

Helping those with disabilities for years

By John Connolly
For The Tribune

Connections for Independent Living was established in 1986 and has been helping those with disabilities find self-sufficient living within the community since.

“We try and offer all the services we can to those with disabilities,” said Michael Stevens, services director and champions program coordinator. “We are here to help them in every way possible.”

Connections for Independent Living, 1331 8th Ave., is one of eight nonprofits that will receive money from the Northern Colorado Empty Stocking Fund this year. The money helps offer a variety of services to those with disabilities, such as employment, housing, support and other amenities.

Norma Trujillo has received services from Connections since 2004, including helping her read her mail, pay her bills, supporting her in her goal of becoming enrolled at the Colorado Center for the Blind and helping her become accustomed to the Denver metro area. Trujillo is a volunteer bilingual interpreter for the Salvation Army and hopes to become a professional interpreter upon graduation from the Colorado Center for the Blind.

“CIL has been such a great help to me,” Trujillo said. “They have always done their best to do what they can for me.” Connections for Independent Living serves 727 clients annually.

The Northern Colorado Empty Stocking Fund is a holiday fundraising campaign that provides resources for local human service agencies dedicated to helping community members struggling to meet basic needs and assisting others on the verge of achieving self-sufficiency and self-reliance.

Connections is one of 10 certified independent living centers in the state of Colorado. These centers serve people with disabilities in Weld, Morgan, Logan, Washington, Sedgwick, Yuma and Phillips counties.

“I would definitely recommend those with disabilities who don’t know about CIL to get in touch with them as soon as possible,” she said.