



Wisconsin Community Services, Inc.
CREATING OPPORTUNITIES TO OVERCOME ADVERSITY

WCS Connection

December 2023



From the desk of the WCS President & CEO: **The Year in Review**

Hello Wisconsin Community Services friends, supporters, team members, funders and advocates. It is hard to believe we are closing out 2023. What a busy year it was for WCS and looking back on the year, there were several milestones and accomplishments that illustrate why the year was so busy. The 2023 year, like most, began with promise, hopefulness, uncertainty, and much anticipation. In most enterprises and for most people, a new year brings with it the chance to build, grow, learn, resolve, and experience more of whatever is deemed to be important or meaningful. For WCS, that includes strengthening our commitment to provide needed services and support for children, youth, adults, and families in our community. That was evident in 2023 through program and staff growth, interaction with the community, and our commitment to excellence. It began with our Bakari Residential Care Center (RCC), which transitioned from a single Milwaukee County purchase of services program to a fee-for-services program, allowing us to serve male youth from surrounding counties and continue our commitment to assisting youth referred from the Milwaukee County Division of Children Youth and Families. The Bakari RCC also became the first WCS program to achieve national accreditation and was designated as a Qualified Residential Treatment Program.

In 2023, WCS also strengthened its embrace of peer support and people with lived experience working in WCS programs and in southeast Wisconsin through our partnership with the Wisconsin Department of Corrections. Peer support has been integral to our expansion of supportive housing services across multiple locations in Milwaukee County. Also, this year, our Treatment Foster Care program experienced significant growth in recruiting and licensing foster homes in Milwaukee County, allowing us to be more effective in serving and supporting children and families of all backgrounds as they work toward reunification. Additionally, we launched our Professional Foster Parent Program, which serves youth ages 13 to 17 who have a history of multiple placements and other needs. This month, we also anticipate completing extensive remodeling of our NOVA

House facility, which will provide long-term supportive housing for adults in the early stages of substance use recovery. Remodeling was also completed this month for the new WCS Youth Crisis Stabilization Program in Watertown, which will serve boys and girls experiencing a mental health crisis. These are just a few examples of what 2023 has been like for WCS. None of this would be possible without our supportive and engaged Board of Directors, which provides leadership and direction for the work of the organization. And, of course, our staff, which has grown to approximately 550, from just under 500 at the beginning of the year. We must also recognize and appreciate our funders, thought partners in philanthropy, and our individual donors. Special thanks to numerous federal, state, county, and city government entities for providing significant financial resources and support, collaborating, and partnering with WCS to make needed and essential services and programs available for people in our communities.

Clarence Johnson



Clarence Johnson Receives 2023 Public Service Award



WCS Board Members joined WCS CEO and President Clarence Johnson as he was awarded NASW-WI's 2023 Public Service Award. Pictured from left: WCS Board President Celia Jackson, Johnson, WCS Board Member Patrica Parker, WCS Board Vice President Andreas Pack and WCS Board Member Michael Morgan.

WCS CEO and President Clarence Johnson is the recipient of the 2023 Public Service Award given by the National Association of Social Workers Wisconsin Chapter (NASW-WI). The association bestows the annual award to a professional whose work supports the values and ideals of social work in the pursuit of social and economic justice for Wisconsinites. The magnitude of the work accomplished by the awardee helps determine the winner. As the leader of a nonprofit that brings life-changing behavioral health and community safety services to more than 16,000 people each year, Johnson epitomizes achievement of the award criteria.

“Clarence believes the key ingredients to effective and successful leadership include holding yourself accountable to the highest standards of performance and empowering

and supporting others to reach their highest level of effectiveness,” said WCS Board Member Patricia Parker, founder of PA Parker Consults, in her nomination of Johnson. “As one of the most experienced African American nonprofit leaders in the Milwaukee area, Clarence has helped to shape the future of several nonprofit organizations in the Milwaukee community and is held in high regard in many circles.”



WCS Presents at NIATx Storyboard Marketplace



WCS staff working in CBMHP recently presented a project they created during the NIATx Storyboard Marketplace. Pictured is Alec Treharne, CBMHP Benefits Supervisor.

Wisconsin Community Services (WCS) staff working in the Community-Based Mental Health Programs (CBMHP), which includes the Community Support Program (CSP) and Targeted Case Management (TCM), recently presented their project “You’re Invited!” at the NIATx Storyboard Marketplace. This is an annual event where participating agencies present a project they have created using the NIATx framework. WCS and other organizations contracted by Milwaukee County Community Access to Recovery Services (CARS) use NIATx as a collaborative effort to develop and implement a process change that leads to quality improvements.

CBMHP staff hold weekly treatment planning meetings with people served. However, the meetings haven’t been as impactful as staff would hope based on not having more people come to the events, despite receiving regular invitations. So, the project developed by CBMHP focused on boosting meeting attendance by creating more formal invitations, improving meeting promotion, and offering incentives for meeting attendance, like snacks and other goodies. Ultimately, these changes helped increase attendance and will benefit the people served and the programs as a whole.



Looking for People to Join the WCS Team!

Are you a dedicated, diligent, and caring individual? Why not work at WCS and become part of the team in one of the following positions:

Care Coordinator — Adult Comprehensive Community Services (CCS)

Help individuals understand, navigate, and grow through Adult CCS, a program that provides care coordination and ancillary services for individuals with mental health,

substance use, and life needs. The person hired for this position will receive consultation from mental health and substance use professionals while working on individualized recovery plans for people in the program. The person in this position will also facilitate recovery meetings with individuals and the care team, establish individual eligibility for the program using a mental health/AODA functional screen, document all contact with individuals and team members, and ensure individuals have transportation to all appointments related to CCS. Qualified candidates must have at least an Associate's Degree in social work or a related field, with a Master's Degree preferred. They should also have two years of experience working in the Mental Health Field.

Youth Advocate — Project Excel

Help bring progressive change to young lives as a Youth Advocate in the Community Service Restitution Coordination Program. The person hired will be responsible for maintaining positive outcomes and charting the progress of youth in the program. Under the leadership of the Program Director, the person hired will coordinate programming and community service opportunities for Project Excel. The person in this position is also responsible for working with staff to track activities that support program enrollment, service delivery, operations, outcome data, and reporting for the program. She or he will help youth and their families to develop youth-centered goals and coordinate services utilizing an evidence-based curriculum for required on-site programming. Qualified candidates will have case management experience and preferably a minimum of two years working with youth. An Associate's Degree is required for the position, and a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work, Criminal Justice, or a Social Service-related field is preferred.

We invite you to visit www.wiscs.org/careers to view a full list of current job openings at WCS.



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WCS**

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Wisconsin Community Services, Inc. (WCS) advocates for justice and community safety, providing innovative opportunities for individuals to overcome adversity.

WCS is a 501(c) 3 non-profit agency that provides services in southeastern Wisconsin.
WCS has been serving the community successfully for 111 years.

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