



North Idaho College

Center for New Directions

2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT



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HELLO FROM LOUISA ROGERS



When I began my role at North Idaho College in December 2021, I immediately saw what an incredible gift this program is to the North Idaho community. The Center for New Directions (CND) is well named. Those who walk through our doors are looking for a new direction in life.

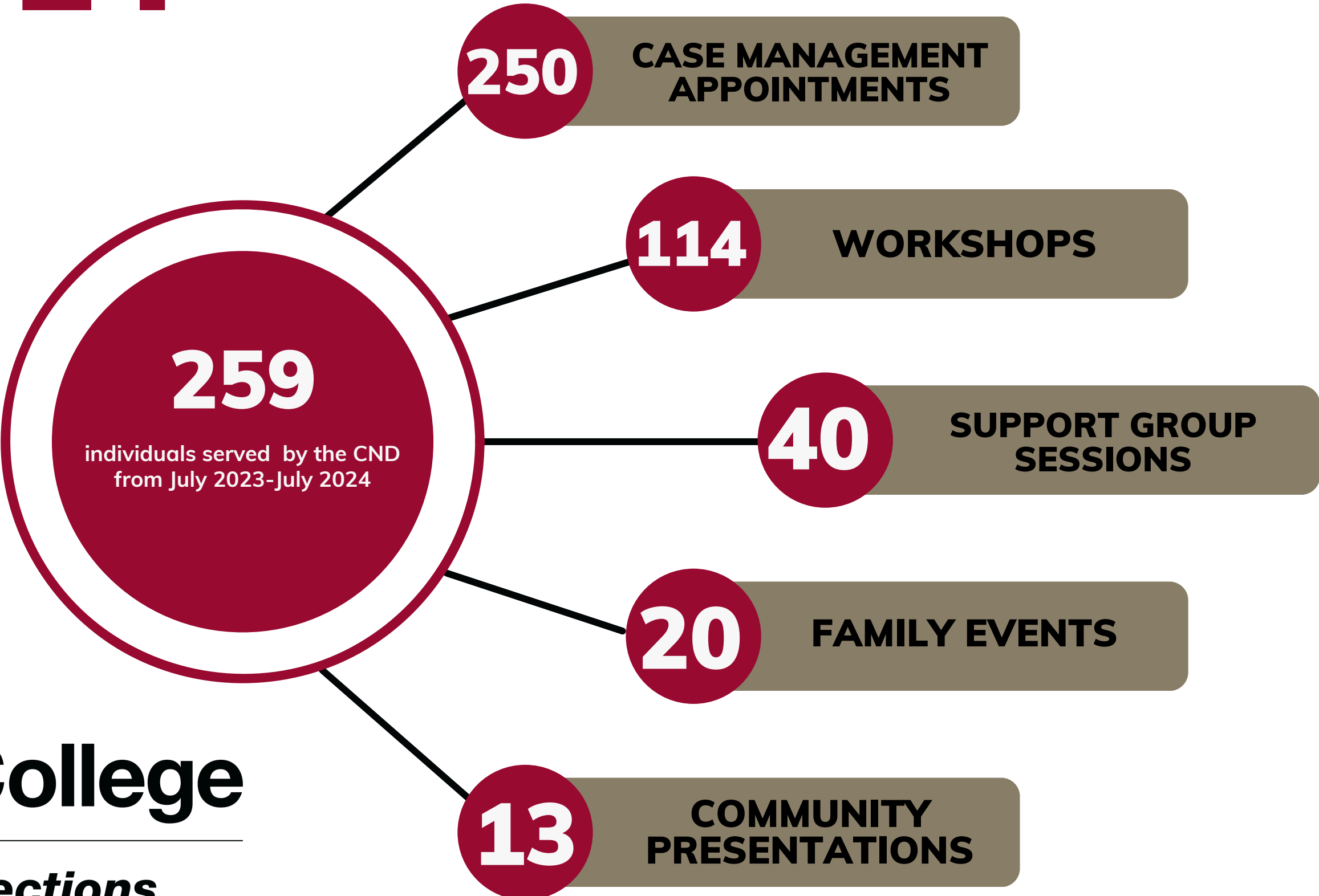
The majority of CND participants have experienced tremendous hardship. However, a unique aspect of our program is our focus not on an individual's past trauma, but instead on their resiliency, grit, and determination. We foster an environment of personal accountability and mentor individuals towards stability and self-sufficiency.

In this year's annual report, I hope to offer a glimpse of the impact the CND is having at North Idaho College and beyond. As you become familiar with our work, you will find that our success is inextricably linked with a greater community of local helping agencies and individuals who believe in our mission.

If you are interested in learning how you can support this work, I'd love to connect with you!

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2023-2024 YEAR IN REVIEW



North Idaho College
Center for New Directions

Cover photo: CND student Jhenya Lakusta and her daughter at the May 2024 graduation ceremony.
Photo credit: NIC Marketing

Why NIC?

Located on the beautiful Lake Coeur d'Alene, North Idaho College offers an affordable, quality education.

NIC offers a broad spectrum of career paths for students to choose from, with more than 80 academic degree and career and technical education certificate programs. The faculty and staff at NIC truly care about the success of the students they work with. NIC's provost Lloyd Duman began at NIC 30 years ago as a faculty member. "It is incredible to witness students come to NIC and not only earn a degree, but also gain confidence and life skills that they will carry with them far beyond their time as a student," he stated.



For many, the process of going back to school is daunting. Applying to NIC, filling out FAFSA paperwork, writing scholarship essays, taking placement tests and scheduling advising appointments can feel overwhelming, and maybe even impossible. The Center for New Directions supports students from the moment they first walk onto NIC's campus and continues to do so throughout their journey towards graduation.

"I walked onto campus a bit overwhelmed. After meeting with the Center for New Directions, I felt both supported and welcomed. They showed me how to navigate my paperwork with enthusiasm and kindness. I am thankful I was connected to the CND because it has made my transition into school a positive experience!" - Shannan, single mom of 6

WHO WE SERVE:

- **Displaced Homemakers**

Anyone who must seek training or paid employment outside of the home due to separation, divorce, death, or disability of spouse.

- **Single Parents**

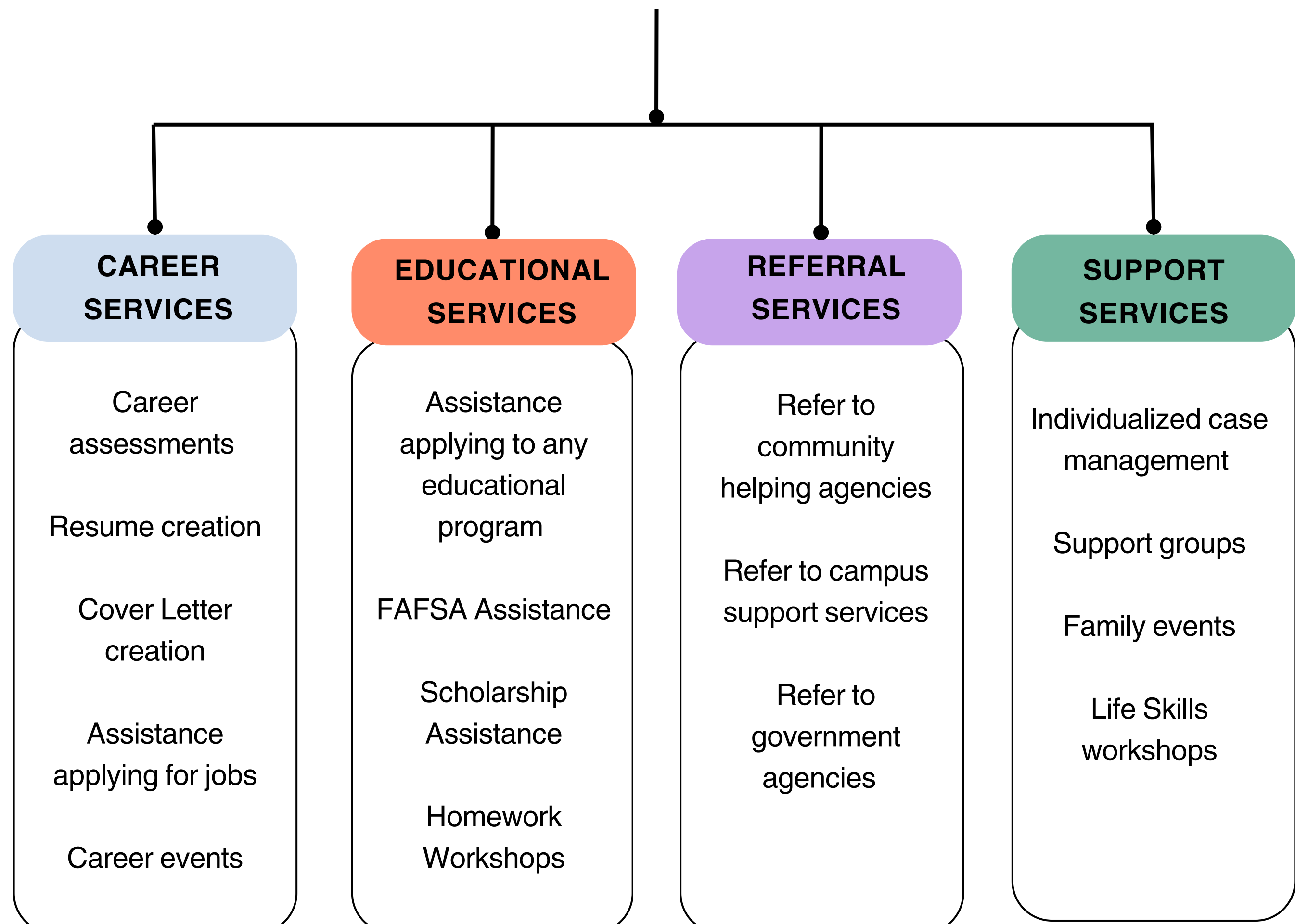
A single parent with primary financial and custodial responsibility for supporting dependent children and who must gain employment skills in order to earn a living.

- **Career Pioneers**

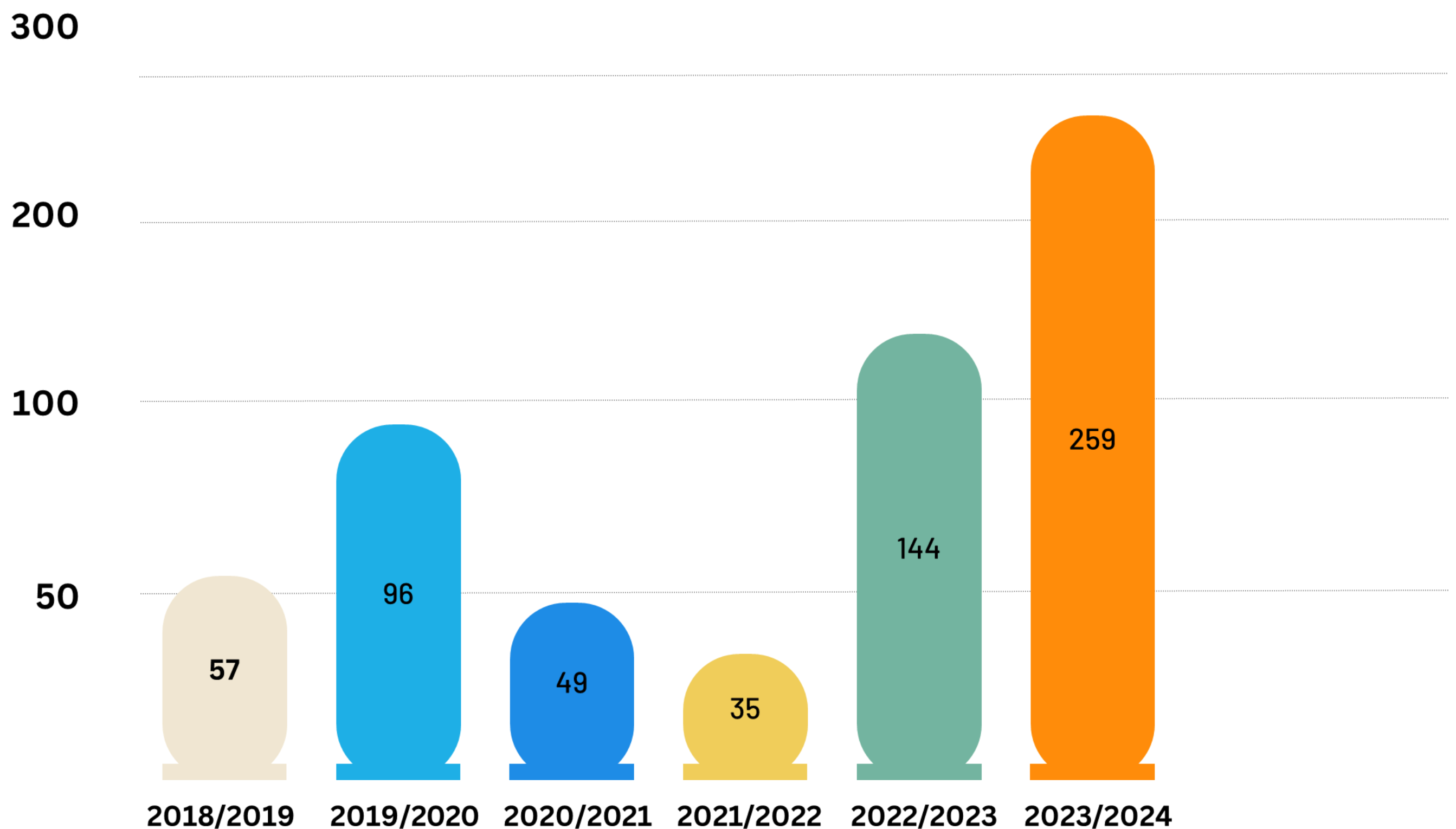
Anyone who is training to work in a field traditionally held by the opposite gender.



CND SERVICES OFFERED:



CND PARTICIPANTS PER SCHOOL YEAR



Numbers based on CND data collected in annual end of year reports

MEET AMY: THE 2023-2024 CND INTERN

This past year, I had the opportunity to intern at the Center for New Directions for my final year of education at Lewis-Clark State College for my major in social work. I could not have asked for a better learning experience. When I initially interviewed with Louisa, she and I immediately clicked and I was able to feel the authenticity coming from her, while she explained her line of work with such passion.

Throughout my time at the CND, I have been able to meet and work with some of the most amazing people I have ever encountered. Louisa and her team do an amazing job at empowering anyone who may apply, as the CND works closely with them to reach their goals. That may entail getting through a college education, obtaining their GED, looking for child care, or even their next grocery bill. The CND wants them to understand that no matter their goal, they are surrounded by a team that genuinely cares and deeply supports them on their journey to reach it.

During this internship, I was able to learn the importance of human relationships on a different level. The connections that are formed within this amazing organization have changed lives. This organization has passion for others and authenticity breathing through it, which is why I am incredibly grateful to have met those within the Center for New Directions. I hope to have touched a few lives within my time at the CND and am leaving with new knowledge, genuity, and excitement for the future.





MEET TERI:

Teri White walked into the Center for New Directions at North Idaho College unsure of what to expect. Six months earlier, in September 2021, her husband of 16 years had passed away unexpectedly from COVID-19. Teri was left utterly devastated and heartbroken, and found herself a single mother of six children. “I barely had time to process Rick’s death,” she said. “I was in survival mode. My job didn’t pay enough to support my family. I knew I needed to make a change.”

A friend encouraged her to reach out to the CND. “I needed to know if going back to school was even possible,” she said. “I remember after telling Louisa my story and what my kids and I were currently going through, she confidently assured me that yes, it was possible. She gave me guidance on how to fill out the FAFSA application and helped me apply to the TRIO program. Right away, I was surrounded by amazing people at NIC who have a passion for helping students.”

Teri began her classes at NIC in the fall semester of 2022. She decided to major in social work. “I want to help others who are going through what I’ve gone through,” she said. “When Rick died, everything changed and I didn’t have much guidance or support through that process. I want to be that support for others.”

Single parents attending school have different challenges than the average college student. Teri quickly realized this as she was balancing a full class load with parenting her six children. Louisa connected her to a few other single mothers on campus. Soon, a weekly single mom support group began. “This group has shown me so much love and support and has given me friendships that will always be with me,” Teri said. “No words can express what they mean to me. And the amazing thing is - none of us would have known each other if it weren’t for the CND facilitating a space to gather and talk each week.”

Teri’s journey at NIC wasn’t without struggles. A year into her schooling, her vehicle needed major repairs. “The quote to fix the car was over \$2,000, and I didn’t know how I could pay that,” she recalled. The CND submitted an application on Teri’s behalf to Charity Reimagined’s Christmas for All program. “I paid \$200 toward the repairs and Christmas for All paid the remainder. If it wasn’t for this, I don’t know how I could have stayed in school.”



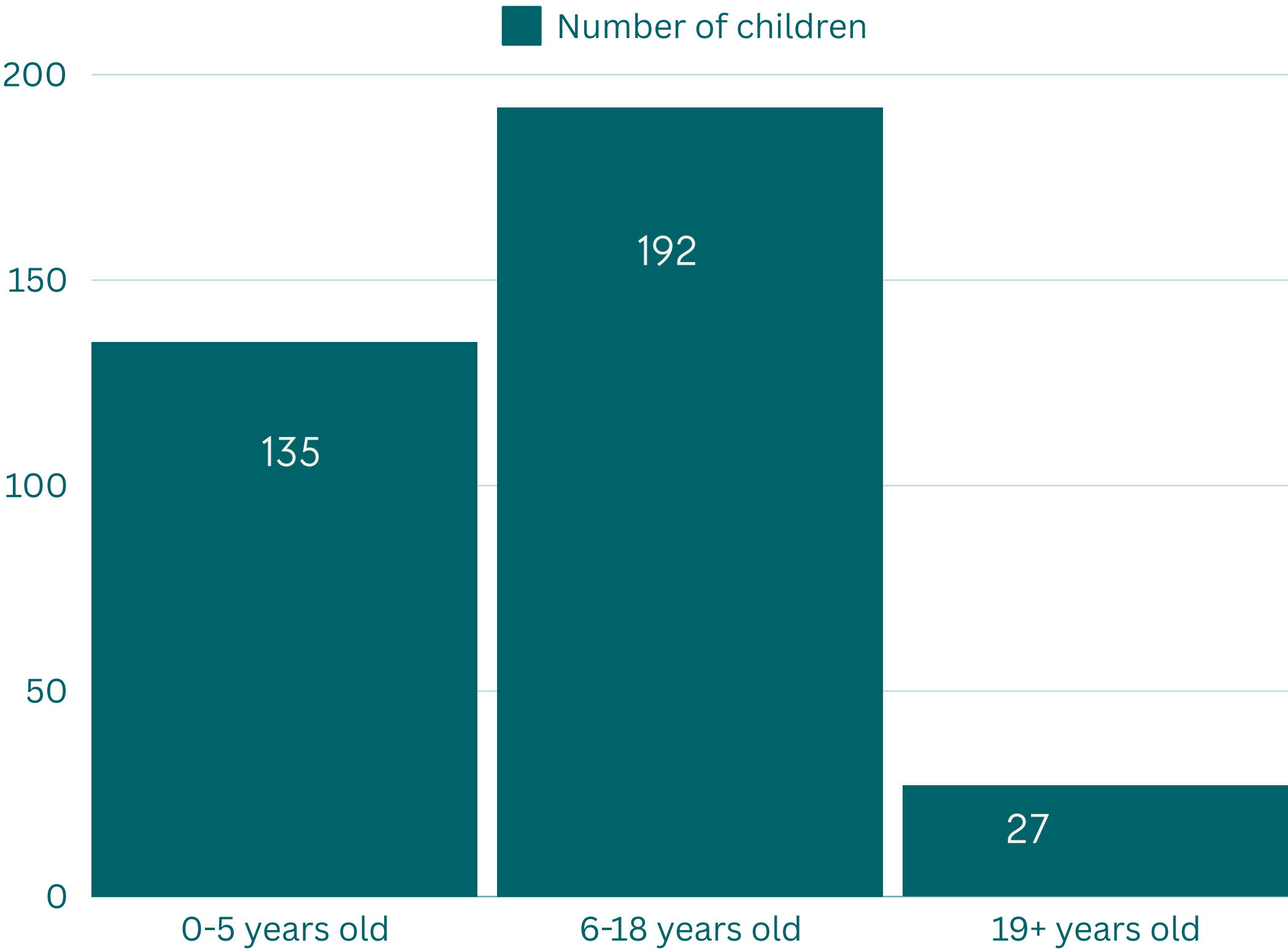
In May 2024, Teri walked across the stage at NIC and received her Associate Degree. “It was the hardest, most life changing and rewarding two years,” she said.

Teri’s next chapter will begin at Lewis-Clark State College, as she works towards her Bachelor’s degree in social work. Although classes will become more intensive, Teri remains determined. “My kids motivate me to continue. They are watching me do this and I won’t let them down.” Teri won’t be a student at NIC anymore, but she will still receive support from the CND as she completes her education journey. “My time at NIC as a student has ended but I will always be part of the CND community. CND isn’t just financial support. It’s so much more than that. It’s a community of women who care about each other. It’s life-giving support. Knowing I have that is the reason I know I can continue.”



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CHILDREN INDIRECTLY SERVED BY THE CND



Although we are working directly with the parent, the children are impacted by the support the parent receives. This graph shows the different ages of children indirectly served by our program.

Supportive staff and the CND help NIC students pursue nontraditional careers

(Originally published in the 2023 Idaho CTE Annual Report)

Kurt Kimberling is more than North Idaho College's first year Machining and CNC Technology instructor. He is also Santa Claus, and his wife is Mrs. Claus. "They needed someone to be Santa at the CND family Christmas party. How could we say no?"

That is the level of devotion Kurt has to his job at NIC. He views his work as more than a job. "I have done many things in my life, but being an instructor at NIC is by far the most rewarding of them all," he said, explaining the best part of his job is when he sees "the lights come on, when I see understanding happen." Students in Kurt's class agree - he is a great teacher.

One of these students is Morgan. As a second year student in the program, she is beginning to understand why Kurt loves it so much. "The possibilities are endless within this trade," she said. "If you put in the time and effort to learn, the outcome is amazing. I love being able to have an idea and then make that idea happen."



Kurt's journey in machining is proof of just that. "I have been machining for 45 years. It has been very satisfying and lucrative. I am a builder of things and over the years I have been a part of building some very cool things. Not only has this career fed my bank account but it has fed my soul."

Morgan is already learning the lucrative side of the profession. She is currently working for a local aerospace company. "I use what I learn in school and apply it to the industry." She isn't the only student working while in school.

"I have students who start working in industry during their first semester and can, if they qualify, work up to three days a week in the second semester and get partial lab credit," Kurt explained.

"If a student wants to follow the machining-manufacturing career path then I have a 100% placement record. The need for trained people is great. I have no trouble finding these students jobs."

Morgan is the only female student in her program at NIC. She thinks more women should consider the trades. "As a society, I think we should be more open towards women in this industry," she said. Kurt agrees with this, stating that "some of the best machinists I've ever worked with were women."

Vicki Isakson, the Dean of Instruction, Workforce Education at NIC, has seen firsthand the impacts of women in trades. She says women "bring varied perspectives and skills to the workforce. It challenges stereotypes, promotes equality, and helps address the skilled labor shortage by tapping into a larger talent pool."

The Center for New Directions holds a monthly lunch at Parker Technical Center for the female students and staff to gather and talk about how things are going. "The services provided by the CND at our Parker Technical Center have been the saving grace for many of our non-traditional students. Whether it is assistance with gender-specific clothing or simply a listening ear, the CND helps ensure these students are successful."

Women at Work

North Idaho College Parker Technical Education Center

(208) 929-4040

NIC's Parker Technical Center, located in Rathdrum, Idaho, was especially purple the afternoon of April 18, 2024. The first annual Women at Work event was taking place, sponsored by NIC's Career Technical Education division, and the Center for New Directions.

"The purpose of the event is to encourage women to enter the trades," Natalie Keim, the academic advisor for Parker Technical Center, said. "These are very male-dominated fields, and that can be intimidating for women, but women are just as capable as men in entering these fields."



The event showcased the different programs offered at Parker Tech. Instructors spoke one-on-one to potential students, explaining why going into the trades is a smart choice. "These fields are high demand, and often only require a certificate or a two year degree, in comparison to a traditional four-year degree," Natalie said. "These jobs also usually start at a competitive wage. Our programs offer students an alternative path to an education and a means to support themselves and their families."

The event offered resource tables, for NIC support services as well as local community support services. A highlight of the event was a panel of local women, working high level jobs in male-dominated industries. "Listening to these women speak and listening to their advice was very inspiring - it was evident they had an impact on the audience." Natalie said. "Women have registered for programs because of this event. It was exciting to be a part of it and to see its impact on others."

One of the primary sources of funding for the Center for New Directions is the Perkins Grant - a federal grant aimed at supporting Career Technical Education. The CND's presence at Parker Technical Center ensures all students have access to resources. Whether that be gas cards to get to and from class, or access to the pop-up food pantry in the student break room, students utilize the CND year round. For prospective students, knowing this extra layer of support is available is helpful in their decision to pursue school.

Trades and Industry Programs offered:

- Automotive Technology
- Autobody and Paint Technology
- Diesel Technology
- Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration
- Industrial Mechanic / Millwright
- Machining and CNC Technology
- Mechanical Design Engineering Technology
- Mechatronics
- Wastewater Treatment Plant Technology
- Welding Technology

MEET ANNA:

When Anna began working with the Center for New Directions, she was living in her car and her children were in foster care. Although things felt hopeless, she did not give up. She knew she needed a job that would make enough money to support herself. After looking at all the different careers, she decided to pursue her CDL - a career that would allow her to start making good money after a relatively short training period. The CND team has walked alongside Anna throughout her journey, and witnessed such incredible transformation.

“More than a cheerleader, more than someone who connected me with resources - the CND helped me find my way...This past year we went from homelessness, a fragmented family, limited possibilities, to stable housing, my children returning to my care from foster care, to gaining my CDL and working full time. I’m not sure where I am going, but I know it won’t be backwards. Thank you for your continued help and support. I’m forever grateful.- Anna



Anna’s story is a reminder that even when things feel utterly hopeless, there is hope. Life circumstances can change for the better. But change requires effort. The CND did not solve Anna’s problems for her. We were there as a support, but Anna did the work. Anna’s story of resilience and accomplishment aligns well with one of our favorite quotes by C.S. Lewis:

“You can't go back and change the beginning but you can start where you are and change the ending.”

2023-2024 CND HIGHLIGHTS:

Diaper Closet

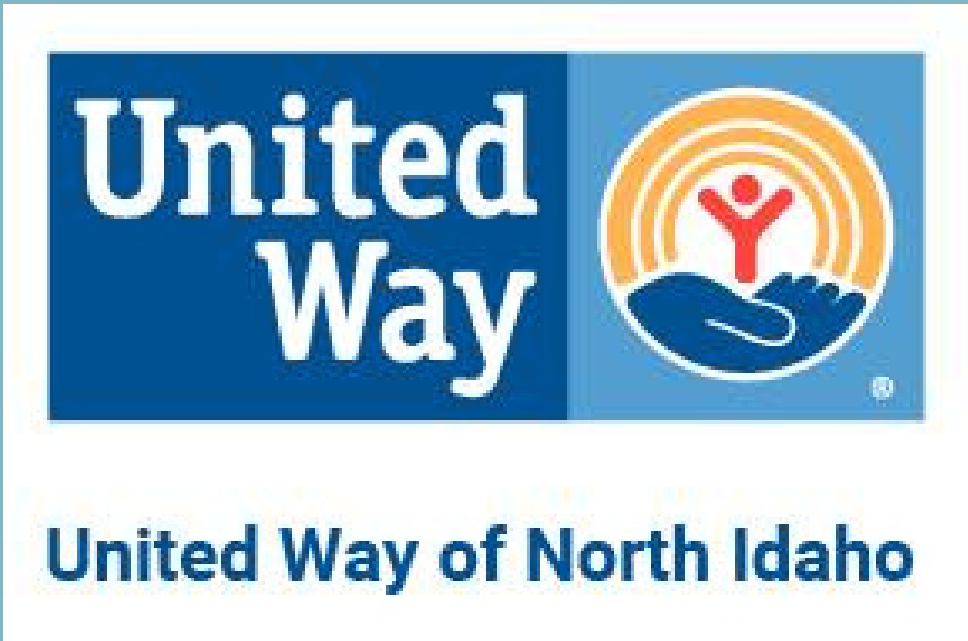
The Center for New Directions receives diaper donations year round from NIC faculty and staff, as well as community members, ensuring that the Diaper Closet is always fully stocked.

During April and May of 2024, the CND raised over 2,500 diapers in honor of Mother’s Day.

Diapers and wipes are expensive, and SNAP benefits do not cover them, so the diaper closet is a much needed resource for CND participants.



CND Childcare Fund



In August 2023, United Way of North Idaho awarded the Center for New Directions with a \$40,000 stipend to go directly towards childcare costs for students served by the CND.

A CND Childcare Fund Committee was established, to review applications and award funds. Checks are sent directly to the certified childcare facility. In order to be eligible for this fund, participants must be a student and engaged in case management with the CND.

Professional Photos

Throughout the school year, the CND has offered active participants different opportunities for free professional photos. Whether this be a professional headshot, or a family photoshoot, participants have been gifted beautiful, high quality photos, something they otherwise would likely be unable to afford.



Community Partners

From July 2023 - July 2024, the CND provided over **\$80,000 of direct assistance** to individuals in need. Although some of this assistance came internally, the majority was due to referrals to outside community organizations. The assistance provided included: new tires, rent payments, utility payments, a new car, gas money, grocery gift cards, eye glasses, and more. Beyond the monetary assistance, these organizations have mentored, encouraged and provided for those we serve time and time again.

*Charity Reimagined
The Salvation Army Kroc Center
3rd Ave. Marketplace
Safety Net Inland NW
Idaho Families
Idaho Housing and Finance
St. Vincent de Paul
Love Inc
Heritage Health*

*Equus Workforce Solutions
Family Promise
ICARE
Idaho Children’s Trust Fund
Community Action Partnership
Open Arms Clinic
Union Gospel Mission
Safe Passages
Idaho Department of Labor*

Thank you to our incredible community partners!



North Idaho College

Center for New Directions

- Career and education exploration
- Admissions assistance
- Workshops covering a variety of topics
- Referrals for campus and community services
- Academic and time management planning
- Individualized case management
- Support groups and community building

Do you know someone who may qualify for the Center for New Directions? Have them fill out the application on the website, or contact the CND directly.

The CND serves both NIC students and community members in need of support.

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