



Director's Report

Slate Valley Cares

October 2024

An Invitation

What follows is a departure from the standard Director's Report-style document I have been writing for the past two years. Instead, I offer an invitation and introduction to a new way of thinking, organizing, and collaborating on the essential work that sustains the mission of Slate Valley Cares, both now and into the future. What I wish to share with you is not yet complete—far from it, in fact. However, when striving for systemic change at any level, I believe it is essential to bring as many contributors to the table as possible.

Over the past year, I have shared that it's time to tidy up and refresh the core documents outlining our organization's inner workings and protocols. I even submitted a draft Constitution and Bylaws to be reviewed and expanded by the Board. At the time, this seemed fitting, given our recent name change; formalizing our renewed values felt like the logical next step. However, this initiative to reimagine our framework was set aside, eventually getting lost in the pull of day-to-day activities.

Now, we find ourselves at another pivotal moment in the organization's history. There is a notable shift occurring within the Board of Directors: over half have resigned for various reasons, and most remaining members have indicated they, too, are prepared to step down. This leaves us in a unique position and with a distinct opportunity.

As we transition into a new era for Slate Valley Cares, I invite us to seize this chance to protect and codify the cultural foundation we've established over the past two years. At the same time, we must build a highly organized, functional system that we can leave behind to support those who follow us. This is no small task, and achieving it will require significant collective effort. But if we do not seize this opportunity now, there is no telling if or when it will come again.

The Question & The Answer(s)

With that in mind, we arrive at the most important question:

How can we, as an organization, maximize our short- and long-term impact while preserving the cultural heart of Slate Valley Cares?

The short answer is multiscale, value-based systems planning.

The long answer is more complex than I can detail here. Instead, I'd like to show you. To see firsthand what multiscale, value-based systems planning looks like, I encourage you to begin exploring the "[Core Systems](#)" folder.

As mentioned, this project is far from complete, and many hours remain to finalize the first iteration of this system. However, it has progressed enough to start sharing, receiving feedback, and making adjustments as we advance.

For those less technologically inclined, there may be a bit of a learning curve—I discovered this firsthand. But Google Docs is fairly simple to navigate once you get accustomed to it, and I'm confident everyone will find their way! I invite each of you to explore this folder and review the documents it contains. As you read, you'll notice links to other documents within each one. This interconnected structure is essential, as it keeps the system aligned with our core beliefs and values.

You may also notice that some sub-folders and documents are empty or contain placeholder text. This is because I haven't yet reached those sections, though they are necessary, and I'm holding space for them. Please feel free to add your notes, thoughts, and observations as you explore the documents.

Undoubtedly, there will be many questions, and it may be necessary to dedicate time for a group deep dive into this system. I'd like to ensure as many of us as possible can participate together to minimize the need for repeating this large task multiple times.

Quarterly Plans & Reports

Before you dive in, I'd like to explain one aspect of the overall system that is relevant to our current work. The additional document attached to this invitation is the first [Quarterly Plan](#). While the process for creating and approving these plans will evolve significantly moving forward, I created this one independently to get things started.

The general idea is that, once we formalize our long-term strategic plans, we will select quarterly priorities from these to focus on. From there, we'll draft a Quarterly Plan, which will be approved by the Board and shared with the SVC team. The team will then create individual documents based on these priority projects, along with detailed action plans to ensure clarity from the outset. Weekly Plans will be developed in team meetings, with each team member creating their own Daily Plans using systems and techniques that suit their working styles.

There are other facets of this process to explore, which we will discuss in person. This overview provides a broad understanding of the Quarterly Plan component within the larger system.

Finally, at the end of each quarter, I will send out a Quarterly Report, structured around feedback on that quarter's Quarterly Plan. This approach will bring greater predictability and structure to our reporting process.

Concluding Thoughts

In conclusion, this document serves not as a final directive but as an invitation to engage in a transformative journey for Slate Valley Cares. We stand at a pivotal point in our organization's story—one filled with potential for growth, refinement, and enduring impact. As we transition toward a structured, multiscale approach, we aim to ensure that our efforts are both strategic and values-driven, allowing us to remain true to the cultural heart of Slate Valley Cares while maximizing our impact in the community.

The journey outlined here is far from complete. Instead, it is an open framework that invites input, collaboration, and iteration. By exploring and engaging with the initial structure of our Core Systems, we each play a part in building an organization that is both resilient and adaptive to future needs. Together, we can cultivate a sustainable foundation that will support our mission for years to come, embedding accountability, trust, and cultural continuity into everything we do.

Moving forward, our Quarterly Plans and Reports will not only guide our work but will create a rhythm of reflection, adjustment, and shared learning. With this collaborative, intentional approach, we set the stage for an impactful legacy—one that we, and those who follow, can build upon with pride and purpose.

Submitted by: Jeffrey Jackson, Executive Director - November 2024