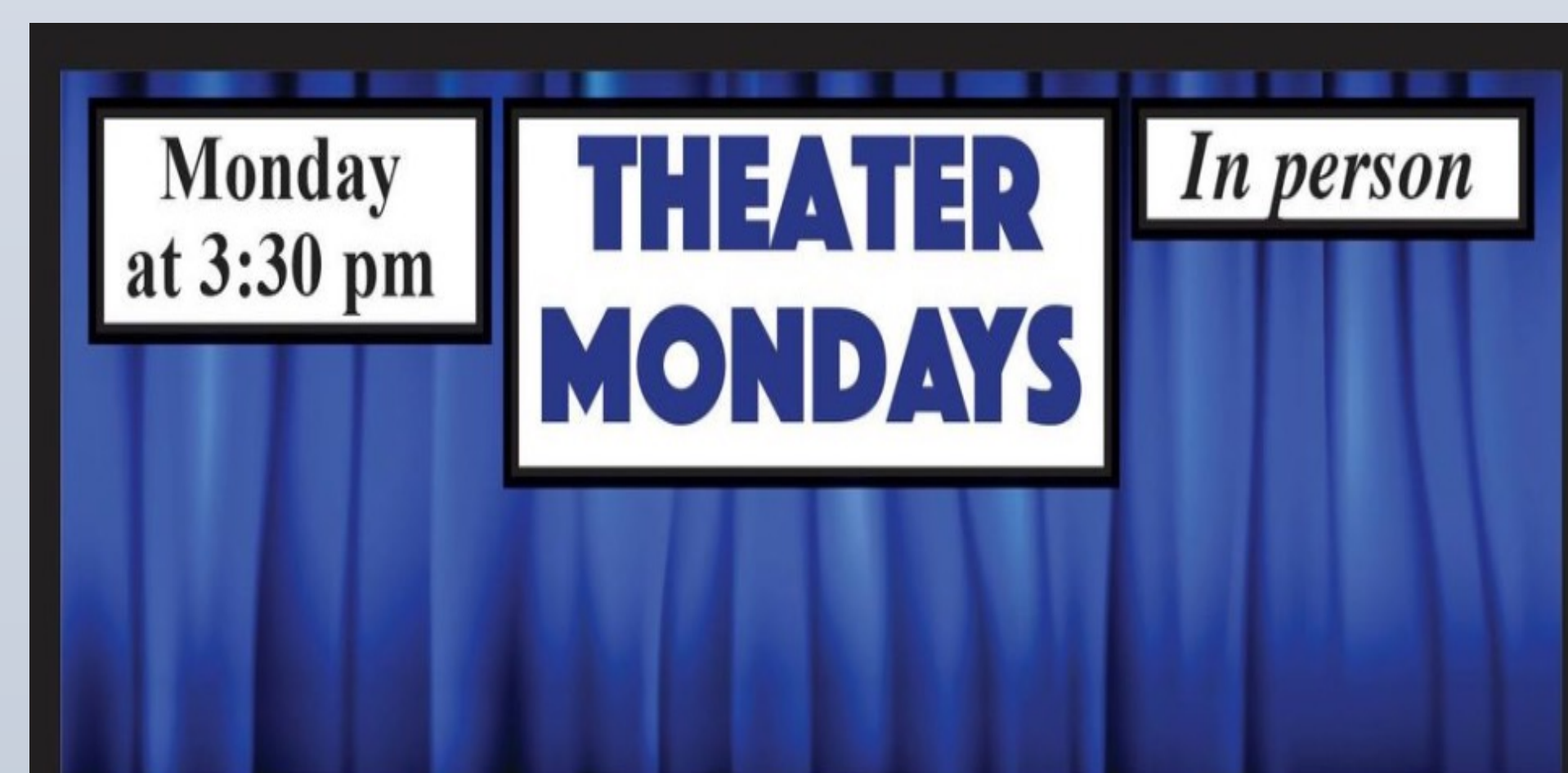
## Population Served

- Young adults in their 20's and 30s with intellectual and developmental disabilities
- Most have not started receiving DD-Waiver services
- No formal membership, application, fees, or waitlist

## Community Support Services

*“Our work is not limited to traditional ways of being. Instead, it engages in opportunities that indulge curiosity, risk, and tomfoolery in pursuit of joy, growth, and belonging.”*

## Offering a hybrid of virtual and in-person activities



- Theater Mondays – Bi-monthly improv and games with NMSU theater pros
- Social Hour Wednesdays – Weekly Fun activities, games, and conversations
- Tutorial Thursdays – Weekly art projects and special community presentations
- United Fridays – Monthly meeting with partner agency DACU and featured presenter
- Timebank Get-Togethers –Monthly social hour hosted by Mesilla Valley Timebank



## Director/Cofounder- Kay Lilley

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## Virtual Engagement Coordinator- Michel Wing

## Disciplines and Agency Collaboration

- Board Members
- Community Member Volunteers
- NMSU Theater Arts Department
- Doña Ana Communities United (DACU)
- Mesilla Valley Timebank- a community of individuals and organizations who have agreed to exchange services with one another free of charge.

## Funding

The program weathered the loss of state funding after two and a half years and the budget for salaries, stipends was reduced significantly. The program now supports itself through:

- Operating Grants
- Fund Raising
- Fee for Services/Billing through Mi Via and NM Supports Waiver
- Patreon Membership Platform
- Donors
  - Vescovo Toyota
  - Walmart Giving
  - City of Las Cruces
  - W.K. Kellogg Foundation
  - Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico
  - Tecumseh Foundation

## Program Evaluation

An evaluation survey administered by a social work intern over the phone. The survey includes quality indicators based on the social determinants of health, social capital, and personal capacity.



[belovedcommunitylc.org](http://belovedcommunitylc.org)