



Wisconsin Community Services, Inc.
CREATING OPPORTUNITIES TO OVERCOME ADVERSITY

WCS Connection

February 2024



From the desk of the WCS President & CEO:

Your Chance to Support the Work of the CDLRE

Since 2010, Wisconsin Community Services (WCS) has operated the Center for Driver's License Recovery and Employability (CDLRE). The CDLRE is a collaboration and partnership between WCS, Legal Action of Wisconsin, the City of Milwaukee, and Milwaukee Area Technical College. The program provides support, case management, and legal services to assist adults who are low-income wage earners in Milwaukee County to reinstate driver's licenses that have been revoked or suspended due to a failure to pay a forfeiture. The program was inceptioned in 2008, and originally operated by another local nonprofit, Justice 2000 for the first two plus years of its existence. WCS is proud that we have served as the home of the program since 2010. The value and impact of the CDLRE is best measured by the work and outcomes over the past 16 years. Since opening in 2008, CDLRE has seen over 16,000 referrals for services, provided professional advice for over 7,000 people, and assisted over 4,000 Milwaukee County adults in reinstating their driver's licenses.

In 2019, the CDLRE was honored as one of three programs in the United States to receive the prestigious Mutual of America (MOA) Community Partnership Award (CPA) out of 500 applicants. The award was created in 1996 by the MOA Foundation to honor nonprofit organizations from across the country that are helping to move the nation forward by building healthier, more equitable communities.

In 2023, the CDLRE received the Milwaukee Bar Association's Community Development Award, a local award that recognized the contributions of the CDLRE to sustainable development, rights, equality, economic opportunity, and social justice through the organization, education, and empowerment of people in the Greater Milwaukee Area. These awards demonstrate CDLRE is recognized both locally and nationally for its uniquely positive impact on the community.

Along with these accolades, the CDLRE must continue to develop innovative strategies to secure the funding needed to operate the program. One of the ways the program leadership and its partners address this need is by hosting a fundraiser to benefit the CDLRE. This year the "On the Road Again" fundraiser will be held on Thursday, May 23,

from 5 pm to 8 pm at American Family Field, in the Northwestern Mutual Legends Club. It has been five years since our last gathering, and we are thrilled to be back on the road again. We invite you to become a Supporter by donating a sponsorship of \$300 for which you'll receive two tickets to attend this exciting event! There will be photo ops with a few of the Racing Sausages, a curated silent auction and a 50/50 raffle, not to mention plenty of wonderful food. We hope you are able to join us! There are also higher-level sponsorships available for individuals, companies and organizations. These sponsorships include greater rewards and more event tickets. Please contact Danielle Callahan at dcallahan@wisconsin.org or 414-290-0408 if you are interested in supporting the work of the CDLRE in this way.

Please join us for a great time at a wonderful venue to raise money toward supporting the CDLRE to increase the number of licensed drivers among low-income residents in Milwaukee County, thus increasing their ability to find sustaining employment, care for their families, and participate more fully in our communities. Through your support, we will be able to sustain the work of the CDLRE for years to come.

Clarence Johnson



WCS Honors Black History Month with Annual Event



Pictured from left to right are WCS President and CEO, Clarence Johnson; Vice President of Court and Community Reintegration Services, Sara Carpenter; Vice President of Operations, Dwayne Marks; event keynote speaker, Joshua Johnson; and Director of Workforce Development, Richard Badger.

WCS employees gathered at its North Avenue Campus on Feb. 21 for an annual Black History Month Event. The event began with Human Resources Coordinator Melva Darrough leading a group of WCS employees in an abstract art project that utilized black, red, green, and yellow, the four colors associated with Pan-Africanism. The banner at the beginning of the newsletter displays art made by Melissa English, Darrough, and Toni Rechlicz – all members of the Human Resources department – during the event. The art project was followed by a potluck lunch. WCS President and CEO, Clarence Johnson began the lunch hour event with opening remarks highlighting the importance of Black

History Month. WCS Director of Workforce Development, Richard Badger, then introduced this year's keynote speaker: Joshua Johnson.

Joshua shared his inspirational life journey. At 17, the Milwaukeean was sentenced to prison. When he was released a decade later – in 2005 – Joshua told himself he would never return, and that's a promise he has kept. Determined to thrive, Joshua spent nearly nine years at the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, eventually elevating to State Director for the Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards. Today, he's a proud husband and father, a motivational speaker, and a Director at Jobs for the Future. After receiving a Governor's Pardon in 2022, Joshua launched the Pardon Me brand, which includes a podcast where he interviews people who have received gubernatorial or presidential pardons.



WCS Programs Provide Black History Month Education



Straightforward messaging is oftentimes the simplest way to share the most important ideas. Realizing this, some WCS programs developed decorated bulletin boards dedicated to African American culture as a way to honor Black History Month.

Milwaukee County Day Reporting Center (MCDRC) developed a board full of short stories and poems by Black authors. MCDRC also held a Black History Month program on Feb. 27. The program included a presentation from Case Manager, Anelea King, who discussed what Black History Month means to her.

Waukesha and Jefferson County Court Services created a board labeled "With Love We Are All Connected." The board depicts women and men who have contributed to America's Black Excellence.



Youth Crisis Facility Opens in Watertown

Wisconsin Community Services and Jefferson County have partnered to develop and implement a Youth Crisis Stabilization Facility (YCSF). Planning for the YCSF started in 2021 and included locating and renovating a building, developing operating policies and procedures, hiring, and training staff, preparing the building, and successfully completing the state certification process. Over two years of hard work and planning culminated on January 8th when the state certification was awarded and an open house and ribbon cutting led by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services Deputy Secretary Deb Standridge was held. During the ribbon-cutting ceremony, WCS efforts were highlighted and the strong partnership between WCS and Jefferson County to open the YCSF was acknowledged. This YCSF will serve youth from across the state.

The YCSF provides youth ages 10-17 years old a safe, treatment-focused environment to

prevent a behavioral health crisis or to stabilize following a crisis. YCSF services are short-term with an average stay of 7-10 days and a maximum stay of 30 days. During the youth's stay, WCS staff welcome the youth and engage them in short-term therapy, skill building, education, and developing strategies to prevent future crises. YCSF will serve boys and girls with a capacity of eight youth (four boys and four girls). WCS is thankful for the partnership with Jefferson County and is pleased to be serving youth there currently.



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:

Certified Peer Specialist – CLASP/DOC/Emergency Department to Recovery+

As a certified peer specialist, you will use your lived experiences with mental health, substance use, or co-occurring needs to help others overcome those same barriers. Persons hired as peer specialists work 1:1 with people in this community-based program who are in the beginning stages of their recovery. Peer specialists develop positive relationships with those in the program, promoting wellness and a purpose-filled life through mentorship. To be considered for the position, candidates must be in recovery, have formal training in the peer specialist model of support, and have either passed the State of Wisconsin certification exam or become certified within one year of hire.

Case Manager – Parsons House

Help others achieve their treatment goals as a case manager at Parson House, a residential reentry center emphasizing employment services for people returning from the Federal Bureau of Prisons. The position requires individual counseling and case management of up to 30 residents. The case manager maintains public safety by ensuring the actions of each resident comply with various policies and procedures. Qualified candidates will possess a bachelor's degree in social service and at least two years of counseling experience.

Case Manager – Waukesha Day Reporting Center

Play an important role in the community as a case manager at the Waukesha Day Reporting Center, an alternative to incarceration for individuals eligible for release with electronic monitoring. This form of case management involves intensive support, supervision, and monitoring of people released from Huber and others as determined by court officials. Qualified candidates will possess a bachelor's degree in criminal justice, social work, or a related field, though considerations can be made for students working towards a degree.

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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