Dear Friends and Supporters of WCS,

It is a joy and an honor to serve as the President of the Wisconsin Community Services, Inc. (WCS) Board of Directors. I am pleased to serve with an engaged Board of Directors and am proud of the work the organization has accomplished by positively impacting the lives of so many in our community. As you look through the pages of this annual report, you will see and hear about the influence that WCS has had during the past year in Southeastern Wisconsin.

It has been a year of growth under new leadership as Executive Director Clarence Johnson is completing his first year in this position. During the past year, WCS has added three residential programs and has seen an 18% increase in the number of staff. In the continuing battle against the ravages of opioid abuse, WCS launched its second Drug Treatment Court in Jefferson County this past summer.

In a day and time when it seems like everything is measured in soundbites and numbers, we offer stories. Not just any stories but stories of lives turned around and now headed in a positive direction. The story of a courageous individual who lost his fight against kidney disease, but won his fight against mental illness and lived peacefully in the community with support from the WCS Mental Health Clinic for the better part of three decades. The story of a young woman in Waukesha who worked hard to beat her drug addiction to become the mom that her two beautiful little girls deserve. And the story of a young, African-American man who has started off adulthood on the right foot by launching his own business.

As you read these stories I hope you will join me in celebrating the important impact that Wisconsin Community Services has had on so many individual lives in such deep ways.

Sincerely,
Joyce Mallory, WCS Board President

ON THE COVER: While a participant in the WCS Community Improvement & Job Training Program (CIJ), Timothy started his own company, Brooks Contracting LLC. Read more on page 10.
The WCS-led Community Building Milwaukee (CBM) initiative held 29 two-and-a-half day Community Building Workshops (CBWs) with a total attendance of 608 individuals. Thanks to CBM’s strong foundational support from the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families, Milwaukee now has the greatest concentration of certified facilitators of CBWs anywhere in the world.

Community Building Workshop participants included:
- Youth from the Milwaukee County Juvenile Detention Center.
- UW-Milwaukee faculty, undergrad and graduate students.
- Residents of Westlawn Public Housing Development and Havenwoods neighborhood.
- Journey House youth athletic teams, staff, board, partners and funders.
- Men and women in Sojourner Family Peace Center Beyond Abuse Program.
- WCs workforce clients being placed in City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works positions.
- Alternative to Revocation Program inmates at Milwaukee Secure Detention Facility.
- Milwaukee Police Department Officers.
- Members of the First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee.
- WCs OARS clients and Joshua Glover Residential Reentry Center clients.
- Youth and young adults from WCS Community Improvement Job Training Program.

If you are interested in participating in a Community Building Workshop, please contact Jim Bartos at (414) 290-0472.

Experts frequently describe Community Building as “trauma-informed care in action,” the “missing link in motivational interviewing” and restorative justice on steroids.” CBM is gaining momentum in impacting trauma across Milwaukee. The long-term goal of the CBM initiative is to dramatically reduce crime, violence and poverty to put Milwaukee on a better path for the future.

“**I can guarantee you will walk away changed.**”

At the invitation of Pastors United, an African-American group of clergy in Milwaukee, I attended my first Community Building Workshop. On a subzero day in January, I pulled on my long underwear, wool sweater and down coat and drove over to the Wisconsin Community Services building, wondering what I had gotten myself into. I did not really have three days to spend sitting in a room with people I’d never met to forge new relationships across our differences. But in the end, I wouldn’t have wanted to be anywhere else. It was a life-transforming experience. I witnessed people of many races, classes, genders, sexual orientations and ethnicities drop the mask of social convention and share from their hearts and souls who they were, and what concerned them most in the world. There were tears and laughter, and there were stories both boring and riveting. I found the ability to speak from my own authenticity and see my reserve around “strangers” melt away. I found these strangers to be family, sharing a deep unity of what it means to be human. I also entered the sacred space of deep respect for differences. If you can make the time to join a Community Building Workshop, I can guarantee you will walk away changed.  

– Rev. Dena McPhetres
CREATING OPPORTUNITIES TO OVERCOME ADVERSITY

For more than a century, WCS has remained steadfast in its commitment to working with the individuals in our communities who are facing significant adversity. Today, in addition to serving those returning to the community after incarceration, WCS serves individuals who live with chronic and persistent mental health issues, those with alcohol and drug addictions, and youth and adults who are at high risk of involvement in the criminal justice system. Because of the intensive and personalized programming offered by WCS, these individuals gain the skills they need to improve their mental health, break the bonds of addiction, find and keep a job, reunite with family, and live a life free from involvement in the criminal justice system.

WCS programming is comprised of four divisions: Behavioral Health Services, Community and Reintegration Services, Court Services and Community Alternatives, and Milwaukee Youth Services. Over the past year, each division has experienced significant growth as noted below.

**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES**
The Behavioral Health Services Division operates programs specifically designed to assist clients in meeting their need for treatment with mental health issues, drug addiction, alcohol abuse, or a combination of these.

*During the past year the WCS Behavioral Health Division began offering Comprehensive Community Services (CCS) Program services. This is a recovery-focused, integrated behavioral health program for adults with mental health issues and/or substance use disorders. CCS is community-based and provides a coordinated and comprehensive array of recovery services, treatment and psychosocial rehabilitation services that assist individuals to utilize professional, community and natural supports to address their needs.*

**COMMUNITY AND REINTEGRATION SERVICES**
The programs in the Community and Reintegration Services Division focus on helping participants develop the skills they need to be successful, contributing members of the Milwaukee community. This results in the city’s neighborhoods being safer and stronger.

*The Joshua Glover Residential Reentry Center (JGRRC) was opened to serve male residents referred by the Wisconsin Department of Corrections. The JGRRC has integrated Community Building workshops into its required programming.*
COURT SERVICES AND COMMUNITY ALTERNATIVES

The Court Services and Community Alternatives Division helps individuals fulfill their legal obligations and provides them with the opportunity to make positive life changes. By connecting people to resources and holding them accountable, staff help to create opportunities for individuals to put an end to circulating through the criminal justice system.

During the past year, WCS implemented a new Drug Treatment Court in Jefferson County. This program joins the Alcohol Treatment Court that began in 2014. Both programs are a collaborative effort between Jefferson County and WCS that offer participants the opportunity to break the cycle of their addiction while fulfilling their legal obligations.

MILWAUKEE YOUTH SERVICES

WCS offers crucial youth programming in Milwaukee County that provides behavioral support for students expelled from Milwaukee Public Schools, community-based alternatives to detention sanctions, and the opportunity to complete community service and restitution for youth who are required to do so.

In recent months WCS began operating the two Milwaukee County Delinquency and Court Services Division’s Youth Care Shelters, one for boys and another for girls. Both programs provide short-term, non-secure, supervised residential programming. Through this programming youth have a safe, nurturing and well-maintained environment that supports them as they attend court appearances, increase school attendance and reduce their likelihood to reoffend.
Caring Staff at Mental Health Clinic Made a Difference in John’s Life

John was a client of the WCS Mental Health Clinic for 28 years. He was a wonderful person and you couldn’t help but like him! Clinic staff described him as an individual with a gentle soul who was kind, generous, respectful and friendly. He was a modest, easy-going man who appreciated the support he received at the Clinic. After struggling with complications related to kidney failure, John passed away on September 29, 2016; he was 56 years old. John is greatly missed.

John’s family is thankful for the support the Clinic staff provided to him. Often the Clinic staff is referred to as heroes or true “friends of the friendless” and being just that they made it possible for John to live an independent, healthy and fulfilling life pursuing his interests.

The Clinic staff was there to help John with emergencies as well as with his ongoing needs. The Clinic provided assistance securing housing, providing emergency food stamps, helping build supportive relationships with family and friends, enabling access to Social Security benefits providing payee services, and making sure that all his physical and mental health needs were met. The caring and compassionate staff at the WCS Mental Health Clinic wants the best for their clients and are tirelessly dedicated to helping clients like John live as positive members of the community.

To honor John’s memory and demonstrate their appreciation to the Clinic, John’s family and friends made generous donations to the Clinic’s Recovery and Client Assistance Fund that provides essential items and financial support for clients when needed, helping others like John to live independent lives. The Fund offers clients support with necessities such as bus tickets, groceries and personal care items, as well as help with medical costs that might not be covered through other means. The Client Recovery and Assistance Fund makes it possible for staff to help clients overcome barriers that could interfere with their ability to pursue a healthy, independent life just like John.

The WCS Mental Health Clinic was one of the first of its kind and has been providing quality mental health services since 1978. The Clinic’s mission is to provide quality services that promote recovery and empower Clinic clients to become successful members of the community. Helping individuals live full, healthy and self-sufficient lives is the approach taken by the staff to meet the Clinic’s major goals of avoiding hospitalization or incarceration and increasing community safety.

At the Clinic, clients find themselves becoming part of a community while they spend time among friends who understand them. Living with mental illness often brings many challenges and Clinic staff provide support, encouragement, accountability and hope for all of their clients.

The Client Recovery and Assistance Fund makes it possible for staff to help clients overcome barriers that could interfere with their ability to pursue a healthy, independent life, just like John.
During the 28 years that my son, John, was served by the WCS Mental Health Clinic there were three changes in Executive Director and periodic changes in Clinic staff. However, one thing never changed: the consistent, caring, dedicated support of those working at the Clinic. Without exception, Clinic staff – from reception to security to case managers to nurses to housing and financial support staff – all treated John with respect, an expectation of responsibility, humility and love. Some Clinic staff have been there for a long portion and, in one case, all of the years that John went to the Clinic. Not many organizations have that level of consistency. Whether new or long term, Clinic staff was always there for John, literally offering life-saving support. They were family to John. They are family to me.”

– Michele Goldstein, John’s mother
Five years ago, Allie got her life back. She was only 21 years old, but she had already lost several years to opioid addiction. Between the ages of 18 and 21, she used heroin daily.

Thanks to the Waukesha County Drug Treatment Court, today Allie is living a happy, productive and drug-free life.

The best part about Allie’s decision to participate in Drug Treatment Court and reclaim her life, is that her two young daughters now have their mom back too.

In 2012, Allie became the third participant in the then-new Waukesha County Drug Treatment Court program, run by WCS and Waukesha County. She struggled at first, as most participants do. Following the strict program rules and requirements was difficult, and she had not experienced success with other treatment programs in the past, so she was not completely committed to the process.

But then one night, Allie said something “clicked” and she knew that she really had to stop using.

Allie realized that in order to be the kind of mom she wanted to be, and that her daughters deserved, she had to do everything possible to overcome her addiction.

From that moment on, Allie dedicated herself to successfully fulfilling all of the Drug Treatment Court program requirements, including attending her routine court appearances and case management appointments, meeting the treatment requirements, and partaking in random alcohol and drug testing. The Waukesha County Drug Treatment Court program gave Allie the opportunity to break the cycle of her addiction and help her improve the chances of living a sober, crime-free, and healthy life.

Today, Allie is on a path she could not have imagined just five years ago. Allie has been working on restoring the relationships she lost while being an addict – most importantly, she has been focusing on being a caring and loving mother who is present for her girls.

Allie is also attending school at Waukesha County Technical College to become an Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse (AODA) counselor and plans to graduate in May 2018. She believes that her struggles as a drug user will help her relate better to others trying to overcome their addictions, and she hopes that her recovery will demonstrate that sobriety is possible.
Today, Allie is on a path she couldn’t have imagined just five years ago. She has been working on restoring the relationships she lost while being an addict – most importantly, she has been focusing on being a caring and loving mother who is present for her girls.
Brooks Contracting, it has a nice ring to it, doesn’t it? Timothy thinks so! It is his registered LLC. He never dreamed that at 17 years old he would have his own business, but he does! Timothy has been an engaged participant in the WCS Community Improvement & Job Training Program (CJT) for the past three years. He began attending the program at his brother’s urging; it got him out of the house and engaged with the world, assisted him with his education, and kept him busy and headed in the right direction. While at CJT, Timothy learned several new skills, discovered his passion for painting and landscaping and became drawn to the idea of starting his own business. With the guidance of CJT staff, he acquired an LLC, and started his own company - Brooks Contracting. Timothy’s business was the first LLC to be created through CJT programming.

As a result of taking the CJT Job Readiness Class, Timothy was able to sharpen his entrepreneurial skills and take what he learned to create his “elevator speech” about Brooks Contracting. For the present, Brooks Contracting primarily focuses on painting and lawn care but in the future Timothy plans to expand it to include plumbing and carpentry services as well.

Timothy’s family is proud of his accomplishments and support his efforts. As family members have watched his success at CJT, his 14-year-old sister has become actively involved in the program and his cousin has been inspired to work towards completing his GED.

Timothy gave a brief speech at a CJT event explaining how much the program has impacted him and describing how it has been one of the best experiences of his life. He described CJT as “family” and recommends that young adults visit CJT and become part of the family, because he knows how it changed his life for the better.

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT & JOB TRAINING PROGRAM

CUT works with individuals, ages 16 to 23 years old, who reside in Milwaukee’s Harambee/Riverwest neighborhood. The overarching aim of the program is to be a source of prevention and refuge for adolescents that are at-risk of falling victim to negative behaviors such as drugs and criminal involvement. By providing alternative outlets and helping youth like Timothy discover their potential, the CJT program significantly reduces adverse consequences for local youth.

Special efforts are made to involve residents who are former gang members and those at-risk of gang involvement. Program staff connect or provide participants with educational opportunities, job training, career counseling, and AODA education through targeted group activities, and one-on-one mentoring. Additionally, the program works with participants to promote self-efficacy and establish positive relationships throughout the community.
Adom Hinkle, CIJT Program Coordinator, describes Timothy as a hard worker and a persistent person. He says that Timothy is known to help wherever, whenever and whomever he can, noting that he often attends CIJT events to assist, even though he’s not required to do so. According to Adom, when Timothy sees a problem, he wants to help find a solution, even when the problem may have nothing to do with him.
Sixteen years ago, WCS established the Friend of the Friendless Award to acknowledge individuals and organizations that have demonstrated long-term dedication to meeting the needs of those considered excluded from the mainstream of the community. In June of 2017, WCS honored Legal Action of Wisconsin with the Friend of the Friendless Award.

Legal Action of Wisconsin has been providing civil legal services for almost 50 years to individuals who live in poverty. The organization reaches across the 39 southernmost counties in Wisconsin and holds high the principle that all people deserve equal justice. Legal Action of Wisconsin fights tirelessly inside and outside of courtrooms against laws and policies that have a negative effect on people who are powerless and afraid of circumstances such as losing their children, home, job, driver’s license or disability benefits that they need to survive. Some Legal Action clients are victims of domestic abuse and a quality attorney can help them to be safe from further harm.

Legal Action has partnered with WCS on multiple projects that provide expert solutions to community problems, including the Center for Driver’s License Recovery and Employability. The two organizations have a long history of co-locating services in downtown Milwaukee, and have become a well-known resource in our community.

Legal Action of Wisconsin has always been focused on both individual assistance and system change, providing leadership in the monumental advocacy effort to bring state-appointed civil legal representation to Wisconsinites who are living in poverty. Legal Action envisions a future in which the amount of safety and freedom you enjoy is not determined by the amount of money you have.

Legal Action of Wisconsin exemplifies what it means to be a friend to the friendless.

Photo above: Legal Action is awarded the 2017 WCS Friend of the Friendless Award. Pictured from left to right: Sara Carpenter, WCS; Susan Lund, Legal Action; Molly Gena, Legal Action; and Clarence Johnson, WCS.

The Black Male Advisory Council (BMAC) provides African-American men employed by WCS an opportunity to meet and work on projects to increase and strengthen life prospects for boys and men of color in the community. Each holiday season they hold a Holiday Toy and Coat Drive. BMAC is grateful to Wolf’s Cleaners and Laundry who generously donated their services by providing dry cleaning for the many coats that were donated.

Among their many activities, BMAC has hosted three annual Community Resource and Job Fairs, organized a holiday dinner for residents of Parsons House (WCS Federal Residential Reentry Center) and their families, and developed a Black men’s support group. The members of BMAC are committed to changing the racial disparities in our community by reaching many more boys and men of color in the years to come.

Photo left: BMAC members David Edwards, Jesse White, and Artis Landon hold up some of the many coats donated to the BMAC Toy and Clothing Drive.
THE UNLIMITED POTENTIAL OUTPATIENT CLINIC

The WCS Unlimited Potential Outpatient Clinic uses a strength-based, trauma-informed therapeutic style to nurture healthy family life and promote stability for individuals coping with mental health needs and/or substance abuse needs in the community.

Our dedicated team of licensed therapists have expertise in the following areas:

- Substance abuse and/or dependency issues
- Behavioral and emotional issues
- Mood disorder/bipolar disorder
- Anger management
- Self-esteem
- Adoption
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Trauma
- ADHD
- Relationship issues
- Domestic abuse
- LGBT and sexual identity issues

We accept referrals from Community Access to Recovery Services (CARS), Wraparound, CCS, Children’s Court and Children’s Hospital.

CALL US TO DETERMINE INSURANCE ACCEPTANCE.

WCS Unlimited Potential Outpatient Clinic
3732 W. Wisconsin Ave., Suite 200 • Milwaukee, WI 53208
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January 1, 2016 to October 16, 2017

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2016-2017 FUNDING SOURCES

Behavioral Consultants, Inc.
City of Greenfield
City of Milwaukee: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
City of West Allis
COA Youth & Family Centers - Arts Education Collaborative
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Greater Milwaukee Foundation - Paul R. Lipton Fund
Greater Milwaukee Foundation
Jefferson County
Kenosha County Sheriff’s Department
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Medicaid/Medicare
Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC)
Milwaukee County: Child Support Services
Milwaukee County Combined Court-Related Operations
Milwaukee County: DHHS-Delinquency & Court Services Division
Milwaukee County: DHHS-Behavioral Health Division
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United Way of Greater Milwaukee and Waukesha County
Village of Shorewood
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Waukesha Community Foundation-Women and Girls Fund
Waukesha County: Criminal Justice Collaborating Council (CJCC)
Waukesha County: Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership (WRTP)
Word of Hope Ministries

Donations in any amount are always appreciated and can be made online at wiscs.org or mailed to WCS, Development Department, 3732 W. Wisconsin Ave., Suite 320, Milwaukee, WI 53208. A list of needed items is also available on the WCS website.
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THE COMMUNITY WITH
JUSTICE, RESPECT, INTEGRITY AND
THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE