

THE *Express*

OUR WESTCARE STORIES
FROM AROUND THE WORLD



Welcome from Dick Steinberg

President & CEO

As the summer winds down and the fall approaches, our children and the little ones of those that we serve are headed back to school, whether it's physically or virtually. While some have already begun attending in-person instruction this past spring, others will be making their first transition from an entirely virtual format. Amidst ongoing debates regarding mask-wearing in schools and the adherence to CDC guidelines, we'd like to send our support to our parents on-staff as well as those that we serve. We can only imagine the pressure that you and your children must be feeling, but we are here for you. To our parents whose children are continuing virtual instruction, we would like to commend them on filling double duty between their regular job and accommodating their children with their at-home studies.

I'd also like to invite you to join us in recognizing **Women's Equality Day** this month. In commemoration, please see below for some poignant thoughts by our Senior Vice President of Human Resources, Savannah Jones, regarding this observance and how we are proud to embrace its message through our operations, practices, and services.

To the amazing and talented parents and women who have chosen to work for this organization that we are so proud to call home - thank you. Together, we will make a change for the better for our communities and those that we serve through the important services that we are proud to provide to those in need!

Stay safe and stay well,

Dick Steinberg

It is my honor to use this opportunity to discuss **Women's Equality Day**, observed annually on August 26th with this year marking the 50th anniversary. First observed in 1971, this special day commemorates the 1920 adoption of the 19th Amendment, which prohibited the states and the federal government from denying anyone the right to vote based on their gender. However, this right was only granted to white females. It wasn't until 45 years later that the Voting Rights Act of 1965 allowed all females the right to vote - regardless of their ethnicity. This was only 56 years ago. While we have made progress since these dates, like a lot of inequalities that we face to this day, there is still work to be done when it comes to true equality for women and transgender women in this country, much less in other parts of the world.

In line with our mission to Uplift the Human Spirit of all which whom we come into contact with, we as an organization are proud to stand firmly on the side of progress and pledge to continue to make strides in this regard. Of our approximately 1,500 staff organization-wide, 68% of our team members identify as female. We understand and value the different lived experiences that women bring to the table to complement those of their male colleagues. Through the blending of unique perspectives and backgrounds, we are ultimately able to provide not only a more enriching environment of care but an eclectic one as well. With no single episode of care requiring the same approach as the next, this diverse pool of experience enables us to better meet the specific needs of those that we serve.

– **Savannah Jones**, Senior Vice President of
Human Resources, WestCare Foundation





Welcome to our stories

The Express features our very own WestCare stories from around the world. These stories are just a glimpse into how we are **Uplifting the Human Spirit**. As a newsletter for employees, community members, and clients to learn more about our work, The Express is a reminder to us all that there are so many different ways in which we can all be pivotal in our mission.



Back to School Season Starts Early for Students

By Emily Selby, Case Manager/BHT

It's that time of the year for **WestCare Arizona's** prevention specialists! The school year began on August 4th and we are excited to be back to school! WestCare's team of dedicated prevention specialists works with schools in and around the area providing students with life skills and education on topics that include substance abuse, anger management, self-esteem, bullying, tobacco, and social media awareness. Every year, our city continues to grow, which means that our classes continue to grow. This gives us an opportunity to work with more students to develop positive life skills. Students are encouraged to participate and share thoughts and ideas while in a comfortable and safe atmosphere.



Learn more about programs



WestCare Arizona



@westcareaz



Expanding Adolescent Services with the SAMHSA Family TREE Grant

By Michael Mygind, Marketing Specialist

In July, we were honored to receive a generous award in the form of a \$545K/five-year grant on behalf of **SAMHSA** (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) to expand our **Adolescent Services** in Kings County! With this funding, we will be introducing the **Family TREE** (Treatment and Recovery Enhancement and Expansion) program!

Family TREE will provide early intervention, case management, outpatient treatment and rehabilitation, and wraparound services for an estimated 450 Kings County youth who are ages 12 to 18 and have a substance use disorder or co-occurring mental health disorder. If needed, additional support will be lent to their families as well, including linkages to substance use disorder treatment and/or Veterans services.

We look forward to the many additional lives that we will be able to impact for the better and would like to thank SAMHSA for joining us once again in Uplifting the Human Spirit!



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Using the Power of Media to Educate

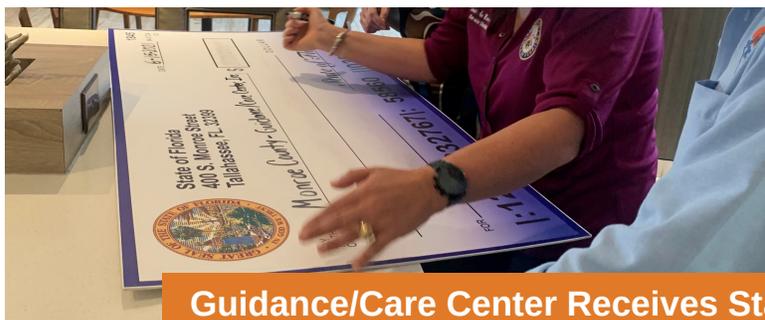
By Yolanda Gonzalez Malave, Program Assistant & HR Coordinator

Guara Bi - Dominican Republic received a visit from **General Jaime Marte Martinez**, President of the **National Drug Council** along with television producer, broadcaster and influencer, Ignacio Ramos - also known as, "El Chico Sandy." The purpose of their visit was to film the intake of a man who asks Mr. Ramos for help to get into a rehab program and is admitted into our facility.

Being able to assist people with an addiction to illicit substances represents for us great satisfaction, since at Guara Bi - Dominican Republic, we are committed to helping them overcome these problems so that they can reintegrate successfully into society.



Read more stories from Guara Bi



Guidance/Care Center Receives State Funds for Capital Improvements



By Maureen Dunleavy, Regional Vice President

Florida Senator, Ana Maria Rodriguez made a tour through the Middle Keys this summer to talk about the Tallahassee legislative session and present a \$200,000 check to the **Guidance/Care Center (GCC)** for a special appropriation to continue renovations to our Marathon inpatient facility! Modernized security upgrades are required to care for the increasing severity of mental illness safely and responsibly among a higher proportion of clients. This request will allow us to update our admission hallway and seclusion rooms.

Our Marathon office is the centralized receiving facility for the Florida Keys. The inpatient unit is Monroe County's Baker Act public receiving facility and the only detoxification program in this area. As a designated receiving facility, the GCC is required to provide emergency psychiatric care intake, screening, stabilization, and treatment for persons with acute mental illness 24/7, year-round. We must accept any person brought by law enforcement for involuntary examination (The Baker Act) or for detox (The Marchman Act). The GCC provides emergency mental health and substance abuse disorder care to approximately 650 people each year with 12 psychiatric

beds and eight detoxification beds. Often, individuals are exhibiting behaviors that present a danger to themselves or others and we still help them. We have seen an increase in the number of people we are serving and an increase in the severity of their illness which has increased the potential for aggression and violence.

Special appropriations must be sponsored by representatives in the state House of Representatives and the Senate. In order for a project to be funded, it must be filed as a standalone bill, be favorably considered in committee, and only request one-time funding. The GCC started this project in 2019 with local entities matching funds for the legislative project. The Florida Legislation initially approved GCC for this funding in 2020, but it was then vetoed by the governor due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We are so grateful for this second chance!

Pictured: Maureen Dunleavy, GCC Regional VP; Senator Ana Maria Rodriguez; Monroe County Commissioner, David Rice



Connect with the G/C





The HART Program's Return to In-Person Outreach

By Jennifer Ellison, *Outreach Specialist*

After almost a year and a half since in-person outreach events were suspended in Miami-Dade County, the **HART (Healthy Alternatives Require Transitions)** program is thrilled to be back out in our community! On Saturday, June 19, the HART program set up shop at the 2021 Wilton Manors Stonewall Pride Parade and Street Festival celebrating the LGBTQ and human rights movements. This year's theme was, "Love is love" and emphasized the importance of inclusion. The one-day festival was a wonderful kickstart to HART's return to events where both visitors and HART staff had an amazing time filled with lots of laughs. By the end of the night, you could see HART fans and bracelets all throughout the crowd.

In addition to PRIDE, HART also attended Miami's very first Voodoo Ball on July 24. The Voodoo "House of Dolls" came together in the 1980s for men to be able to live open and free of judgment to be who they are. For two decades, "houses" have created safe spaces for the LGBTQ community to thrive. Pridelines Miami's very own, Williamson "Tboy" Bellot, brought together allied services to assist in bringing awareness to the community regarding PrEP and HIV as well as LGBTQ and Transgender rights. The Voodoo Ball showcased fashion as well as talent within the "houses" in which each "house" had a different voodoo-like theme. All proceeds went towards increasing awareness for each cause.

The HART program provides one-on-one services to men who are living a high-risk lifestyle and are struggling with substance abuse. With individual therapy and clear case management, this program provides participants a new outlook on living a healthier lifestyle while teaching new life skills to help them succeed in obtaining a promising future.



Connect with The Village South

The Village South, Inc @thevillagesouth @thevillagesouth



Green Thumb Residents

By Ray Cox, *Program Director*

Living in the deep south comes with some simple pleasures. On a hot summer day, a tall glass of sweet tea and a fresh home-grown tomato sandwich is a southern delicacy. Recently, our residents have learned some new skills that will help them in the years to come. The residents of the **WestCare Georgia Guidance Center** have learned how to build raised garden boxes from donated materials provided by a local sawmill, **Jordan Lumber & Supply**. The residents were taught and directed by Wyolene Dumas, an amazing RN of ours as well as an avid gardener regarding what to plant, how to plant, and how to nurture the garden boxes. The program staff (Darrell McMullen, Greg Mitchell, Becky Patterson, Christina New, and Cliff VanSykle) participated in the building of the boxes as well as filling the boxes with topsoil. Once the boxes were prepared, the residents started the planting process. Some plants were mere seeds while others were young plants. The residents planted tomatoes, okra, beans, squash, watermelon, purple hull peas, jalapeno peppers, and cucumbers. The plants were planted after the last frost in April. The residents learned how to compost, to nurture the plants, and have been reaping the benefits of their hard work. They have learned about the concept of a hundredfold return. The images that we've included show the abundance of their labor.



Celebrating love!
Wishing our board member Dr. Walker and his wife Pat a Happy 60th Anniversary! 8/28/21 marks 60 years for them both.



Follow for more about Georgia

WestCare Georgia @westcarega



Exciting Updates from Illinois

Compiled with submissions by John E. Zidek, MSW, CADC, *Community Treatment Director*; Cathryn Smith, MS, CADC, *Clinical Supervisor*, and Carlos G. Rodriguez, *Program Director*

WestCare Illinois has several exciting updates from the month of July to share! We have continued to provide licensed Substance Use Disorder Treatment (SUDT) services through an off-site program to justice-involved Veterans at the **Cook County Jail**. On July 9, our SUD Counselor, Deyon Myles, organized a resource event at the jail, which was attended by multiple Veterans-specific providers. The justice-involved Veterans on-hand were able to learn more about the benefits and resources that are available in the community. The event was featured on **FOX 32 Chicago** as well as in the **Daily Herald** newspaper. Thank you, Deyon, for your hard work and dedication!

Meanwhile, the expansion to our **Dual Diagnosis program at the Logan Correctional Center** began last month. Current clients joined the expansion members as well as a mental health program run at the facility on a new housing unit. Both programs on the unit are working on providing a therapeutic environment that acts as an uplifting space and promotes pro-social behaviors. This expansion has provided a collaborative experience between WestCare and the mental health staff at the Logan Correctional Center, which is something new within the facility and the state. This collaboration provides extra support for Dual Diagnosis members with the added access to mental health personnel. For our

individuals served who are struggling with mental health, we hope that these new resources will show them that recovery is possible.

Additionally, on August 5, WestCare Illinois Program Director, Carlos Rodriguez, was a guest on a local cable station, **CANTV**. The segment's host, Rev. Walter Amir Jones, is also the Executive Director for **Fathers Who Care (FWC)**. FWC along with **Grand Boulevard Prevention Services**, is partnering with us on a five-year prevention grant. The purpose of the grant is to sustain these partnerships on the West and South sides of Chicago after the grant ends as they support these targeted communities with prevention and other support services. Mr. Rodriguez spoke about preventing underage substance use as well as violence.



In other updates, we have continued our online group programming focusing on mentoring and substance-use prevention. We have also conducted trainings for staff that have focused on a variety of topics including the NowPow service linkage platform, understanding trauma in youth, the importance of heart-focused breathing and cultural competency. Last but not least, we were presented an award for being the Community Partner of the Year (2020 - 2021) on behalf of **Southwest High School's Excel Academy!**



Follow Illinois online for more





Celebrating 10 Amazing Years of Services!

By Barb Ruitter, Data Entry

WestCare Iowa/Family Alliance for Veterans of America (FAVA) celebrated 10 years of serving homeless Veterans and Veterans who are about to be evicted. While participating in Forest City Iowa's annual celebration, our staff constructed a parade float that featured a birthday cake and signs. The celebration was held July 23rd through July 25th.

Each year, Forest City has a town celebration called **Puckerbrush** that was named after a tumbleweed that once rolled through the countryside where Forest City is now located. It was called "*Frontier Days*" when it was first established, but as the community was no longer using that theme, they decided that it was time to change its name. So, they combed the history books looking for something else. When they came upon the Puckerbrush plant, they decided it was different and fun and it has been Puckerbrush Days ever since then.

Working on the float on the day of the parade were staff, Amanda Eldridge and her significant other as well as Robin Jaquis, Jennifer Cleveland and Molly Henderson, and her two sons. With the rain on Saturday morning, the

signs on the side of the float were ripped. But, with a little tape, they were as good as new! Well, maybe a lot of tape. Some red, white and blue balloons finished off the float with added flair. Our staff creatively made the cake in the office the week before using hula hoops. They placed a big balloon at the top of the cake. The first layer had WestCare logos, the second layer had FAVA logos and the third layer had the five branches of the military represented with their emblems.

When the float went past the reviewing stand, the announcer from the local radio station spoke for about three minutes regarding our 10th anniversary, the services that we provide, and the areas that we serve. He did a great recap on all that we do and made us feel very proud. Of the entries in the parade, we were the only ones with a float. Thanks, FAVA staff, for a successful event and a job well done!



Follow FAVA for more stories

FAVA (Family Alliance for Veterans of America)



On Your MARK, Get Set...

By Jeremie Delauder, MAT Research Assistant

From May 25 through August 17, **WestCare Kentucky's Judi Patton Center for Healthy Families (JPCHF)** has participated in a pilot community art/health program through the **University of Kentucky**.

The **MARK (Mind.Art.Recovery.KY)** program uses art journaling to increase wellness and reduce stigma for those affected by Substance Use Disorders (SUD) by building skills that promote personal growth and strengthened relationships over six sequential 2.5-hour lessons.

Some objectives of art journaling include:

- Establishing healthy routines
- Integrating many art styles/media
- Providing an outlet for creative expression
- Building literacy, critical thinking, planning, and reflection

The MARK pilot program was made available through the **Arts Extension of the University of Kentucky's College of Agriculture, Food and Environment's Cooperative Extension Service**.



Follow for more in Kentucky

WestCare Kentucky



Back to School Backpacks for the Children

By Amanda Henderson, Director of Accreditation – Western Region, WestCare Foundation

On Saturday, July 30, the **Raider Nation Wrecking Crew** brought 30 backpacks to the **WestCare Nevada Women and Children’s Campus (WCC)** for their kids that are heading back to school. Each backpack is pre-filled with assorted school supplies for its new student owner.

This wonderful group continues to show their support for WCC, Harris Springs Ranch, and our 4th Street men’s transitional living program all year round, from Santa drops ala Raider Nation style of assorted new clothing items to much needed and always appreciated hygiene and delicious treats.

We send our WestCare love and appreciation for each blessing that they bestow on us. Thank You and “Go, Raiders!”

Additionally, Ms. Brittney Lease, Order Management Specialist II and Community Events Coordinator for Caltrol, Inc., graciously delivered backpacks so that the children of parents currently receiving treatment at a WestCare Nevada facility could return to school prepared. The backpacks were stuffed with school supplies to aid the children in the classroom.

Much like the Raider Nation Wrecking Crew, **Caltrol, Inc.** has also partnered with us by conducting other events such as a Thanksgiving food drive and a toy drive during the Christmas/Holiday Season. WestCare clients and their families have truly benefited from the generosity of Caltrol, Inc. and their employees. Thank you for Uplifting the Human Spirit of our programs and those that we serve!



Learn more about Nevada



WestCare Nevada



@westcarenevada



@westcarenevada



Spending the Day on the River

By Nancy Pine, Case Manager

In July, our Veterans at the **VETcare Transitional Program** in Salem had the opportunity to go on a rafting trip on the Santiam River in Oregon’s Willamette Valley. Mark Buchholz, Chairman, and Founder of **Honoring Heroes**, a local support organization for Veterans and active military members, coordinated with **Freeman River Sports, LLC** to provide a trip that our Vets would never forget. The weather was perfect and the experience was amazing for all who were able to attend.

Oregon was hit by wildfires last year and the area that we rafted in was an affected area. We were able to see the progress that was made by not only the individuals who live in the area but what Mother Nature can do to heal itself in such a short amount of time.

After the rafting trip, Honoring Heroes treated our Veterans to dinner at a local pizza parlor where everyone was able to relax after a busy day on the river and talk about an experience that many had never had the opportunity to do before.

Thank you, **Honoring Heroes** and **Freeman River Sports** for an experience that will not be soon forgotten!





Second Summer Splash

By Salome Vuki and Kathryn Bisalen,
Prevention Specialists

There was no stopping for the **I Lina'la Hu (My Life)** and **Maolek Na Lina'la (Life is Good)** programs of **WestCare Pacific Islands** as we headed down to the southern side of the island and kicked off our second summer camp in the village of Piti. With 16 middle-school-aged youth looking to make the most of what's left of the summer, we are now in the home stretch of both programs' curricula. The young campers are learning how positive thoughts can affect changes in their actions as well as what healthy relationships may look like in these modern times.

Not only are they keeping their minds active during the summer, but they have also kept their body active through participating in team cheers, scavenger hunts, and games. As the summer winds down to make way for the beginning of a new school year, we will treasure these special milestones for our programs. They will serve as memories of great times had and a source of motivation for our teams to deepen our work in the community.



Continue the journey online



WestCare Pacific Islands



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A Collaboration to Save Lives

By Yolanda Gonzalez Malave, *Program Assistant & HR Coordinator*

Guara Bi, Inc. in coordination with the **Puerto Rico Public Housing Administration**, the **Puerto Rico Department of the Family**, the **Women's Advocate Office of Puerto Rico**, and **Solo por Hoy**, signed a collaborative agreement to facilitate the delivery of 203 Section 8 housing vouchers to female victims of domestic violence or those experiencing homelessness.

The program will focus primarily on cases of women who are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking - a situation that has worsened after the pandemic on the island and has created a state of emergency.

Our priority has always been to provide a safe roof for Puerto Rico's victims and the homeless who seek our services. We appreciate the commitment of the Secretary of the Family and the Women's Advocate Office to address this situation and help us in achieving our mission of Uplifting the Human Spirit.



Follow the journey online



Guara Bi



A Godly Judge

By Sonya Gibson, *Counselor*

I had the privilege of being able to interview the **Honorable Judge, Michael Davis**. Before interviewing him, I already knew what I would call this article. I chose to name it, “*A Godly Judge*” because even though he keeps his religion separate from his job, his inward devotion to God is outwardly displayed in his work.

Judge Davis serves as Morgan County's General Sessions Judge. He has lived in Morgan County his whole life, outside of attending **Berea College** and the three years that he attended law school at the **University of Memphis**. After completing law school, he started work at **Wilson & Brooks P.C.** He also worked at the **Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)** for two years as an investigator for employee discrimination complaints. He was also employed by the **Liquidating Trustee for the Southern Industrial Banking Corporation (SIBC)** for three years. In high school, he worked as a janitor at the courthouse, but in a full-circle moment, he became a judge on September 1, 1998.

Judge Davis just celebrated his 37th wedding anniversary with his wife, Tammy. He has two sons, ages 33 and 28, and a two-year-old grandson. He said that he was blessed with a supportive wife. She is his harshest critic and strongest support. His goal was to have a good career so that his family could be financially stable. He had those same desires for his children and supported them in their journeys as well. He lives in Sunbright where he has resided since returning from law school in 1986. He has also been active in his church at the **Pilot Mountain Missionary Baptist Church** since his return and has been the Sunday School Superintendent for the past 30 years. His hobbies include gardening, reading, hiking, watching sports, and going to plays with his wife. When asked about his childhood, he said that he grew up not having much, but had love and support. He was the first baby born in 1961 at **Harriman Hospital** on January 1st. He grew up in the Frankfort community and his father was a preacher who worked at the prison and sawmill.

Judge Davis has now been a judge for almost 23 years. When asked why he chose this field, he said that he has always been drawn to the legal system and wanted to help people. He has done work in the Knoxville area and was even interviewed at one time for the FBI, but turned it down because he wanted to work in his hometown. He decided to start a recovery court because he realized that jail time alone was not working. People were getting off drugs in jail but were struggling with staying sober when released. He attended a recovery court training in Scott County and discovered that a recovery court would help with recidivism. Morgan County was the first in the district to start a recovery court in January of 2007 and was one of the first few in East Tennessee. He plans on serving at least one more term and would like to do charitable work after he retires. When asked about working during the COVID-19 pandemic, he said it has been the most stressful time in his career trying to organize, implement and follow COVID guidelines at work.

Judge Davis applies the law to the facts and understands how a decision will affect the people appearing before him. He remains calm and courteous while listening to and considering what is said by all parties. He is motivated to improve his knowledge and is open to new ideas. There is no doubt about his personal and professional ethics. He has the courage to do what is needed even though it may not be the popular choice. He works not just in the courtroom, but also in the community that he serves, where he holds a positive reputation. This is what makes him, “*A Godly Judge*” and I am honored to work alongside him to make a positive change for Morgan County for years to come!

“Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?” - 1 Kings 3:9



Learn more about Tennessee



WestCare Tennessee



@WestCareTN

Joining Together to Address Mental Healthcare Gaps

By Jessica Cerda

The capacity to help those in need of mental healthcare and services in San Antonio's Eastside has significantly increased as a result of the **Bridges to Care** program, which links individuals to behavioral health services and training through spiritual and faith-based communities.

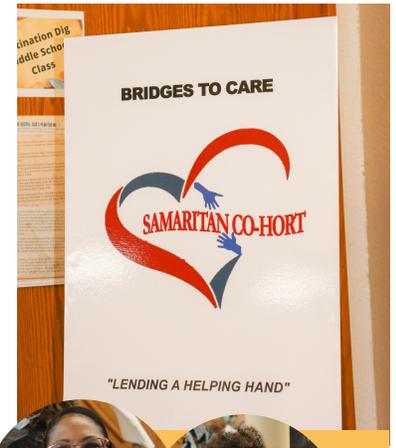
"Because of their [WestCare's] generosity, families are being impacted, communities are now talking about mental illness where there was once stigma, shame, and silence. WestCare is doing work in our city for which we will continue to see the effects for generations to come," said Bridges to Care District 2 Cohort Leader, Pastor Veron Blue of Family Life International Ministries.

Bridges to Care San Antonio, modeled after an effective Bridges to Care program in St. Louis, launched in October of 2020. WestCare's support has enabled training in five core areas at no cost to participating community members: building a behavioral health program, companionship training, Mental Health First Aid, becoming a trauma-informed organization, and suicide prevention.

A recognition luncheon was held on July 18 for the first group of approximately 36 Bridges to Care Wellness Champions who graduated from the program and received certificates for completing 20 hours of Mental Health First Aid training. The three-month training took place virtually from April through June.

Different "Cohorts" are made up of groups of churches where program participants emerge. A study featured in the Journal of Community Psychology found that more African Americans (90.4%) than non-Hispanic Whites reported seeking out their faith leaders instead of going to a mental health professional when experiencing mental health challenges.

"If we know people are more likely to come to us, we owe it to them to be prepared to walk alongside them and be the bridge that helps lead them to the professional help they may need," said Bridges to Care Near Eastside District 2 Cohort Leader, Mignon R. Jones-Spann with Antioch Missionary Baptist Church. "Too often, mental illness has been the elephant in the room that many families try to ignore. Bridges to Care has allowed the faith community to bring the conversation out of the shadows and into the forefront."



Read more online

WestCare Texas



Celebrating Virgin Islands Freedom Week and Emancipation Day

By Maudiana John-Baptiste, Behavioral Health Counselor

The Village - Virgin Islands Partners in Recovery were proud to embrace our Caribbean heritage. We are no strangers to the fight for emancipation. It is a beautiful reminder of the resiliency of our ancestors and their willingness to fight to ensure a better future for themselves and those that would come after them. **Virgin Islands Freedom Week** concluded with our **Emancipation Day** on July 3rd.

Staff and clients of The Village honored the bravery of John Gottlieb, known as General Buddhoe, who famously blew into a conch shell - rallying the enslaved on July 2, 1848, for the violent uprising that would lead to their emancipation that very day.

As we walked through Freedom City Frederiksted and enjoyed the artistic expressions displayed at

the Caribbean Museum of the Arts by our local artists who honor our ancestral warriors, the pride in each person's Caribbean heritage was evident. This month, we topped off the celebratory time by enjoying the cultural foods and treats of our Caribbean home. It is with much cultural pride that we shout from the rooftops, **HAPPY EMANCIPATION!**



Follow along for more

The Village - VI Partners in Recovery Inc / WestCare



A Time for Necessary Diligence

By Donald Lachman, *Special Projects Coordinator*, and Andrea Talmadge, *Regional Coordinator*

“This is no time to relax.” These are powerful words of caution spoken at our recent Western District Leadership Team meeting by Chief Operating Officer for our Western Region, Shawn Jenkins; Chief Clinical Officer for WestCare Foundation, Dr. Jason Engle and Medical Director for WestCare California, Dr. Herbert Cruz. They led an important conversation on the serious risks posed by an emerging social condition some have labeled as, “COVID fatigue.” This involves persons, no matter their vaccination status, relaxing their public health and safety practices needed in order to reduce a person’s risk to COVID-19 infection as its Delta variant continues to sweep throughout the country.

Dr. Cruz shared his recent observations on what he refers to as, “Diminishing individual diligence,” evidenced by reduced practices among some persons that include hand washing, sanitizing of work items, and the consistent/proper wearing of masks.

Shawn emphasized our responsibility to WestCare’s clients, many of whom are at high risk of infection due to preexisting conditions and the increased need to practice and model meticulous adherence to all public health recommendations.

At **WestCare Washington (WCWA)/WAServes**, we share our leadership’s concerns on the condition referred to as “COVID Fatigue” as Washington State achieves an overall 70% vaccination rate as of mid-July. We embrace this emphasis on properly modeling safe practices to reduce COVID infections and encourage our clients to do the same. The trust that we as WestCare staff build with our clients uniquely positions us to continue providing effective clinical and social services even as the pandemic remains a serious health risk in our communities.

Additionally, the pandemic has highlighted the technological and connectivity gaps experienced by many rural, aging, and disabled populations. The causes for this can be very individualized and may range from a lack of reliable internet, personal physical limitations, poverty, or the challenges of adapting to ever-evolving technology. In 2021, WCWA’s coordinated case management program looks forward to addressing these gaps by collaborating with Sound Generations, Washington State’s largest provider of comprehensive services for aging adults and their loved ones residing in King County. We will be applying the lessons that we’ve learned from their recent pilot project with local senior centers. Various devices and personal tech support practices were introduced and evaluated to determine what provided the best customer experience.

From all of us in Washington. stay safe. stay well.

Youth Come Together to Serve Their Community

By Felicia Williams, *LST Program Director*

Each year, **WestCare Wisconsin** has the privilege of serving as a host site for **Employ Milwaukee’s Earn & Learn Summer Youth Employment Program**. This year, we tried something different when the youth arrived at the beginning of their eight-week program – task them with presenting their own community clothing giveaway! They would be allowed two days to work on the project leading up to the date that they designated to hold it. Prior to the giveaway, they worked together to design their own flyer, sort and take an inventory of donated clothing, execute their plan and run the event! When asked what they learned, their responses ranged from the importance of organizing to working with others that are less fortunate and improvising if original plans don’t work. They learned several key lessons from the project and did an amazing job in completing this task! Way to go, team!



Get connected with Wisconsin



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Grants & Resource Development



A Demonstrated Commitment

By Beverly Watts-Davis, *Chief Officer of
Resource Development*

People get certifications for a variety of reasons. Sometimes, they need to be certified to get a particular job or to advance their career. They may want their peers to recognize their knowledge and commitment to a particular profession. They may want the personal satisfaction or pride that often comes with professional certification. Regardless of the motivation, certifications often help to label or define someone professionally. Are you a “counselor” or a Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselor? This holds true in the world of fundraising as well.

Since 1981, the **Certified Fund Raising Executive (CFRE)** has stood for confidence, ethics, and professionalism in fundraising. The CFRE certification is the only accredited, globally recognized certification for fundraising professionals and shows a dedication to and mastery of fundraising practices. Currently, there are approximately 7,500 individuals in 20 different countries who maintain this certification. Like most certifications, an individual must meet several professional criteria and pass an examination before initial certification. At WestCare, we are fortunate to have Martin Bimler, Grant Development Officer, who has attained this important certification.

Although there are a few different ways to meet the initial application criteria, most candidates will have completed approximately 80 hours of continuing education, a minimum of 36 months of professional employment in fundraising and have raised \$1,375,000 within the past five years. Once qualified, a candidate can sit for an exam that tests their knowledge of donor research, securing gifts/funding, building relationships, volunteer involvement, leadership and management, and ethics and accountability. A CFRE needs to be recertified every three years and requires another 45 hours of continuing education, 30 months of fundraising employment, and raising at least \$1,000,000.

The CFRE is not just about indicating one’s experience, knowledge and dollars raised. It also demonstrates a commitment to fundraising as a career and helps to assure donors and funders that the fundraiser is staying informed about the latest research, guidelines, and ethical concerns regarding the stewardship of the money that they invest in programs and the organization. Whether working on a grant proposal, organizing a capital campaign, attending major donor meetings with board members, developing donor recognition programs, planning events, or participating in other fundraising activities, it assures donors and funders that the fundraiser understands their concerns and is committed to helping connect their philanthropic desires with an organization’s philanthropic needs. For more information on this highly valued credential, please visit www.cfre.org.

Human Resources



Honoring the Women of WestCare

By Nazneen Khatib, MS, *HR
Specialist, The Village South, Inc.*

August 26, 2021, marks the 50th anniversary of **Women’s Equality Day**. This day has been observed since 1971 following the previous year’s nationwide Women’s Strike for Equality in New York City, where 50,000 women gathered on Fifth Avenue. The event celebrated the 50th anniversary of the passing of the 19th Amendment, giving women the right to vote. While we still have a long way to go for equality for all, Women’s Equality Day is a reminder of the progress that we’ve made within the past 100 years.

Since joining WestCare, I have been fortunate to work with several strong and positive female leaders. Their guidance has allowed me to grow in my role by becoming more knowledgeable and confident. Each and every one of you has been an inspiration in your determination and passion to ensure that we provide the best possible services to our staff and consumers. Those who know me may recall that when I joined as a human resources intern in 2014, I was a much less confident person, but have since found myself becoming more self-assured when speaking with our leaders – thanks in part to these ladies. Thank you for your steadfast guidance, patience, and willingness to answer any questions that a young HR professional may have!

Unlike other industries, WestCare has a unique distinction of having a workforce that is largely comprised of females. In recent weeks, we have seen the appointments of many well-deserved women into various leadership roles throughout the organization. Congratulations, ladies! Take a moment to appreciate the honor of your role in shaping the future of WestCare. We’re excited to see what the next chapter in women’s equality will look like! Just remember that there are always new and shy interns and staff that are eager to be shaped by your guidance and vast knowledge.



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