APRIL 2021 ISSUE 11

THE Express

OUR WESTCARE STORIES FROM AROUND THE WORLD





Welcome from Dick Steinberg

President & CEO

With operations in sixteen states, three U.S. territories, and two republics, WestCare is literally changing thousands of lives for the better each and every day. However, while we can never overlook the tremendous part that our staff plays in helping us accomplish our goals and support those that we serve, we must not forget to recognize and celebrate the efforts of who are often our behind-the-scenes heroes - our volunteers and interns! With April being both National Volunteer Month and National Internship Awareness Month, I'd like to dedicate this opening message to them!

Our volunteers have come from a variety of backgrounds and for many different reasons. These have included youth from after-school and faith-based groups, alumni who would like to pay it forward, and individuals who are simply looking to donate their time and talent

to give back to those in need. We have seen volunteers help out in so many different ways from helping beautify our facilities and serve meals to leading our individuals served in enriching activities such as worship, exercise, and art therapy - to name just a few. Some have helped out once while others have established a regular presence within our programs throughout the years. Volunteering, however, isn't only just a dedication of time and service, but in some cases - guidance. The amazing members of our Board of DirectorCommunity Action Councils (CAC) are also volunteers who devote their time, expertise, and wisdom to our organization to improve the capacity for our programs to operate and more effectively deliver services to those in need.

Meanwhile, our interns have chosen our organization as the one in which they'd like to apply what they've learned through their education to serve those within our programs. With our interns often working part-time to full-time schedules, we have always strived to treat them no differently than we do our own staff because, after all, we have seen many

interns who once walked our hallways with a badge that reads "Intern" trade it in for a badge with a job title that has been earned through their experience and service!

While the pandemic has made it difficult for some of our operations to bring in hands-on assistance from the public in the form of interns and volunteers, we look forward to the day that our programs will once again be bustling with the sounds of staff and interns working together again to change lives while others contribute their time and talents as part of a variety of helpful volunteer projects!

However, we strongly encourage anyone that is interested in assisting us to please visit **this link** and learn how they can support us as a volunteer or intern in their area when it is safe again to do so. We will be in touch!

In closing, I'd like to sincerely thank ALL members of our WestCare Family and until we are all able to work together in person again...

Dick Steinberg









Caesars Entertainment, Inc., which operates the Harrah's and Tropicana hotels in Laughlin, AZ recently donated some very useful items to WestCare Arizona's Women Helping Women program. Through our work, we are able to assist women who are fleeing domestic abuse or other traumas with obtaining shelter, clothes, and other means to get themselves back on track.

Caesars Entertainment. Inc. Gives Back to Our Ladies in Need

By Emily Selby, BHT, Case Manager

The employees of the Laughlin Tropicana and Harrah's hotels donated hygiene items as well as interview attire to our ladies as they search for employment. These donations will be greatly appreciated by our ladies as they work towards achieving self-sufficiency. We'd like to thank the wonderful staff of Tropicana, Harrah's, and Caesars Entertainment, Inc. for their generous donations to help the women that we serve in our tri-state region!



follow the program online



WestCare Arizona



@westcareaz











Clovis Elks Lodge Welcome Vets into Their New Homes

By Michael Mygind, Marketing Specialist

In early April, our longtime community partners with the Clovis Elks Lodge No. 2599 made another generous donation to support the Veterans served by our San Joaquin Valley Veterans (SJVV) team in Fresno. This time, they provided welcome home kits for Vets who were recently housed at the newly opened Crossroads Village permanent housing community!

Our Vets were very surprised and truly felt the love as staff and Elks members made these special deliveries. Each kit included a vacuum, toaster oven, coffee maker with grounds and filters, groceries, kitchenware, cleaning supplies, and a quilt comforter!

On behalf of our staff and Veterans, we'd like to give our most heartfelt thanks to the Clovis Elks Lodge for their continued support of all who have served!



Read about other parterships being made







@westcarecalifornia









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

As part of the services offered in the Dominican Republic, we are proud to be able to offer food to those in need. Due to the pandemic, this activity has since been suspended, but we are pleased to announce that we have officially resumed these outreach efforts! This distribution of food is made possible thanks to a donation from a private donor. Our most recent food giveaway was held at Cervantes Park, near our facility as well as the Dominican Republic's famous coastline road, The Malecon.



We're proud to announce that Mr. Cristian Duarte, WestCare Deputy COO for the Caribbean and Latin American Region, and Mr. Yunior Sanchez, Director of **Guara Bi – Dominican Republic** were recently recognized as Honorary Advisors of the Dominican Republic's National Drug Council or Consejo Nacional de Drogas (CND). This important recognition was presented by CND President, Major General, Jaime Marte Martinez. We are thankful for this recognition as we continue to collaborate with the CND on implementing an institutional strategic plan that will establish criteria and mechanisms to address the continued problem of substance abuse in the Dominican Republic.



Follow the journey online



Guara Bi









Find more stories online



WestCare GulfCoast - Florida

A Success Story Featuring Aaron

By Terry Jones, Employment Recruiter

Aaron B. is a residential treatment client with **WestCare Gulf Coast** and is part of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Treatment, Recovery and Workforce Support Grant program. He is also a U.S. Army Combat Veteran. In February, he began working at **Hammer Haag Steel, Inc.**

Glen Blickenstaff, Chief Operating Officer at Hammer Haag Steel, Inc. wrote the following about Aaron:

Aaron was a fantastic hire. Rarely these days do you find someone as dedicated and trustworthy as he is.

We run a large fabrication facility with multiple departments. In a short time, Aaron has worked in paint, assembly, prefabrication, and fabrication. My only difficulty is that every manager wants him to work in their department!

Within a few weeks of working here, Aaron was welding. This is amazing as we frequently have people that come to us with years of experience but fail to weld to our standard and have to be trained. Aaron had no experience, but has the capacity to be an excellent welder.

We are very happy to have Aaron as well as others from the WestCare facility. Thank you for all that you do!

99 ·





Introducing the Jail In-House Program (JIP)

By Kristin Flores, MCAP, Lead Substance Abuse Counselor

When people think about counseling settings, they often imagine cozy spaces and a silent office. Imagine sitting in a counseling session while hearing slamming steel doors, jangling keys, arguing voices, and constant phones ringing. These are the sounds present at the Monroe County Detention Center (MCDC) in Key West, Florida where the Guidance/Care Center's (G/CC) Jail In-House Program (JIP) facilitates group and individual therapy sessions. There is no privacy behind the large bulletproof windows that are free of curtains for all to see into while presenting constant distractions. The clients live surrounded by other inmates where simple discussions can often lead to verbal and physical altercations. Although the JIP clients can struggle in this challenging environment, they can also flourish once they are engaged in treatment.

The JIP is a six-month intensive outpatient program with most clients assigned by the 16th Judicial Circuit of Florida, Monroe County to complete it as part of their sentence. However, other inmates can volunteer for the program which will shorten their sentence and teach positive/alternative lifestyle choices as well as coping skills to avoid continued substance abuse and incarceration. Substance abuse treatment groups are held daily and supplemented with individual care.

Recently, Major Timothy Age, Commander for the Bureau of Corrections (BOC), approached JIP counselors, Kristin Flores and Kaylee Armstrong to complement their work and comment on the dramatic shift of two inmates who had a longstanding history of reoccurring arrests, fights

and other violations of facility rules. Due to their behavioral improvements during their time with JIP, both clients were granted job opportunities within the facility that had been previously denied. Major Age went on to explain that he truly understood the importance of an in-house program after seeing the effects of treatment on the individuals involved in our program.

Despite the challenging environment, JIP counselors often express their love for working in this stressful environment. This year, the program has already served fifty-three men and fifteen women. When inmates complete their program, a graduation ceremony is held to help them celebrate this accomplishment. One of our grateful graduates said, "My counselor had a huge impact on me. She showed me a different way to live."





WestCare Florida



By Beatriz Del Rio, Marketing Director

National April is **Alcohol** Awareness Month, a month of education on the causes and treatment of one of alcoholism, one of our nation's largest health concerns and preventable causes

An article published by the SAFE Project, discussed the issue of alcoholism and how it relates to the current COVID-19 pandemic. It states, "In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, millions are out of work, fear and anxiety are at alltime highs, and many people are turning to alcohol to cope. According to market research from Nielsen, since March 21st, 2020 alcohol sales in the United States have increased by 55% and online alcohol sales have increased by 243%. Though some experts believe the huge jump in alcohol sales were due to preparing for those stay-at-home orders, it also shows consumers are stockpiling and safeguarding what's important to them. While turning to alcohol as a stress reliever may seem relatively harmless, it can have serious consequences. In addition

to increasing the risk of stroke, liver cirrhosis. and cancer, alcohol consumption can damage your immune system making you at higher risk for infection during the COVID-19 pandemic."

that might need those professional help for their alcohol or other type of substance use disorder, The Village South confidential program offers treatment and rehabilitation programs that can provide support. We have become a trusted leader in community-based substance abuse and mental health care with residential and outpatient programs that provide services including case management, counseling, job development and childcare for parents with children. In addition, we conduct regular outreach and stress the importance of early education,

intervention and awareness. all Village South Additionally, programs offer Medically-Assisted Treatment (MAT) with Vivitrol for those with an alcohol or opioid dependence.

For more information on The Village South's programs and services, please call 305-573-3784 and dial 1 to reach our Admissions team.





The Village South, Inc



@thevillagesouth



@thevillagesouth

of death.









Guidance Center Celebrates its Second Graduate

By Ray Cox, Program Director

On April 1st, 2021, amidst a year-long pandemic of epic proportions, Christian A. became the second resident to successfully complete the **Guidance Center's** residential treatment program which serves men between the ages of eighteen and twenty-six who are residing in Georgia.

Graduations are a special time of celebration at WestCare in which we acknowledge the many community partners, staff, family, and friends for their roles in making recovery possible for those that we serve. Christian received inspiring words of wisdom, hope, and encouragement from the **Honorable Chief Magistrate Judge Buck Wilder** from Georgia's Monroe County. The judge shared a personal story on his own family's experience with addiction and the wreckage that it caused. He encouraged Christian and other residents to use the lessons that they've learned at the Guidance Center to overcome life's challenges.

Christian received congratulations, cards, and gifts from residents as well as his family and staff. However, one of the most moving moments was when his recovery coach presented him with his personal five-year medallion and challenged him to live a sober life and return it to him when he achieves five years of sobriety. After the presentation, he participated in the "hand ceremony" in which his handprint was placed on the "WestCare Tree of Recovery."

"I am so proud of the quality care that is provided at this facility on a daily basis by staff," commented Michael Langford, Regional Vice President, WestCare Georgia. Not only did this graduate leave our facility drug-free, but thanks to his employment coach, he leaves with a full-time job and as a productive member of society. Recovery still works!



Read more recovery stories



WestCare Georgia



@westcarega



By Melissa Valentine M.Ed., CADC, Program Coordinator

WestCare Illinois proudly celebrated Employee Appreciation Day. Staff around the state celebrated the day in different ways:

- The Chicago office provided tasty snacks and Amazon gift cards to employees.
- The Logan Correctional Center handed out gift cards to their staff
- The staff at the Sheridan Correctional Center received WestCare hoodies.
- The Illinois Youth Center (IYC) at Harrisburg provided employees with personalized gift bags.
- Bootcamps at Dixon Springs Correctional Center and Du Quoin Correctional Center shared their appreciation for one another with Amazon gift cards and a virtual get-together.



On April 1, we opened a new treatment program at the **Decatur Correctional Center!** This program is designed to provide co-occurring disorder treatment to 26 female clients for a period of 6 - 12 months. Programming will include trauma-informed/gender-responsive treatment using evidence-based practices and curriculum to meet the identified needs of the individuals while engaging them in developing their own strength-based treatment plans. Specialty and re-entry groups will also be provided.



Learn more about wnat's nappening in Illinois online



WestCare Illinois

----- WESTCARE.COM

Ten Years of Volunteering

By Barbara Ruiter, Data Entry

Family Alliance for Veterans of America (FAVA)/WestCare Iowa has had several volunteers and interns to help with various tasks throughout FAVA's ten years. Linda Parmley is our glowing star that we want to acknowledge and show appreciation to for her consistent help throughout the years. She was a member of our Community Action Council (CAC) from 2018 until 2020. Before 2018, she attended the CAC meetings as a volunteer to take part in volunteer activities. Linda is a person who loves to work more than she attending meetings.

Linda has been actively helping FAVA for ten years. She has spent hours organizing our pantries and countless hours helping get food, quilts and other donations organized and displayed. She has helped to prepare care packages to give to homeless individuals while staff conducted the Federal

Point-In-Time (PIT) Count of homeless people in Iowa. She has donated and coordinated the donations used to hand out to homeless individuals encountered hats, gloves, scarves, socks, handwarmers, food and hygiene items. Linda has volunteered to bake for bake sale fundraisers and has provided food for the Veterans in the Continuum of Care (CoC) house. She has also helped with our annual Chili Cook Off several years in a row.

Linda is a Veteran's widow. Her late husband, Jerry, was in the US. Navy on a PBR (Patrol Boat Riverine) in the Mekong Delta during the Vietnam War (1963 to 1967). He then served in the Army National Guard from 1967 to 1969 for a total of six years of service. The Parmley's met in 1990 while working at the Lowry Air Force Base in Denver, Colorado and

married in 1993. They took early retirement and moved to the rural city of Emmons, Minnesota right on the border of lowa and Minnesota.

Jerry joined the Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA), where he served as their director for eight years before passing away of cancer in 2011. Linda has stayed active as a member of the VVA for the last twenty years. She has worked with gathering memberships, assisting with fundraising and takes their trailer with merchandise to area events to sell items and raise funds.

She is also a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Auxiliary of Britt, Iowa. Heritage Park of Forest City is creating a new Veteran's Memorial Museum in the park where Linda has been doing volunteer jobs as well.

We are lucky to have her. Thank you for 10 years of service, Linda!



Get involved with FAVA



FAVA (Family Alliance for Veterans of America)

The JPCF Welcomes Staff

By Jeremie Delauder, MAT Research Assistant

WestCare Kentucky is pleased to welcome staff at the newly opened Judi Patton Center for Families (JPCF) facility! The JPCF is a ninety-six-bed residential facility for women who are battling substance use disorders in and around Kentucky. Clients are referred to WestCare through various agencies including the Kentucky Department of Corrections (KY DOC) and the federal probation/parole system.

The JPCF's Program Director, Dr. Tiffany Slone (pictured), and her team will continue the WestCare mission of Uplifting the Human Spirit at this newly opened facility! On behalf of our staff throughout the Kentucky region – welcome to the WestCare family! We look forward to working with all of you!



Dr. Tiffany Slone, Program Director Brandi Baily, Counselor Technician Kenneth Brown, Maintenance Janie Coleman, Counselor Technician Clarissa Epling, Administrative Assistant Stacy Gibson, Counselor Technician Amber McCoy, Counselor Alesha Pigg, Cook Jennifer Reese, Counselor Technician Courtney Roberts, Counselor Technician Rebecca Stevens, Counselor Technician Amanda Tackett, Counselor Technician



Follow for more in Kentucky



WestCare Kentucky





















Nevada Colleges Make the COVID-19 Vaccine Possible for Our Clients

By Rhonda Davisson, Transitional Coordinator

Beginning this past March, the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) Schools of Medicine and Nursing partnered with their Student Health Center as well as the College of Southern Nevada (CSN) and Nevada State College (NSC) to hold a COVID-19 vaccine clinic on the UNLV Campus.

In mid-March, we were contacted by Christie Putman, Director of Business Operations for UNLV's School of Medicine, who generously offered the staff and clients of our Harris Springs Ranch and Women and Children's Campus programs the opportunity to receive the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine if they desired. Thank you, Christie, for thinking of our staff and those that we serve!

As of March 16th, twenty-nine clients and three staff members received their first dose at the UNLV Student Union. Thanks to the generosity of our community partners, we were able to offer a valuable resource to our clients for their health and well-being during this pandemic.

We'd also like to congratulate UNLV's School of Medicine for officially reaching their 100,000th vaccine administered in Las Vegas, NV as of April 14th!









Vaccine Clinic at the Las Vegas CTC is a Success!

By Leo Magrdichian, LCSW, LCADC, Vice President Operations

In April, WestCare Nevada, the City of Las Vegas, the Las Vegas Fire and Rescue Strike Team, and the SilverSummit Healthplan joined forces in conducting a COVID-19 vaccine clinic at the Las Vegas Community Triage Center (CTC)!

Initially, one hundred and twenty-five Johnson & Johnson vaccines were requested and scheduled to be administered to the surrounding homeless population, our WestCare staff and clients, and anyone else that was interested in receiving this single-dose vaccine. However, that plan changed rather drastically the day before based on the CDC's guidance to pause any administration of this particular vaccine as they assessed any potential side effects.

Fortunately for everyone involved in the event, their vaccination was not postponed or canceled since organizers were able to secure 80 doses of the Moderna vaccine just in time! In all, 76 individuals were vaccinated with their first dose. Each person was provided with a follow-up appointment to return to the CTC in May to receive their second and final dose.

We'd like to thank all of our amazing community partners for coming together to ensure the continued health of our staff, our community, and those that we serve!





WestCare Nevada



@westcarenevada



@westcarenevada





We'd like to share a letter from one of our **VETcare** clients, Craig M, who recently completed the program and has moved to Oklahoma to be closer to his family. His story is further proof of why our work is so rewarding. Congratulations, Craig. We're proud of the work that you've done and know that you'll be successful in the future.

"Hello. I would like to share with you a part of my story.

When I first arrived at VETcare, I was a broken man. I went full circle from trying to end it all to starting a new, calmer, and more fulfilling life.

I have Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) from my time during Desert Storm and have had years of counseling because of it. But with COVID-19, job loss, divorce, and later a bankruptcy - I wasn't able to 'deal with it' any longer.

After I was admitted to the Portland VA mental health ward twice, I was introduced to a case manager named Eric. He provided the first stair of my year-long journey out of the ruins and ashes that my existence had become. He got me enrolled in a PTSD program at the Boise VA, but it wouldn't start for a few more weeks. I was incapable of processing complex thoughts, let alone returning to my prior residency. Eric then introduced me to the 2nd stair (My 'landing,' actually).

After a very caring and patient conversation with Brenda Powers from VETcare, I had a place where I could burrow until my program started. I was a qualified 'hot mess in distress.' Along with PTSD, I had anxiety that was off the charts as well as severe depression.

From the jump, their entire staff treated me with respect, dignity, and compassion. Upon my return from Boise, I was no longer smoldering from the ashes, but still charred. Then, serendipity stepped in by the name of Donald Phillips, their on-site mental health counselor. He and I began a series of sessions that methodically allowed me to climb the first flight of

stairs. I say 'serendipity' because Donald was a Veteran who had lived through many of the issues that I was encountering and came out the other side. He had invaluable experience and was a big advocate of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), the same type of treatment utilized by the Boise PTSD program. Donald spent many, many hours reinforcing the training (including homework) and answering any questions that I had. We discussed anything that was troubling me. He, his professionalism, patience, and compassion would become a true grounding rod for me. David and James, a fellow staff person, have always been generous with their time, empathy, and willingness to help the Veterans that they serve.

When things seem like they're getting out of hand, I have resorted to throwing a 'Hail Nancy.' Nancy Pine's demeanor, willingness to help, and knowledge of resources for Vets have been invaluable.

The entire kitchen staff of Chris, Roger, and Denise are a well-oiled machine. They are a pleasure to be around and are unquestionably dedicated. The quality of the food, down to its presentation (Really? Are we still talking about a GPD facility?), has been the bright spot of many a rainy and stormy day.

Honestly, there was a noticeable vacuum here when Brenda retired. But Ray, despite everything that he was experiencing, adroitly sealed the vacuum again. I assume he had outside concerns because I have never heard him complain - never. I often stand in awe of how he deals with difficult clients and circumstances. He is respectful without fail. The amount of time and effort that Ray puts in, is in my opinion, the overarching reason that this place should be WestCare's template for all of their other programs.

I will truly miss this place as I am seeing it in the rear-view mirror and smiling through the windshield. Thank you all for giving me a chance to have a life worth living." – Craig M.



Spring is the season for fresh starts, deep cleaning, and planting seedlings - and Guam's year-round tropical weather makes no exception. Thrive: Coalition for a Drug-Free Dededo marched into spring at the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Guam Chapter's Annual Conference with its "Coalition Development for Thriving Communities" presentation. Representatives of Thrive, its youth coalition, and community partners modeled how to cultivate a well-rounded Coalition using both grassroots and traditional approaches.

At the start of April, Thrive organized the Dededo Neighborhood Clean-Up of Sagan Linahyan Roadway and Park event. Our participation exceeded all expectations and brought together 70 volunteers from local government, Guam's congressional district, and our island community. Together, we were able to breathe life back into this small corner of Astumbo!

Both events emphasized the importance of careful planning, collaboration, and community involvement. Whether through providing resources, mobilizing the community, or getting our hands dirty (and our island clean) - we hope that the seeds that we've sown this spring will thrive for many years to come.





By Vanalyn Quichocho, Research Assistant



Regina Shiroma, Research Assistant

For the month of April, the **WestCare Pacific Islands** team enthusiastically returned to conducting in-person outreach in the community. The **Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)** team showed up and suited up for the 2021 Passport-to-Services event. In collaboration with the Guam Homeless Coalition (GHC), over 100 families who are at-risk or experiencing homelessness were given an opportunity to receive the COVID-19 vaccination and meet with service providers from the community. SSVF continues to be at the frontline ensuring that our heroes are not left behind.

Meanwhile, our youth programs brought their high energy with them as they participated in the island-wide Waves in the Village event in honor of Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) and Child Abuse Prevention Month (CAPM). Along with the Guam Coalition Against Sexual Assault & Family Violence (GCASAFV), WPI and 22 other organizations took a stand together along Guam's streets to bring community awareness to these two important causes.



Continue the journey online



WestCare Pacific Islands



@westcare.pi



@westcare.pi



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

During his most recent visit to Argentina, our Deputy COO, Cristian Duarte, signed a collaboration agreement with Mr. Guillermo Ferrando, Presidente of Asociación Modelo Minnesota Guara Bi Argentina. Asociación Modelo Minnesota is a non-profit organization that was created in 2004 by a group of people who were committed to addressing the problem of addiction. The staff of Modelo Minnesota has extensive experience with more than 20 years in the field of substance abuse treatment and prevention. In addition to the education, prevention, and treatment of substance use disorders, they also have a program that feeds vulnerable families. Together with Mr. Guillermo Ferrando and his team, we plan to carry out many projects to continue Uplifting the Human Spirit.



Follow the Journey online



Guara Bi



By Yolanda Gonzalezmalave, Program Assistant & HR
Coordinator

Ms. Karina Cruz, Case Manager from **Guara Bi Yocahú** was interviewed as part of a recent radio broadcast on Victoria 840 AM. During the show, Ms. Cruz discussed the housing and medical services that are offered at our facility for homeless men and women who have tested positive for COVID-19 and are recovering from the effects of the virus. In our native language of Taino, the god, Yúcahu, is known as the deity of peace and tranquility and represented goodness. This represents our goal at Guara Bi Yocahú for all of our clients to have peace and tranquility while they are in our care and recovering from the virus.



Follow the journey online



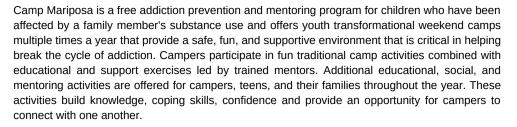


Updates from Camp Mariposa – Tennessee!

By Renee Salyers, Regional Administrator



In March, **Camp Mariposa** in Tennessee kicked off 2021 at Victory Lanes Bowling Alley for a day of family fun. Masks were worn and all of our families had a great time. It was also a day of enrollment for new 2021 campers. WestCare has been blessed to have a Camp Mariposa program in four states: Florida, Kentucky, Ohio, and Tennessee.





Also, Camp Mariposa Tennessee has a new Camp Director, Tessa Woods. Tessa is a mother of two children, Jordan and Makayla, and has been happily married to her husband, Derrick, for 28 years! She has been in the field of nursing for 26 years and has also served as a cheerleading coach, basketball coach, and youth leader for over 10 years. In addition, she serves on the board for the Options Pregnancy Help Center. These are just a few roles that she has been involved in as a community volunteer over the past 30+ years in the Cocke County community. Welcome aboard, Tessa!

Every year, countless children are affected by a family member's substance abuse. No child should ever have to face this struggle alone. Our unique program gives children the chance to cry, laugh, grow and heal. Kids meet other kids in similar circumstances and together - they grow stronger.



Follow for more stories in Tennessee



WestCare Tennessee



@WestCareTN



On March 17th, WestCare Texas held our

Community Blood Drive & Drive-Thru Resource

Fair to bring winter storm relief and recovery

resources to low-income families following the

crippling snowstorm that Texas faced in

February. While many have had their power

turned back on and water restored, there are

still people in our community who are struggling.

The historic winter weather only exacerbated

pre-existing disparities like poor infrastructure

and a lack of resources in marginalized

communities. Black and Latino families who

were disproportionately hit by COVID-19 are

now struggling to recover from one of the worst

weather events to ever hit Texas. Despite,

already tightening their budgets due to the

pandemic, many people lost a week's worth of

wages since the storm kept them from working.

Now, they are behind on rent and utilities on top

of the challenges of home/plumbing repairs and

restocking a week's worth of fresh food that

spoiled during the power outages.



Drive-Thru Resource Fair Provides Winter Storm Relief

WestCare Texas has been successful in creating and maintaining coalitions and partnerships with multiple organizations that have come together in times of crisis with the common purpose of addressing the needs of community. Through collaborative partnerships, We are able to bring desperately

needed programs and services together in one place where the community can easily access them.

We were happy to have involvement from 14 community organizations as well as giveaways of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE), bottled water, and non-perishable food bags. Meanwhile, 16 blood donations were made to the South Texas Blood & Tissue Center, 16 kidney screenings were conducted by the Texas Kidney Foundation, and 134 people registered for Pfizer COVID-19 vaccinations that were provided by Metro Health. In all, 130 attendees took part in the event.



Engagement Coordinator

This event wouldn't have been possible without the generous support and donations from our sponsors: The City of San Antonio, the San Antonio Food Bank, CPS Energy, Metro Health, San Antonio Growth for the Eastside (SAGE), and the South Texas Blood & Tissue Center.

"We understand the impact that this historic winter storm has had on so many of our lowincome community members. That is why we invited community partners that can provide critical resources along with ongoing programs and services to assist families for the long road to recovery," said Beverly Watts Davis, Chief Officer of Program Support and Resource Development and Senior Vice President for WestCare Texas.





WestCare Texas





VIPIR Celebrates Their Amazing Staff!

By Yolanda Gonzalez Malave, Program Assistant & HR Coordinator

What a way to celebrate Women's History month! Through the everyday hustle and bustle here at The Village, these two women have been nothing less than resilient. Their dynamic attitude most definitely leaves its mark. Maudiana John-Baptiste, Behavioral Health Counselor at our Sion Hill Therapeutic Community Program has been a therapeutic champion as our lead therapist catering to every one of our clients. Elizabeth Torres, Case Manager/Research Assistant at Sion Hill and Progressive Lifestyles Prevention Program has been handling her roles as both of her roles exceptionally well with diligence and grace. The Village - Virgin Island Partners In Recovery (VIPIR) not only thanks but honors you both.



In March, the Progressive Lifestyles Prevention Program's team collaborated with the U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Sports, Parks, and Recreation (DSPR) to provide free HIV and Hepatitis C testing. They recently attended a drive-through market presented by the DSPR at the Bethlehem Sugar Factory on March 21st to provide tests and educate community members on their status. New members were also enrolled into our Prime for Life program as well!



The Village - VI Partners in Recovery Inc / WestCare



Addressing Food Insecurity Among Local Veterans

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



Food insecurity is a term that we have heard frequently during the COVID-19 pandemic to describe the challenges many people are experiencing as they try to put food on the table. We have all witnessed scenes in the news of long lines of people extending the length of multiple football fields, waiting in the cold and the heat for hours to obtain boxes of food at local community centers.

But, there is another aspect of food insecurity that is frequently overlooked. It is not related to a lack of access to healthy food items, but rather their access to safe food storage and proper preparation. Faulty major kitchen appliances including refrigerators and freezers. Stoves and ovens directly contribute to the food and nutrition problems experienced by many aging and low-income households including Veterans.

The main barrier often preventing many people from correcting this unhealthy and disturbing circumstance is a financial one. The cost of purchasing and installing a major kitchen appliance such as a refrigerator can easily amount to several thousands of dollars and is a prohibitive expense for many households!

Defective food storage and preparation are directly linked to increased consumption and dependence on overly processed, high-salt, and high-sugar foods often associated with canned goods and local fast-food outlets. For many people diagnosed with high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, or diabetes, these can be poor nutritional choices that can increase their risk of stroke and even death.

However, WestCare Washington and Home Depot have recently joined forces to launch a county-wide initiative that addresses this issue.

Our shared vision is to reduce food insecurity associated with faulty kitchen appliances while concurrently helping Veterans initiate sustainable nutrition planning. This planning will include connecting clients to healthy food choices and programs offered in their local community.

By reaching out to representatives from the local American Legion, Red Cross, and faith-based groups, we identified our initial list of Veterans and family members who could benefit from replacement kitchen appliances. Our plan is to work closely with our colleagues at Home Depot as well as Mary Ellen Pistalu, our Grant Development Officer with WestCare Foundation, to secure approval and facilitate the installation of this first round of appliances before the end of May.



By Felicia Williams, LST Program Director



Keep in touch with Wisconsir





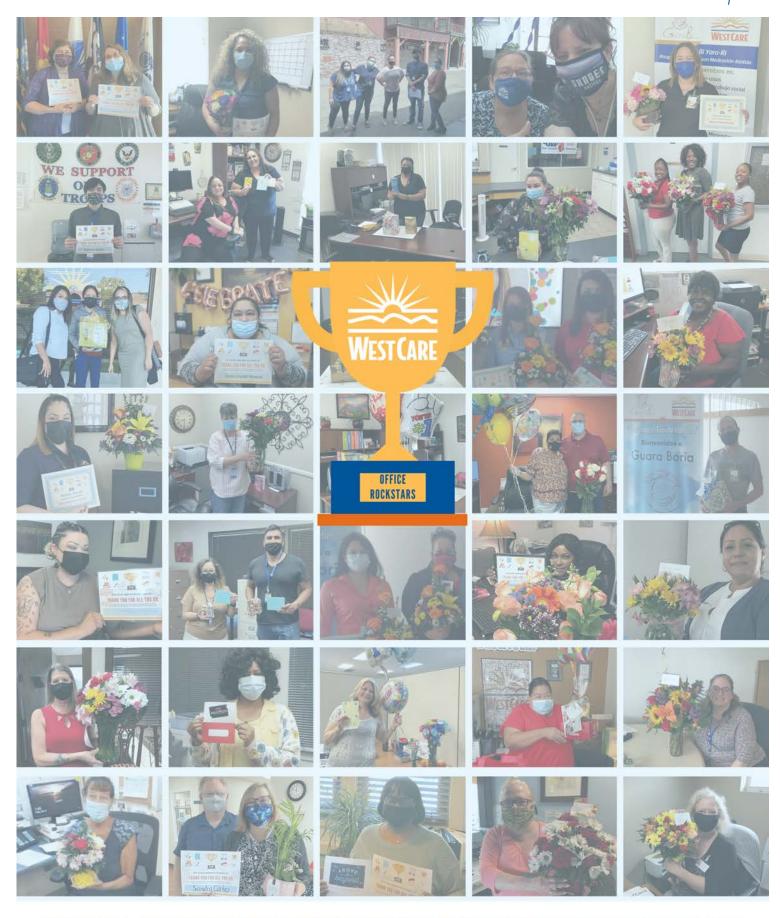
David Sinclair, Program Coordinator with our Cream City Credible Messenger program attended an event honoring Willie Mae Hill from the Maskani Apartments. This complex is part of the Heartland Alliance group, which provides housing for low-income mothers and children. David has partnered with the Maskani Apartments to supply USDA stock boxes from the WestCare Wisconsin E.A.T.S Food Pantry as well as mentoring and advocacy for adjudicated youth that may reside in the facility. This partnership has been in the making since January of this year and will hopefully continue well into the future.

What makes this partnership such a blessing is what Ms. Willie Mae Hill does and stands for. The Heartland Alliance summed up her legacy perfectly by saying, "Willie Mae has dedicated her life to serving women, mothers, and families in Milwaukee. She's worked in workforce development, she has helped families access vital healthcare services, and helped individuals and families find the safety and security of a home." She has famously lived by the quote, "When you invest in women, you're investing in their families. When you invest in families, you invest in the community."

This is exactly what WestCare Wisconsin believes in - a holistic approach to serving the entire family. Great job on helping establish such a strong community partnership, David.

Thank you for your contributions, Mrs. Hill!

THE Express



NATIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS DAY. THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO!

- WESTCARE.COM



First Ouarter 2021 Wellness Drawing Winners



Angela Mangum is the winner of the 2021 Level One Wellness Points Challenge Drawing! Angela works in Nevada's Foundation office as our director of billing. She was born at a U.S. Coast Guard Base in Alaska. She later moved to California and North Carolina and back to California before settling in Nevada in August of 2008 when she joined the WestCare family as a billing specialist. Angela was later promoted to billing coordinator and assistant director of billing before assuming her current position. She is also a certified coding and billing specialist and medical administrative assistant. She is currently attending Western Governors University (WGU) and is halfway through obtaining a Bachelor's Degree in Business for Healthcare Management. When she is not studying, Angela is a fitness instructor and teaches Les Mills BODYPUMP barbell classes three times a week. She brings her knowledge of health and wellness to others in the workplace and readily shares it with others. Angela is married while raising two boys - ages fifteen and three and has a cat, too! Where does she find the time?



Yolanda Gonzalez Malave is the winner of the First Quarter Healthy Recipe Drawing! Yolanda works in our Puerto Rico location where she is the program assistant and HR coordinator for the Caribbean & Latin America Region. She began working with WestCare in December of 2016 and is proud to be part of the WestCare family. She was born and raised in Puerto Rico and is the youngest of seven siblings. Yolanda has raised her niece, Marielys (now nineteen years old and in her first year of college), and nephew, Derek (now ten years old and in the fifth grade) since they were infants. She truly loves taking care of them.

Yolanda also thoroughly enjoys outdoor gardening. She plants fresh spices, vegetables, and her most favorite - orchids! She researches the most exotic and rare orchids and treats them with the utmost care. Yolanda says that they are her babies!

Additionally, when she has spare time, Yolanda volunteers at her church and in her local community where she has been scheduling online COVID-19 vaccination appointments for her elderly neighbors and in some instances, transports them to get their shots!



Doreen Mobley is the winner of the First Quarter Healthy Selfie Drawing! Doreen works in our Key West, Florida location and is a research assistant. She began her employment with WestCare in December of 2012 and left for three months in June of 2019. However, she returned in October of the same year and has been with us ever since! She was born in Bronx, New York, and was raised in Orlando, Florida. In January of 2009, she moved to beautiful Key West, Florida. She is married and has a fourteen-year-old son, an eleven-year-old daughter, and a pet Yorkie mix named Gizmo - all of whom she loves dearly. They have fun going to water parks and to the beach to swim as a family. She also enjoys kayaking, when possible. Doreen likes to dance and volunteers by helping her daughter participate in dance recitals and cheer competitions. She has taken a renewed interest in health and fitness and enjoys the Personal Challenges option of WellRight's Wellness Program.



to Angela, Yolanda and Doreen, and all who participated in our wellness Constitutions and velocities and velocities and will participated in our weinless program during the first quarter of 2021. It's important to make our health and wellness a priority. Keep the momentum going!

Teledoc Drawing Winners



Paula Forbes is originally from upstate New York near Syracuse. She works as a regional accountant for Foundation and covers the Appalachian Region, Ohio, and FitzHouse. She was initially hired to work out of the Las Vegas Foundation office in August of 2013 but now works out of our Foundation office in the beautifully quaint city of Dandridge, Tennessee.

Paula obtained a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) degree in Accounting from the University of Phoenix in Las Vegas. In addition to work, she enjoys spending time boating on Douglas Lake. She also enjoys cooking, sewing and has recently taken up knitting! Paula loves living in Dandridge where the people are so welcoming and friendly. She has two grown children. Her daughter lives in Las Vegas and her son lives with her in Dandridge. Paula is now on a house-hunting mission and hopes to find the perfect home soon!



Darby Garner is a native Floridian and was born and raised in Tampa until she married and moved to Pasco County, Florida. She was hired in January of 2013 as a Program Assistant for our Gulf Coast's Port Richey location. She is truly appreciated and respected by her fellow staff as well as the community partners that they work with. She has worked in the substance use disorder field for 13 years.

Darby has three grown children and six grandchildren. She lives alone on two-and-a-half acres with her horse and dog Rocky, who is a pitbull/wolf mix. She has a goldfish pond as well. Darby has an eighty-year-old friend who requires dialysis, whom she enjoys helping. She loves tending to her vegetable and floral gardens containing various flowers such as orchids and roses to name a few. In her spare time, she also enjoys walking, soaking in the beautiful Florida sunshine, taking trips to the beach, horseback riding, fishing, and life itself.



Christopher Mitchell is a native of Sacramento, California, and was recently hired as a case manager for their STOP: Area 1 program in February of 2020. He has worked in the substance use disorder field for approximately six years. Christopher has his Associate of Arts (A.A.) Degrees in Social & Behavioral Science and American Studies as well as his Associate of Science (A.S.) Degree in Business from Coastline Community College. In addition, he is a Certified Alcohol Drug Counselor – Certified Addiction Specialist (CADC-CAS).

Christopher is proud to have served as a member of the U.S. military as part of the Air Force and Coast Guard. He now lives with his cat, Ari, who is his baby! In his spare time, Christopher enjoys playing video games and creating beaded jewelry. Best of all, he is currently preparing to purchase his first home!



Darlene Terrill was born and raised in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Prior to coming to WestCare Nevada, she and her husband owned a marina, campground, and resort in Minnesota for ten years that was known for its charter and ice fishing. Darlene was hired by WestCare in October of 1991 and currently holds the position of regional administrator for our Minnesota/Iowa operations. She has held various positions throughout her tenure at WestCare such as a counselor, senior counselor, program coordinator, program director, development director, and special projects director. She earned a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) Degree in Social Work from the University of Minnesota and is licensed as a Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselor and Supervisor (LADC and LADC-S) since 1993 with good standing. She has successfully supervised many interns, all of whom have gone on to receive their licenses as well.

Darlene became a widow in 2014 and is of German and Scandinavian descent with immediate family in Minnesota and Sweden. She has lived at her home in Las Vegas for the last thirty years and currently lives with her six rescue cats. She enjoys sewing, arts and crafts, woodworking, and camping. She is working towards her short-term goal of moving back to Minnesota to be closer to her family, granddaughter, and great-granddaughter. Her dream is to own a house on a lake there where she can have a small pontoon boat for fishing as well as a four-wheeler.



California

- · Timothy Earnst, 5 Years
- · Gertrude Wilson, 3 Years
- · Lenora Brooks-Phillips, 17 Years
- Rosalinda Nepomuceno-Zavala, 6 Years
- Angela Wheeler, 5 Years
- · Valentina Sanchez, 5 Years
- · Maria Rodriguez, 4 Years
- · Tracey Hunt, 4 Years
- Sean Simmons, 4 Years
- · Kandi Carter, 4 Years
- Christina Lopez, 4 Years
- · Adela Acosta, 3 Years
- Christopher Lanin, 3 Years
- Michael Ortega, 3 Years
- · Adolfo Zubiran, 3 Years
- James Pokorny, 3 YearsStephanie Chadwick, 2 Years
- · Stacie Dunn, 2 Years
- Cardaysha Thomas, 2 Years
- Christine Killebrew, 2 Years
- · Leslie Posey, 2 Years
- Theresa Stafford, 1 Year
- Carolina V Avila, 1 Year
- Andrea Garcia, 1 Year

Florida - Guidance/Care Center

- Gary Roberts, 13 Years
- Erin Kirkland, 6 Years
- · Cynthia Bennett, 6 Years
- Nastassia Charles, 3 Years
- Gloria Ramirez, 2 Years
- · Reyna Keller, 2 Years
- Claudette Julmiste, 22 Years

Florida - GulfCoast

- Sharon Phillips, 14 Years
- Gregg Cosgrove, 11 Years
- · Adrianon Marion, 9 Years
- Maureen-Ann Traci, 8 Years
- · Amber Smith, 5 Years
- Zamia Keys, 4 Years
- · Larry Bankston, 3 Years
- Kurtisha Battle, 2 Years
- Mallory Delay, 1 Year
- Dena Higley, 1 Year

Florida - The Village South

- Rory Levine, 11 Years
- Amber Cole, 4 Years
- Iris Molina, 4 Years
- · Doris Quiceno, 4 Years
- Vincent Nightroad, 4 YearsDamaris Contes, 2 Years
- Chawntelle Morman-Shanks, 2
 Years
- Teron Verma, 2 Years

Foundation

- Diana Alvarez-Mendez, 23 Years
- Diane Ludens, 17 Years
- Melissa Rhea, 10 Years
- Ryan Creelman, 6 Years
- Jason Rowe, 5 Years
- Martin Bimler, 4 Years
- Cody Krezan, 2 Years
- Daniel Stiles, 2 Years
- Emily Hoffner, 1 Year

Georgia

- Eldredge Washington, 3 Years
- · Becky Patterson, 1 Year
- Darrell Mcmullen, 1 Year

Illinois

- Paul Weitz, 21 Year
- Ryan Bell, 11 Years
- Jennifer Barks, 8 Years
- John Zidek, 5 Years
- Cathryn Smith, 4 Years
- Martha Blankenship, 2 Years
- Libby Leigh, 2 Years
- · Jennifer Hall, 2 Years
- Stacy Waldman, 2 Years
- Teri Charleton, 2 Years

Kentucky

- Stephen Wright, 8 Years
- · Matthew Gross, 2 Years

Nevada

- Hubert Ergenbright, 13 Years
- Irma Magrdichian, 10 Years
- · Edgar Salcido, 2 Years
- · Elgin Lofton, 1 Year

Pacific Islands

- Barbara Benavente, 4 Years
- Kathryn Bisalen, 1 Year

Puerto Rico

- · Irisbel Nunez, 8 Years
- Edwin Melendez, 1 Year

Tennessee

· Kimberly Dawson, 1 Year

Wisconsin

• Felicia Williams, 3 Years

We appreciate you!



Grants & Resource Development



By Lisa Jackson, GPC, Interim VP of Grants

Did you know that there is a **Grant Professionals Association (GPA)** that provides development opportunities for grant professionals? It's true and many of WestCare's Grant Development Officers are members of the association. This is an agency that offers a plethora of professional opportunities including an annual conference for grant writers and developers.

Grant professionals must possess a variety of skills and there is no college or university degree to help them develop those skills. So, the GPA brought together experts in the field to help define what those skills are and developed a community around assisting these professionals in obtaining the necessary knowledge and experience to be successful.

This association offers members training webinars, a professional journal on current topics, networking opportunities, and expert advice on areas such as government contracting regulations, legal requirements within the grant development and management arenas as well as an ethical framework in which to work. The association has been around for over 20 years and has a membership of 2,800 individuals.

Additionally, the association helps launch affiliates. The first was the **Grant Professionals Certification Institute (GPCI)** that established a psychometrically developed exam to certify the skills of a grant professional. During this process, the following competencies were outlined as critical to the field of grant writing:

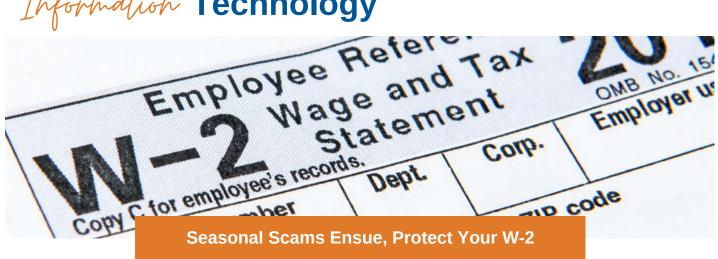
- Knowledge of how to research, identify and match funding resources to meet specific needs.
- Knowledge of organizational development as it pertains to grant seeking.
- Knowledge of strategies for effective program and project design and development.
- Knowledge of how to craft, construct and submit an effective grant application.
- Knowledge of post-award grant management practices sufficient to inform effective grant design and development.
- Knowledge of nationally recognized standards of ethical practice by grant developers.
- Knowledge of practices and services that raise the level of professionalism of grant developers.
- Knowledge of methods and strategies that cultivate and maintain relationships between fund-seeking and recipient organizations and funders.
- Ability to write a convincing case for funding.

The second affiliate is the **Grant Professionals Foundation (GPF)** which provides grant professionals an opportunity to apply for scholarships in 15 different membership and training programs. This affiliate works to make sure that grant professionals have the resources needed to serve the greater good.

There is something magical about walking into a conference room where hundreds of people do the same kind of work as you, have the same kind of experience and challenges that you have, and possess real-world answers and expertise regarding issues that you have encountered. This association gives our Grant Development Officers this type of support. To learn more about the GPA please go to https://grantprofessionals.org



Information Technology



Adapted from the April 2021 issue of the MS-ISAC Monthly Security Tips Newsletter

It seems like it's been much longer than one year ago since we last did our taxes, but somehow, it's here again: Tax season. Let's start by acknowledging that this past year, fiscally, is fundamentally different from other tax years before it. The introduction of Stimulus payments from the government in the past year has added a new dimension to our taxes, and a potential increase of vulnerability to hackers and cybercriminals alike.

This is a period of time where extra vigilance and caution are needed while online and conducting business, especially avoiding any kind of online activity that could jeopardize your identity and finances. There are some important best practices and red flags to keep in mind while navigating through this season, and hopefully, you'll feel a little bit more secure with the knowledge that you haven't fallen victim to a cyber scheme!

Scams to look out for

- · An email, link, or phone call requesting personal and/or financial information, such as your name, social security number, bank or credit card account numbers, or any securityrelated information.
- Receipt of a notice that states your IRS account has been accessed or disabled when you haven't accessed the account.
- Emails advertising bigger tax refunds, or that have incorrect spelling, grammar, or odd phrasing throughout.
- Emails that tell a story and entice you to open a link or attachment. Sometimes they will say they've noticed suspicious activity, claim there is a problem with your account, or want you to click on a link to make a payment. These links often contain malware that is used to infect your computer and retrieve your personal information.

Stimulus-specific scams

- Scammers have been mailing fraudulent checks that appear to be sent from the government, and will request that money be sent back due to an "over-payment." Always call your bank to verify a check is legitimate, and if you receive a request to return a portion of a check, report this immediately to your bank.
- Robo-call check scams are commonly reported. The caller will be asking for personal and/or financial information and try to convince you that this information is necessary in order for the check to be deposited. In reality, the government already has your information on file from when you completed your taxes. You will either get your stimulus check and tax refund in the mail or they will be directly deposited into your account.
- Carefully Select the Sites You Visit: Do not visit a site that doesn't end in ".gov". No nongovernmental website is distributing stimulus checks.

How to avoid being a victim

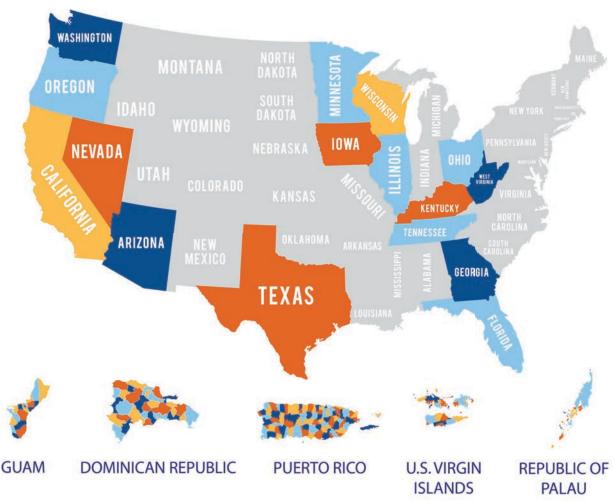
- · Never Send Sensitive Information in an Email: If there is any doubt that communication is coming from a suspicious source, don't reply to any email requesting personal information.
- Keep Up your Cyber Hygiene: Keep up to date with recent data breaches. Ensure your computer has the latest security updates installed. Check that your anti-virus and anti-spyware software are running properly and receiving automatic updates from the vendor. Change your passwords frequently.
- Carefully Select the Sites You Visit: Do not click on links sent to you via email from a site claiming to give tax preparation advice or tax forms as there are many fake forms on scam sites that look authentic.
- **Never Use Public Wi-Fi to File Your Taxes!**
- Only Use a Bona-fide Preparer: If you choose to use a preparer to do your taxes, make sure they can provide their Tax Preparer Identification Number - you can use this number to look them up on the IRS website to confirm they are legitimate, as only professionals can hold this identification.
- Be Aware of IRS Typical Practices: The IRS will not contact you via email, text messaging, or your social network, nor does it advertise on websites. Starting in 2021, the IRS has created IP PINS available for all taxpayers. These PINS provide the IRS additional verification and security at the time of filing. You can log on to get an IP PIN tool offered by the IRS at https://www.irs.gov/identitytheft-fraud-scams/get-an-identity-protection-pin/.
- · If you receive a tax-related phishing or suspicious email at work, report it by using the Report Phish button in Outlook or by forwarding it to phishing@westcare.com. If you receive a similar email on your personal account, the IRS encourages you to forward the original suspicious email to its phishing@irs.gov email account, or to call the IRS at 800-908-4490. More information about tax scams is available on the IRS website and in the IRS Dirty Dozen list.



Uplifting the Human Spirit since 1973

WestCare, a family of tax-exempt nonprofit organizations founded in 1973, provides a wide spectrum of behavioral health and human services in both residential and outpatient environments. Our service domains include Treatment and Rehabilitation, Mental Health, Veterans Services, Criminal Justice, Housing Opportunities, Education, Prevention, and support for those fleeing Domestic Violence. These services are available to adults, children, adolescents, and families. We specialize in helping people traditionally considered difficult to treat, such as those who are indigent, have multiple disorders, or are involved with the criminal justice system.

Proudly serving sixteen states, three U.S. territories, the Dominican Republic and the Republic of Palau



Follow along online























Storytelling is part of The Express

The Express is made possible through stories submitted by our amazing WestCare teams around the world. We know that each and every day, a positive change is happening for our clients with our support.

Have a story to tell? Please email marketing@westcare.com and let's share the impact WestCare makes in Uplifting the Human Spirit.



Shopping on Amazon? WestCare Foundation participates in AmazonSmile! AmazonSmile donates a percentage of your purchase at no cost to the shopper.

Head to smile.amazon.com and select WestCare Foundation as the recipient.



WestCare Foundation is registered with PayPal Giving Fund. Users can select WestCare Foundation as their charity of choice and have 100% of their donation given to our organization. A donation can be made at paypal.com/fundraiser/charity/74402



Benjamin Hernandez Social Media Specialist



Justin Kamimoto Creative Services Manager



Gabriela McNiel

Director of Marketing

& Procurement



Michael Mygind Marketing Specialist