



OVERCOMING ADVERSITY



Wisconsin Community Services, Inc.
ANNUAL REPORT

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD



Dear Friends and Supporters of WCS,



Another historic year! Though many others remain working remotely, as the pandemic continues, WCS is providing critical, essential services to thousands of individuals, mostly in person. As an agency, we are honored to serve individuals and our communities during this unique time in history.

I invite you to read through the pages of this annual report to share in the success of three individuals who have worked hard to overcome the adversity they faced. Each received services through a WCS program that supported and guided them as they determined what changes were best for them to make to attain the future they want.

WCS has made significant progress as an agency during the past year as well. The WCS North Avenue Campus building is now owned by WCS and is home to many of our programs. The Hub and Spoke Health Home Program, a collaboration with the State of Wisconsin Department of Health Services, is a pilot program offering an evidence-based continuum of care to individuals with complex substance use needs along with a co-occurring physical or mental health condition. In addition, WCS opened Swigart House this past summer. Swigart House is a 24-bed supportive housing services facility funded by the Wisconsin Department of Corrections. It is named to honor a past Executive Director of WCS, Steve Swigart, who dedicated 33 years of his life to working at WCS. Steve's career and practice were deeply rooted in social work, and he modeled being "person-centered" and "trauma-informed" long before they became foundational practices in social services.

I am proud of what WCS has accomplished, and grateful for all of you who have supported the agency through funding, collaborations and partnerships. We are truly making a difference!

Sincerely,

Lynn Menefee, WCS Board President

MISSION STATEMENT
Wisconsin Community Services advocates for justice and community safety, providing innovative opportunities for individuals to overcome adversity.

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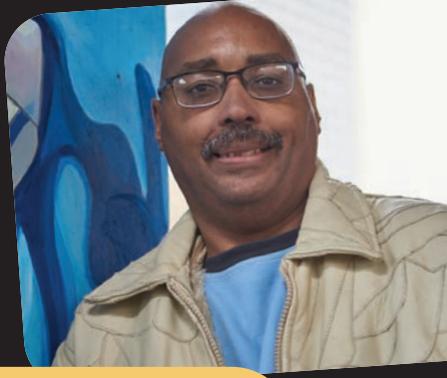
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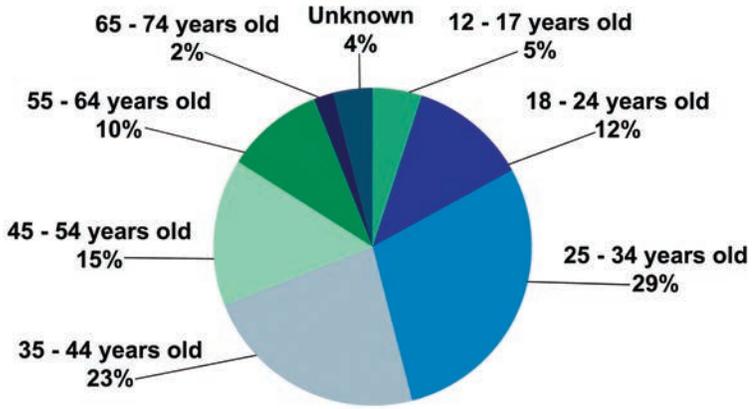
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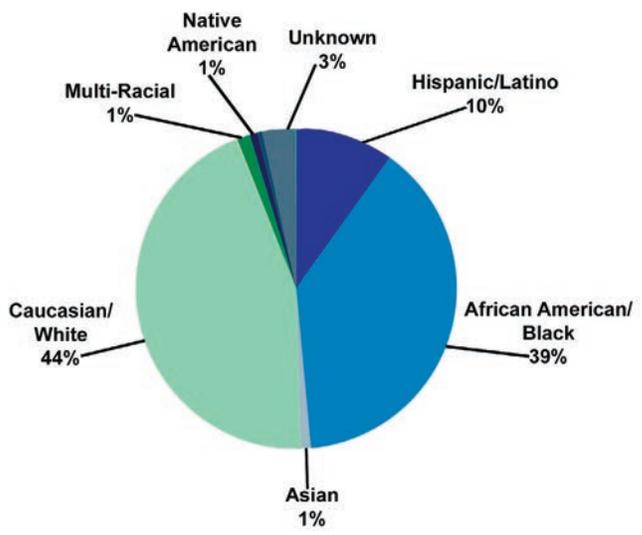


WHO WE SERVE
 WCS provides services to children, youth, adults and families in the areas of behavioral health, criminal justice, community reintegration, and employment and training.

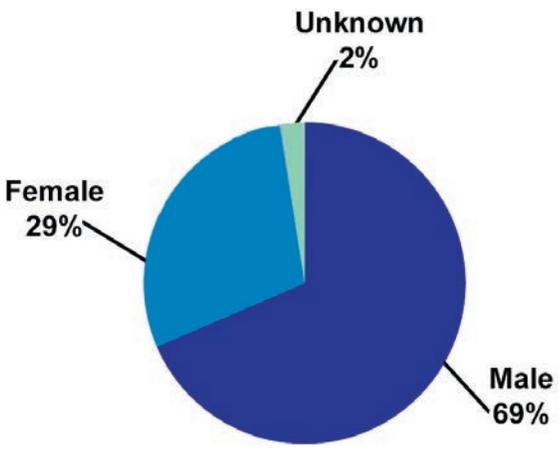
AGES OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED



RACES OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED



GENDERS OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED



WCS SERVED 12,749 INDIVIDUALS IN 2020
 More than 40% of the individuals served had an annual income of less than \$9,999.

WISCONSIN COMMUNITY SERVICES SUCCESS STORY ANNUAL REPORT



“YOU GUYS REBUILD LIVES!”

Fourteen years is a long time. It is a particularly long time for someone with mental illness, like David, who spent those years in prison. As the end of David's sentence was approaching and he was set to be released in June 2021, he was extremely anxious about entering the “outside” world. He had been living in a highly structured institutional environment for so long. He had anxiety about almost every facet of life outside the prison walls. He thought, “Where will I live? What will I eat? The only clothes I have are prison clothes so what will I wear?” He thought about these basic life needs over and over.

Several months before David was scheduled to be released, he met Brittany in a virtual pre-release planning meeting. The virtual approach, instead of a face-to-face meeting in the prison, was one of many adjustments that had to be made due to the pandemic. Brittany is one of several case managers in the WCS Opening Avenues to Reentry Success program (OARS). OARS is a voluntary program for people with mental health needs who are reintegrating into the community after incarceration. David thought this might be his opportunity to get the assistance he would need with all of those things that were making him so anxious. Brittany continued to meet virtually with David to help him prepare for his release into the community, and she was there for him when he got released.

“I wasn't ready for the outside world when I first got out. I was lost,” says 54-year-old David, “The world had changed so much that I didn't even recognize it. There were so many stimuli, but mostly it was all the technology that really freaked me out. I felt like it was a combination of my mental illness, my medication and being in an institution for so long that made it hard for me to learn the technology. I really struggled with learning so many new things. Even riding the bus was different.”

But Brittany understood. David states, “She was kind and, most of all, patient. She kept teaching me over and over until I could get it. She didn't talk down to me. I could have slipped through the cracks and become homeless if not for Brittany and WCS. I couldn't have gotten through it all.”

The WCS OARS program assists people with accessing community resources to meet basic needs, in addition to psychiatric and recovery services, and to move toward independence as much as possible. David also received services from the WCS Employment and Training Program to access forklift training and OSHA certification, hoping he might be able to get back into a warehouse job again someday, something he did many years ago. He has been able to do some part-time work and continues to look for appropriate work opportunities.

The OARS staff and resources helped him to move into a rooming house, obtain clothing and a phone, access food benefits, and get a bike with a lock so he

could get around more easily. David attached large baskets to his bike so he can carry groceries. This helps him feel independent. And then there are the things that seem so simple, but make a significant difference in feeling even more independent, like his planning calendar that he uses to keep track of obligations such as medical appointments and meeting with his parole officer and, of course, his case manager, Brittany.

“The OARS program doesn’t treat me like I am mentally ill. I will always remember being treated with kindness and respect. They want me to reach my full potential. I feel like OARS and WCS are on my team.”

David really enjoys the support he receives from his peer support specialist, who he calls his “mentor.” Peer specialists have “lived experience” and a similar background to those who they support. David values that his peer specialist has gone through very similar experiences. He also appreciates the inspirational daily messages the peer specialist shares with him to motivate David to stay on track.

The OARS program is still providing supportive resources, and Brittany is still working alongside David as he moves more and more toward independence. He is in recovery, eating better, getting lots of exercise and living a healthier life. David says, “Brittany really cares about my wellbeing and has my best interest at heart. I am learning to become more independent. The OARS program doesn’t treat me like I am mentally ill. I will always remember being treated with kindness and respect. They want me to reach my full potential. I feel like OARS and WCS are on my team.”

“I would like to thank OARS and WCS for everything they did for me. I am eternally grateful. You guys rebuild lives.”

A big thank you to the Milwaukee Art Museum (MAM) for assisting WCS to take these amazing photos of David in the museum. When he was in high school, David worked at the MAM, but was never able to return until this wonderful opportunity became available.



WCS OPENING AVENUES TO REENTRY SUCCESS PROGRAM (OARS)

OARS is a voluntary program for people with mental illness who are re-entering community life after incarceration. This program assists people with accessing community resources to meet basic needs, in addition to psychiatric and recovery services, and to move toward independence as much as possible.



COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY SERVICES (CCS)

CCS is a voluntary, psychosocial rehabilitation Medicaid program that focuses on helping people who have a mental health and/or substance use diagnosis on their journey to recovery.

“THESE ARE THE HAPPIEST DAYS OF MY LIFE!”

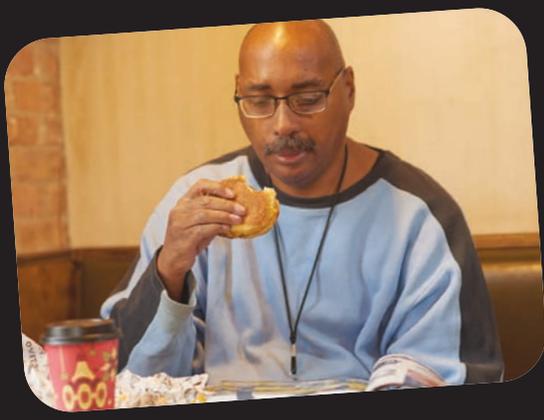
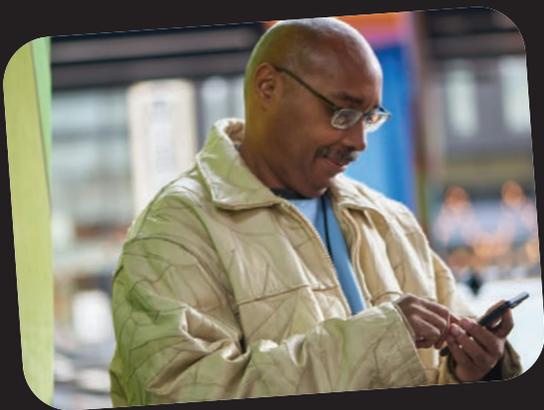
Gary never even thought about setting any positive goals for his life. In addition to having mental health needs, he had participated in a criminal lifestyle that led to 23 years in a federal prison. “I had no hope while I was in prison. I thought this was the end for me, that things would never be different. I was afraid that when I got out, I would fail again.”

But when Gary got released from prison, he was connected with Comprehensive Community Services (CCS), a program that set him on a path different than the one he had feared. The new path was one of recovery. At 53 years old, Gary learned about setting goals and accessing a network of support to achieve those goals. Comprehensive Community Services is a WCS program that works in partnership with the Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Division. CCS is a voluntary psychosocial rehabilitative Medicaid program that focuses on helping people who have a mental health and/or a substance use diagnosis on their journey to recovery. The hallmark of the program is that participants are empowered to self-direct their own care and path to recovery, and to set their own goals.

Gary welcomed the opportunity to be vested in his own care and recovery success. “I didn’t want to go back to my old ways. I wanted to start over. I wanted to make it different this time.” His CCS care coordinator, Abby, worked with him to design a recovery plan of his choice, set goals and access a network of services to help achieve those goals. Gary works with Abby on an ongoing basis to monitor his goals and the services he receives.

“Health, Home, Purpose and Community,” are all things we value and expect in our lives. According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) they are also the four major dimensions that support a life in recovery. The CCS program provides a significant network of services to strengthen those critical dimensions in a person’s life. For Gary, those services include a stable place to live, psychiatric and medical services, home management and life skills support, supportive employment, peer support, and budget counseling.

WISCONSIN COMMUNITY SERVICES SUCCESS STORY ANNUAL REPORT



The budget counseling has been key to helping Gary achieve some of the goals that are most important to him. He really wanted to get a driver's license and eventually a car. In 2021, he got a driver's license for the first time in his life. He learned how to budget his funds, build his credit and to save enough to buy a car and purchase insurance. He also obtained his first-ever credit card. Gary works part-time doing janitorial services in the building where he lives, and he enjoys getting that paycheck every two weeks. Gary's number-one goal was to someday get his own apartment, and in February, he will move into his own efficiency unit.

"I'm really excited to get my own place. After having a cellmate for 23 years, this was my biggest goal."

Two of Gary's favorite things are to go to the Milwaukee

Public Market downtown or to Colectivo Coffee for a cup of hot tea. He enjoys going there with his WCS peer specialist every week. Peer support is a key service in the CCS program with the peer specialist being an equal partner with Gary as he moves along the path of mental health recovery. Gary values the peer specialist's lived experience and states, "he is like me and understands me."

His new life of stable living, healthy relationships and recovery is a long way from the life that led Gary to prison. "All of my friends used to be criminals, but now I try to make new friends who are in situations like me."

With many goals set and many goals achieved, Gary's primary goal remains, "I want to stay clean and stay out of jail. I feel good now. These are the happiest days of my life."



WISCONSIN COMMUNITY SERVICES SUCCESS STORY ANNUAL REPORT



“IT SAVED MY LIFE”

By the time Cassy received her third OWI (Operating While Intoxicated), she recalls, “I had lost everything” – numerous jobs (including one she held for 20 years), her fitness and health, a stable marriage and, most devastating of all, her relationships with her adult twin daughters.

Cassy had never really been a drinker. She had a solid job, taught aerobics, was a runner and cared about her health and her family. But in 2010, amidst a time of profound personal stress, that all began to change. At almost 40 years old, Cassy started to drink as a way to deal with depression, anxiety and emotional pain. She became a “closet” drinker in the truest sense of the word. “I would actually drink in a closet,” says Cassy as she talks about hiding her drinking, including stashing bottles under her pillow. Her life became driven by alcohol every day, all day. Cassy says “hiding my nonstop drinking was exhausting.”

Her first OWI was in 2013 at 8:30 a.m. on her way to work when “my van went off the road and I landed upside down in the snow and unconscious.” However, that did not stop her from drinking, which led to her second OWI at the end of 2014 while driving to Iowa to visit a daughter in college. But nothing changed. In fact, her alcohol consumption escalated to the point of drinking daily at work, which resulted in losing a job she had held for 20 years.

The legal problems and multiple divorce filings by her husband led to attempts at recovery, including detox, hospitalizations, even a few out-of-state inpatient stays, and Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meetings. She had brief periods of sobriety, but they never lasted. Cassy states,

“I missed my daughters’ entire high school years, all the activities and events, even their graduation. They didn’t want me there.” Ultimately, while at an inpatient treatment program in Florida, she received a text from one of her daughters, then a young adult, addressing her by name as “Cassy” instead of “mom.” The text stated that she was “disowning” her mom and no longer wanted any relationship with her.

So much loss. Yet after being released from treatment, Cassy continued to drink to suppress the mounting emotional pain, not seeing any way out of it despite attending AA meetings the entire time. She resorted to stealing money to buy alcohol. She lied to everyone, and she lied to herself. She was living a life of denial and complete desperation.

In August of 2017, Cassy’s life trajectory was finally about to change. While tending to her husband in the hospital after emergency surgery, she was arrested and handcuffed in the hospital room, in front of her sick husband, for her third OWI. A nearby neighbor had observed her swerving onto their lawn and called police.

“My third OWI literally brought me to my knees,” Cassy states. “My attorney said, “there is a program made just for you, for people who are high-risk and high-need.”

The OWI Treatment Court (OTC) is operated by WCS in collaboration with the Waukesha County court system. This voluntary, post-conviction program provides intensive case management, access to treatment, and significant judicial oversight of third- and fourth-offense drunk drivers.

While the incentive to participate is the possibility of a reduced sentence, the emphasis is on treatment, with accountability, in an effort to help people break the cycle of drunk driving, improve the chances of a sober and healthy life, and contribute to a safe community.

Cassy was admitted to the program in February 2018. She was released from the Huber Jail with 30 days of an electronic alcohol monitoring ankle bracelet called SCRAM (Secure Continuous Remote Alcohol Monitoring). She was hopeful, but the road to recovery was long and the program requirements were intensive. Once the SCRAM bracelet was removed, Cassy started to drink again which landed her in jail for a night as a sanction.

It was this time, when WCS OTC director, Kristy, met with Cassy that something changed. Cassy recalls that, "Kristy sat right down next to me, put her hand on my knee, looked right at me and said 'This program is not here to punish you. It's here to help you.' After all the loss, all the legal trouble and all the pain, Cassy says, "At that very moment it clicked for me. I was finally ready to put in the work."

Cassy went on to follow all of the rigorous program requirements and meet the treatment goals. She states that it was the "incremental benchmarks" that led to her success, each positive achievement leading to the next. She graduated from the OTC program on February 28, 2019. While in the program, she had secured an entry-level job that led to a promotion, which in turn has now led to an excellent position working in the administration offices of a local municipality. She was honest about her past struggles with the interview panel, and she was chosen for the job out of 200 applicants. Cassy is proud to be a certified peer support specialist, now assisting others in the WCS OTC program. She is also an active volunteer at her church. She has returned to being a regular runner and maintaining a healthy life without alcohol. Her husband ultimately stood by her, and today he is "amazed" at her success.

But, most profoundly of all, Cassy and her adult daughters have restored their mother-daughter relationship. Recently, Cassy and one of her daughters competed in a half-marathon together.

Cassy reflects on the OTC program and her long path to recovery, "Without my sobriety, I had no marriage, no kids and no job. If I would have just done my jail time, the day I got out I would have been drinking. Honestly, I don't think I would be alive. I can't say enough about the program. It saved my life."

"I have lots of joy in my life now. I actually love myself, but I had to go through all of that in order to get here. Everything I lost, I got it all back."



WCS OWI TREATMENT COURT (OWITC)

The OWI Treatment Court is a voluntary, post-conviction program providing intensive case management, access to treatment, and significant judicial oversight of third- and fourth-offense drunk drivers in Waukesha County.

SECURE CONTINUOUS REMOTE ALCOHOL MONITORING (SCRAM)

An electronic, alcohol monitoring ankle bracelet.



WISCONSIN COMMUNITY SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT

SUPPORTERS RAISE FUNDS FOR CDLRE THROUGH “ON THE ROAD AGAIN” CAMPAIGN

On the road driving a car to run errands or going to work – many of us take these simple, everyday activities for granted. However, nearly 90,000 Milwaukee County residents have had their driver’s license suspended or revoked, making it difficult to easily do some of these tasks. WCS aims to help these residents recover their licenses so they can get back on the road again, through the Center for Driver’s License Recovery and Employability (CDLRE).

WCS is grateful for the dedicated supporters that raised almost \$30,000 for the CDLRE. This support will assist the CDLRE to increase the number of licensed drivers among low-income residents in Milwaukee County, helping them to get on the road again and to go to places that they’ve never been.



MANY THANKS TO ALL OF OUR SUPPORTERS

PRESENTING SUPPORTER

Mutual of America Foundation

GOLD SUPPORTERS

Husco International MWH Law Group
Mutual of America Wipfli



SILVER SUPPORTERS

AMS Legal Action of Wisconsin
BestEd Business M3 Insurance
Fess Properties Share Training
Infinity Business Solutions

BRONZE SUPPORTERS

160 Driving Academy • Benedict Center • Vistelar

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Honorable James Gramling, Jr. June Perry
JBM Patrol & Protection David Pifer
Clarence & Tina Johnson Statewide Insurance
Mortle Trucking, Inc. Group
Ron & Helen Pawasarat Staci Young

2020-2021 FUNDING SOURCES

160 Driving Academy, LLC
(Rock Gate Capital, LLC)
Bader Philanthropies, Inc.
Behavioral Consultants, Inc.
City of Milwaukee: Community
Development Block Grant (CDBG)
Dodge County
Employ Milwaukee
Greater Milwaukee Foundation
Jefferson County
Kenosha County Sheriff’s Department
Manitowoc County
Maximus
Medicaid/Medicare
Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC)
Milwaukee County Combined Court-
Related Operations
Milwaukee County: Department of
Child Support Services (DCSS)
Milwaukee County: DHHS - Division of
Youth and Family Services (DYFS)
Milwaukee County: DHHS - Behavioral
Health Division (BHD)

Milwaukee County: DHHS - Housing
Division
Milwaukee County: DHHS - Wraparound
Milwaukee County: House of Correction
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Community Partnership Grant Program
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Mutual of America Foundation
ResCare, Inc.
State of Wisconsin: Department of
Children & Families (DCF)
State of Wisconsin: Department of
Corrections (DOC)
State of Wisconsin: DHS - Division of Care
and Treatment Services
State of Wisconsin: DHS - Division of
Mental Health and
Substance Abuse Services (DMHSAS)
U.S. Courts: Probation and Pretrial Services
U.S. Department of Justice: Bureau of
Prisons (BOP)

United Way of Greater Milwaukee and
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University of Wisconsin School of Medicine
and Public Health
Washington County
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Collaborating Council (CJCC)
Waukesha County: Department of Health
and Human Services (DHHS)
Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ)
Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership
(WRTP)
Wisconsin Voices for Recovery (WIVFR)
Women & Girls Fund of Waukesha



Annual Report Photography: Saturn Lounge and Melissa Streeter
Design/Production: Caprile Marketing/Design • Editor: Anne Osterwind

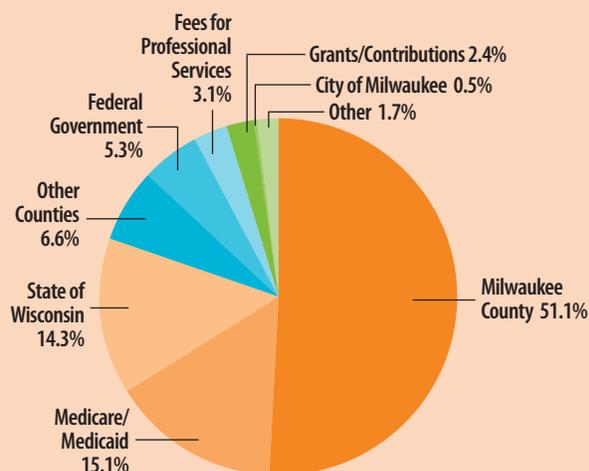
WCS FINANCIAL REPORT

Year ending December 31, 2020

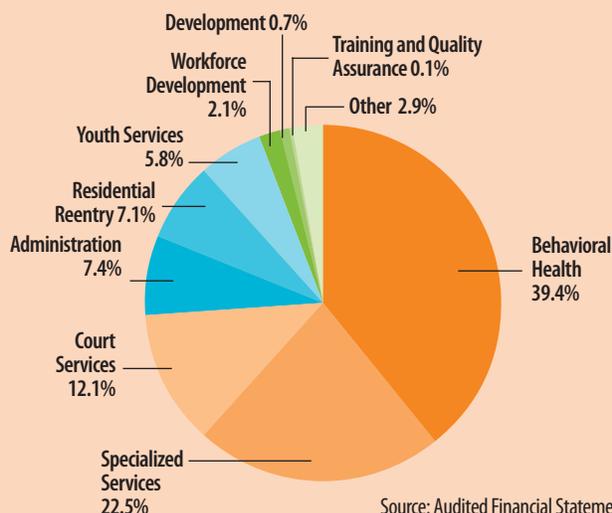
TOTAL INCOME.....\$38,278,914

TOTAL EXPENSES.....\$36,878,882

WHERE FUNDS COME FROM



WHAT FUNDS PAY FOR



Source: Audited Financial Statements

2020-2021 DONORS, SUPPORTERS AND VOLUNTEERS

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Michael Brown
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Benedict Center
BestEd Business
Cedar Lake Improvement Association
Fess Properties LLC
Husco International
Infinity Benefit Solutions
James Imaging Systems
JBM Patrol & Protection
Koch Charitable Trust
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M3 Insurance Solutions
Masked Sewists of SE Wisconsin
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Andrew Whelan

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Ron & Helen Pawasarat donated in memory of John Pawasarat.



YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO SUPPORT INDIVIDUALS TO OVERCOME ADVERSITY

Every day at WCS we are honored to witness people turning their lives around in amazing ways. Whether the individual is living with a mental health condition, involved with the justice system, or seeking to regain driving privileges that have been lost, our staff members support their desire to lead fulfilling lives in ways that make the best sense to them and their family. You can play an important role in supporting them by simply donating to WCS.

To donate, please visit wiscs.org or you can mail your donation to the WCS Development Department at the address below. A "wish list" of needed items is also available on the website (wiscs.org) if you prefer to shop or donate specific items.



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