

# THE *Express*

OUR WESTCARE STORIES  
FROM AROUND THE WORLD



## Welcome from Dick Steinberg

*President & CEO*

With operations in 16 states, three U.S. territories, and two republics, WestCare changes thousands of lives every day. For that, we thank not only our staff, but the many amazing volunteers and interns who selflessly give their all to support us in a variety of ways! This month of April, as we celebrate **National Internship Awareness Month** and **National Volunteer Month**, I would like to encourage potential interns and volunteers to join us in transforming the lives of the many individuals that we serve. As we begin to transition back to regular life after two years with in-person events coming back and facility safety measures being slowly loosened due to fewer positive cases - many of our programs are now accepting new interns and volunteers and all that they have to offer for the men, women, children, families, and Veterans that we serve!

Through the years, we have seen many of our interns choose us as the place to apply what they have learned through their education and become staff. In fact, some members of our leadership team began their time with this wonderful organization by simply giving back. These have included interns from various backgrounds and fields of study including criminal justice, public health, social work, and mental health. We love to see our interns trade in an "Intern" badge for one with a job title of their own that they have truly earned through their time as an intern.

Meanwhile, our community volunteers can vary in age range and group size from young to old and from big to small, but all lend their talents, energy, and compassion for those that we serve to assist with a variety of short or long-term and one-time or re-occurring projects that range from site cleanups to mural projects, facility renovations, and more! In other instances, volunteers have visited on a regular basis to lead activities such as educational workshops and art therapy sessions! However, volunteering doesn't end with service projects, but sometimes includes guidance, advocacy, and support in the form of our **Community Action Council (CAC)** members who devote their time, expertise, connections, and wisdom to help us in bettering our services and in turn, improving the care that we can provide for those that we serve.

We remain hopeful that this is only the beginning of expanding our internship and volunteer opportunities. If anyone from the communities in which we serve is interested in giving back, our programs would be happy to have them! They can reach out to their closest program of interest for more information on internship and volunteer opportunities.

In closing, I'd like to sincerely thank ALL members of our WestCare Family. I look forward to seeing us all together again soon...

*Dick Steinberg*



## A Place of Refuge, A Place for Healing

By Cheryl De Batt, *Vice President*

“Welcome to our safe place” was written on a rock placed in a beautiful garden behind **The Safe House**, a place many call home who are escaping domestic violence. The garden was created by our mothers and their children that we serve. While restructuring their lives, plants are planted, watered, and nurtured - producing positive thoughts and energy during a time that can be difficult.

The Safe House, with its revolving door, welcomes all who are needing a safe place for the night or for a few months. We offer counseling, clothes, personal items, help with employment, housing and whatever else may be needed. Our goal is to ensure safety and help rebuild lives without domestic violence. Welcome to our safe place.



WestCare Arizona



@westcareaz



## Fresno County DSS Highlights the Work of Our Perinatal Staff at MLK

By Michael Mygind, *Director of Marketing, WestCare California and Nevada*

In late March, media staff on behalf of **Fresno County’s Department of Social Services (DSS)** visited our **MLK Residential** facility in Fresno to highlight the amazing work being done by the staff of our M’ella and Papa Natal programs as well as The Learning Center – which together, comprise our perinatal services in Fresno County!

The piece will be featured as part of a future episode of The DSS Morning Show, an internally produced program that is distributed monthly by 2,700 staff on behalf of Fresno County DSS! We’d like to thank their amazing

media team for visiting our program and helping share the lifesaving services that we provide for local mothers and fathers!

On top of providing treatment to parents with little ones aged 0 to 12, our perinatal staff work together to strengthen the bonds between our men and women served and their kiddos while also ensuring that they not only gain, but retain the parenting skills necessary to keep their children happy and healthy after their time in the program!



WestCare California



@WestCareCA



@westcarecalifornia

## WestCare Dominican Republic's CAC Plans for Growth and Positive Change

By Belinda Morales, Program Assistant

On March 2, **WestCare Dominican Republic's Community Action Council (CAC)** meeting was held, taking place at UTESA University with the participation of the current members of this committee, the Dean of the University, and the chief operating officer of the Caribbean and Latin America of Guara Bi/ WestCare, Mr. Cristian Duarte. Joining them through videoconference were also staff from Guara Bi and WestCare. Different topics were discussed and updates were given from each facility. Topics included our programs' services, strategies to bring information about the services offered, our management, and future plans for this great non-profit organization to knock on more doors with the goal of helping all people in need.



Guara Bi



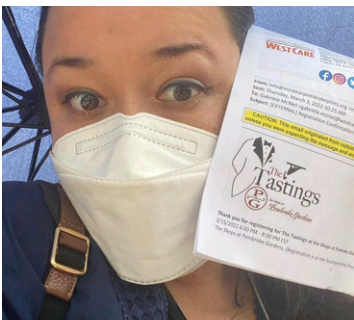
## The Village South is Selected as a Beneficiary of The Tastings!

By Maritza Portillo, Administrative Services Coordinator

**The Village South** was recently selected as one of five non-profit organizations to benefit in this year's **The Tastings at Pembroke Gardens** presented by the **Miramar/Pembroke Pines Regional Chamber of Commerce** and **The Shops at Pembroke Gardens**. Over 15 restaurants participated in providing food samples to the sold-out crowd. Although rain fell, it did not stop The Village South staff members and the community from showing their support and enjoying a night out. A portion of the proceeds will benefit WestCare/The Village South. We are honored and humbled to have been selected to participate in such a great annual tradition!

At The Village South, our ambitions are bold and our dedication to service is not new. We are proud of our longstanding commitment to being a leader in our communities and believe that our culture of excellence will help us flourish.

We are excited to continue to work collaboratively with Miramar/Pembroke Pines Regional Chamber of Commerce and The Shops at Pembroke Gardens in continuing the mission of Uplifting the Human Spirit!



The Village South, Inc



@thevillagesouth



@thevillagesouth



## The Suncoast Utility Contractors Association Seminar

By Terry Jones, *Employment Recruiter*

On March 17, Carolyn Annand and Terry Jones attended the **Suncoast Utility Contractors Association March Roundtable Luncheon** at the Columbia Restaurant. Through a presentation delivered by Carrie and Terry to contractors attending the seminar, WestCare was able to connect with potentially new companies that can help our clients enhance their employment opportunities.

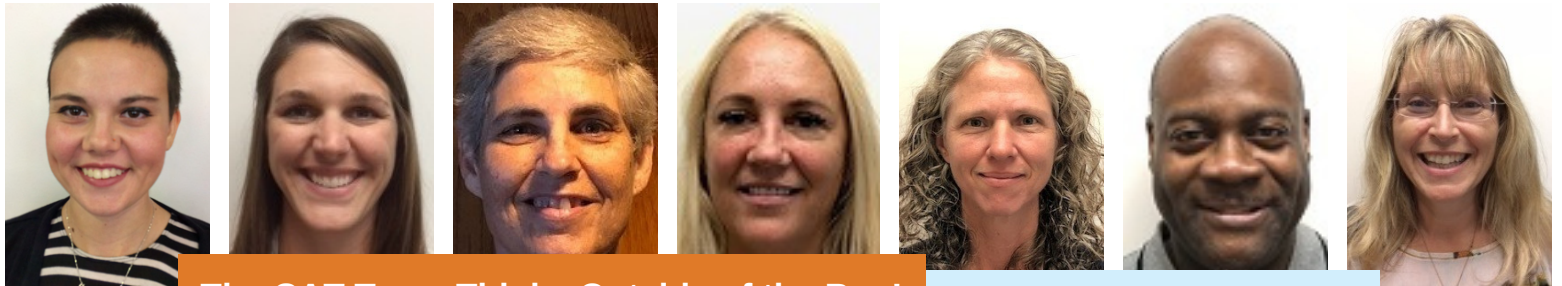
We discussed WestCare's mission and our **Workforce Support** program, including how we prepare our clients for the workforce. We summarized to potential employers the type of employees that our program seeks to build. Following the seminar, several potential employers approached us to learn more about our operations. We are glad to announce that we are in the process of connecting with those employers to set up future meetings.



WestCare GulfCoast - Florida



@WestCareGCFL



## The CAT Team Thinks Outside of the Box!

By Brittany Evans, *CAT Team Leader*

The **Community Action Team (CAT)** is a team-based approach to address the needs of youth and their families. Our team is comprised of two therapists, two counselors, a care coordinator, a nurse, and a team leader. We also collaborate with an advanced registered nurse practitioner (ARNP) who provides medication management, direct support to clients, and attends a weekly team meeting. CAT is considered the highest level of outpatient care. There are strict requirements to become a CAT client. The individual must be between the ages of 11 to 21, have a mental health or co-occurring substance abuse diagnosis, and have one or more other high-risk characteristics such as being at-risk for out-of-home placement, two or more periods of hospitalization, Department of Juvenile Justice involvement, multiple episodes involving law enforcement, or poor academic performance.

CAT strives to strengthen the family and support systems for youth and assist them to live successfully in the community. We implement wraparound evidence-based practices. Wraparound is a team-based approach that helps the client and their family identify their strengths,

culture, and needs. We then use those strengths to accomplish the family's goals to improve their lives. Other program goals include improved school related outcomes such as improved attendance, grades, and graduation rates in addition to decreased substance abuse and psychiatric hospitalizations.

The **Guidance/Care Center (GCC)** has worked alongside **Monroe County School District** for years. Most recently, we had three staff members attend and complete the Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines training. This allows GCC to remain involved in the assessment process when an individual makes a threat to harm others in the school or community setting. We can complete the mental health portion of the threat assessment, help gauge the level of threat made, and engage in follow up support and services. This is not only a source of support for our students, but also for our community and schools.

**Pictured (left to right):** Alexandra Wilcoxon, Brittany Evans, Carol Valladares, Linda Lann, Monique French, Robert Prosser, Sandra Rautio



Guidance/Care Center by WestCare



## Give Local, Save Local

By Ashley Cobb, *Prevention Specialist*

**WestCare Georgia's Prevention Outreach Team** is all about providing health related street and community outreach. In the month of March, we hosted a blood drive sponsored by **LifeSouth Blood Centers**. There is a national blood shortage that is affecting our communities, and we wanted to inspire people of our community to give blood that could save a life in our community. We made this a community event by having a variety of vendors, music, and free HIV and Hepatitis C testing. The event was a success as we were able to enlighten the community on the importance of donating blood and saving lives. The participants, vendors, community residents, and staff enjoyed themselves, and we cannot wait to do it again!



WestCare Georgia  
 @westcarega



## Working With Our Community Partners at Veterans Affairs

By Darrell Mayo, *SSVF Veteran Advocate*

Helping Veterans with their long-term care to escape homelessness is a team effort. Not only must they overcome their individual troubles such as drug and alcohol abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and other ailments - but many Veterans must also learn to navigate through their lives while also having limited income.

The **Veterans Affairs (VA) Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)** program, **WestCare Iowa Family Alliance for Veterans of America (FAVA)**, provides a short to medium range plan. It is designed to help Veterans get back on their feet and hopefully allow them to then stand up on their own. Unfortunately, some of them require more help over longer periods of time than the SSVF program can provide. To help Veterans long-term, WestCare relies on our community partners such as the staff of the **Housing and Urban Development & the Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH)** program to continue to help homeless Veterans after they have completed our SSVF program.

The Sioux City WestCare-Iowa/FAVA staff is proud to work with our local VA HUD-VASH representatives, Alexa Lewis and Angie McElmurray Dundee. Alexa is the **Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV)** social worker while Angie is the HUD-VASH case manager for Sioux City's VA community-based outpatient clinic (CBOC). HUD-VASH is a collaborative program between HUD and the VA that provides up to 30 vouchers for

homeless Veterans and their families in Sioux City to find and sustain permanent housing as they remain eligible and compliant with the program.

WestCare's SSVF program is designed to assist Veterans by helping them find housing and then paying their rent, deposits, and utilities for anywhere between one to nine months depending on the circumstances surrounding the Veteran. If they are eligible for HUD-VASH, then they can then use their voucher for years allowing them to only pay up to one third of their income for housing. Some Veterans in Sioux City are surviving off \$400 to \$800 a month and by only having to pay a third of their income for housing, it allows them to survive while continuing to remain housed. Once a Veteran begins HUD/VASH, they are no longer eligible for rental assistance through the SSVF program. WestCare's Veteran Advocates must work closely with Alexa and Angie to ensure that there is no gap in the timing of transferring from the SSVF program to HUD/VASH services.

It has been a pleasure working with and seeing the dedication and care that is provided by Alexa and Angie. They do ensure our nation's at-risk or homeless veterans are taken care of after leaving WestCare's SSVF program.



FAVA (Family Alliance for Veterans of America)

## Team Building at Sheridan Correctional!

By Kelley England, *Office Manager*

On Friday, April 8, the WestCare staff at the **Sheridan Correctional Center** hosted a team-building staff day. They broke into eight teams of about six or seven people and engaged in an ice breaker game and several different team building games including one that consisted of solving murder mysteries. Each team had to work together to solve their assigned cold case. Staff had the opportunity to get to know several new staff members throughout the day. Overall, it was a very fun and productive day of getting to know each other better!



 WestCare Illinois



## Clients Learn New Trade Skills in Landscaping


By Jeremie Delauder, *Data Coordinator*

Now that spring has sprung in the mountains of Kentucky, the **Supportive Employment Program's (SEP)** job skills training group has begun to spring forth a beautiful creation of their own, a gazebo in the courtyard at the **Hal Rogers Appalachian Recovery Center** located in Ashcamp, Kentucky.

Clayton Swindall, the interim Program Director at Ashcamp, had the idea of putting a gazebo in the courtyard for clients to use for meetings, activities, religious groups, and self-reflection. The courtyard will include an updated pond with a waterfall. Enlisting the help from the Supportive Employment program, Mr. Swindall began to make this idea a reality.

Thank you to Douglas Ramey, one of SEP's case managers, for donating all the materials used for the project! Doug has also taken the lead with planning, prepping, and teaching SEP clients the skills necessary for such a project. Once the construction is complete, their focus will turn to landscaping. The project is expected to be completed sometime this spring and ready for summertime use.



 WestCare Kentucky

## Introducing our New I Am Possible Program

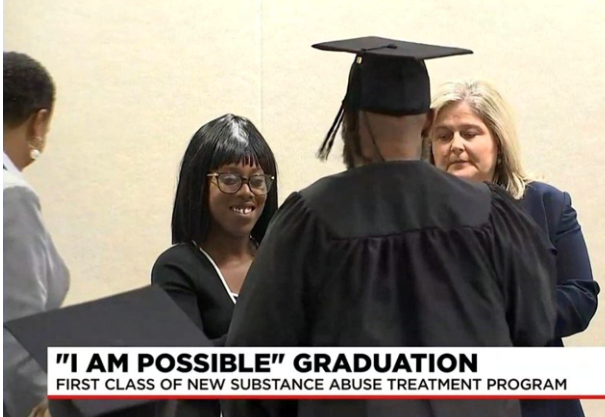
Staff Testimonies by Jessica Shalai Morales Alvarez, Counselor II & Jurea Williams, MS, Community Services Specialist

**Jurea Williams:** *"I Am Possible is the first residential substance abuse treatment grant funded program in a local jail in the State of Nevada. This joint venture with WestCare Nevada has been both challenging and rewarding. Our first class was able to produce six amazing graduating men who are now on different journeys in their lives."*

**Jessica Shalai Morales Alvarez:** *"This program shows us that there is potential to be and do better when an individual sees it in themselves. This 30-day program is not just about coping skills, but seeking discovery into the root of the disease. As the counselor working with these individuals, I am allowed the opportunity to witness change."*

*I have seen an immense amount of growth in unimaginable ways. I was told that if I reached 'just one,' I was doing enough and that one has been seen. I would argue that this program has reached every single graduate thus far in the way that they each needed. As the counselor of these men, I have seen them as clients and in their own ways, changed and molded against the force that took grip of them for so long and has allowed their grounding to be shaken and dismantled. The reality of addiction is that it sows the seeds of suffering and numbness, which therefore can only be combatted through work rooted in courage. These gentlemen that make an active decision to engage in this program have taken up their courage and unpacked all their luggage leaving it at the doors of their past to step into a new light of their journey. The only way to change is in discomfort and to be uncomfortable is to be changed. I am honored to be a part of such progress in ones' life journey and am so eager to continue to work with others who enter this program. This program instills a newness that perhaps was not given a chance before, so I encourage clients to always remember that sobriety is a mentality."*

**Jurea Williams:** *"There was some initial anxiety about what and how this program was going to manifest by both the staff and the participants, however, we all rose to the occasion. Our staff remained motivated and the participants put their own judgements aside to fully embrace a new life-changing program. The challenges faced with this first class allowed us to learn and grow for the next and future classes. As represented in our logo, we are seed planters and trust that someone will come behind us and water those seeds so that the participants and graduates can grow into their full potential."*






**"I AM POSSIBLE" GRADUATION**  
FIRST CLASS OF NEW SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAM



**"I AM POSSIBLE" GRADUATION**  
FIRST CLASS OF NEW SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAM



-  WestCare Nevada
-  @westcarenevada
-  @westcarenevada



## Looking Back on the Legacy of WestCare Ohio/East End

By Jan Lepore-Jentleson, Executive Director

**WestCare Ohio's** creed that we have adopted from the ancient philosopher, Lao Tzu, says it all: *"Go to the people. Live with them. Learn from them. Love them. Start with what they know. Build with what they have. But with the best leaders, when the work is done, the task accomplished, the people will say, 'We have done this ourselves.'"*



When WestCare Ohio, originally known as **East End Community Services**, or just East End, began working in the Twin Towers Neighborhood of Dayton, we asked the community how we could help. The answer came back loud and clear: *"Our children have no dreams. Help them be successful."* That led us on a 24-year journey to explore, understand, and try to mitigate the limiting effects on human potential that arise from poverty: poor quality urban education, low wages, steep barriers to healthcare and nutritious food, the impact of the stressors of poverty on the developing brain, and the compounding impacts of crime, addiction, behavioral health, inadequate housing, and the lack of social cohesion in a neighborhood. We learned that most poverty seen in Dayton is generational and that the odds of, *"Lifting oneself out of poverty"* are slim without a lot of help, personal motivation, and luck.




We pledged ourselves years ago to create the conditions whereby people could access those opportunities that they need to be successful, to improve academic outcomes for children and youth, and to mitigate conditions and beliefs that hold kids and families back.

To this day, WestCare Ohio/East End Community Services' mission remains true: *"To listen to and work with the people of Inner East Dayton to build a prosperous, caring, and healthy community that nurtures disadvantaged children and families toward success and to break the cycle of generational poverty."*



 East End Community Services

 @eastendcommunityservices



## Recognizing Our Outstanding Support Staff

By Nancy Pine, Case Manager



The **VETcare Transitional Program** in Salem, Oregon has nine full time staff members - many who are support staff. Our support staff includes our night monitors and kitchen staff. We would like to recognize their support of our facility and know that if they weren't doing their jobs behind the scenes, our program wouldn't be nearly as successful!

**Denise Hoover**, our Kitchen Manager, has been with our program for about a year and a half. She started off as a part-time cook and because of her amazing work ethic and skills in the kitchen, she was promoted to a full-time position and eventually to the manager position. Our kitchen provides three hot meals a day to our 30 residents and she ensures that not only are the meals nutritious, but they're tasty as well.

**Danny Klavinger**, one of our two-night monitors, joined our team after being a resident of VETcare. Since he knows how our organization works, he has been essential to our nighttime team. He has a history in counseling and previously working with individuals who had substance abuse issues. He is a Veteran and knows how to communicate with his fellow Vets. Not only is he a night monitor, but he is a mentor for many of our residents.

**Ian McGee**, our most recent addition to VETcare, works as a kitchen staff. Ian decided to change his career path when he joined us. He was a certified welder working for a fuel tank manufacturing company. During his young adulthood he was trained in Job Corps to be a food service worker. He decided that his passion is cooking, so he decided to join our team. Ian has added spice to our kitchen and has proven himself to be a valuable asset to our team!

**Kyle Read**, our other night monitor, moved to our area from Arizona. He has his Bachelor's in Psychology and is attending classes online to get his Master's in Social Work. He is the son of a retired Air Force Veteran, so he understands Veterans and has been around them most of his life. His goal is to eventually work for the Department of Veterans' Affairs as a Social Worker.

We thank all of our support employees for all that they do to make this facility run so smoothly! Without them, our facility wouldn't be the success that it is today!



## Biba Mes CHamoru!

By Chanelle Ramiro, Youth Educator, and Regina Shiroma, Research Assistant

While our WestCare family and the nation observed the month of March as **Women's History Month**, **WestCare Pacific Islands** joined our island community in celebrating two of our most valued resources, our women and our culture. Every year, March also showcases **Mes CHamoru**, (CHamoru Heritage Month) which brings our island community together to celebrate the rich history of Guam and its indigenous people who continue to protect and preserve CHamoru culture, language, and heritage. Rooted in ancestral matrilineal society, it was through the mother's lineage that wealth and resources such as land were passed from one generation to the next. This custom is carried through time by fierce famalao'an (women) leaders who continue to champion the empowerment of i Taotao Tâno (the people of the land). To have both be celebrated in the same month is only fitting as it calls attention to the strength and resilience of our island.

Biba Mes CHamoru! Biba Famalao'an!



WestCare Pacific Islands



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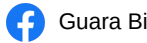
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**Guara Bi Puerto Rico Aids in Identifying our Homeless Populations**

By Elizabeth Roldan, Program Assistant

Our **Homeless Point-In-Time Count** in Puerto Rico took place this past March. Our staff and volunteers from Guara Bi went out into the community and provided counseling services, free HIV and COVID-19 testing, and offered other psychological and support services. Our volunteers were excited to finally go out into the streets after two years of COVID-19 restrictions. Before the start of the event, our volunteers and staff dedicated their time to preparing personal hygiene and disinfectant items for the homeless population. Thanks to the count, we can identify the needs of the homeless in Puerto Rico and give our government an idea of the public policies needed to aid this population, which in most cases, lack not only material resources - but physical and mental health services too.

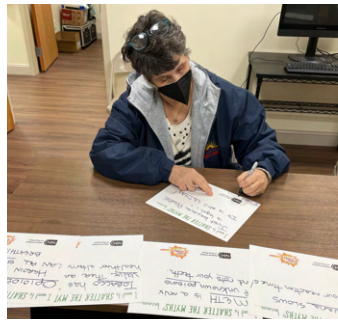


**WestCare Caribbean Visits Argentina**

By Victoria Osuna, Administrative Assistant

Social Clinic Coordinator for WestCare Latin America and Caribbean, Mrs. Iris de Leon and Coordinator ORP for Caribe-Guaitiao Project-Natiao Project, Mrs. Irisbel Nuñez, visited several facilities of **Viviré** and **Modelo Minnesota Foundation** in Argentina. During this visit, they were able to discuss different projects with different employees such as their needs, the work that they do, and the construction of new facilities within these foundations.

Mrs. De Leon and Mrs. Nuñez offered workshops and motivational speeches in which professionals participated in both in-person and virtually. They also made an informative presentation regarding all of the activities related to the Caribbean and the help that is granted there, mentioning all of the centers and projects of WestCare/Guara Bi throughout the Caribbean and all of the work done there. These events were well received by the participants. Thank you, Argentina, for welcoming WestCare Guara Bi!



**Educating the Youth Throughout the State**

By Shandi Hill, Area Director

In the month of March, our **WestCare Tennessee** team had a few busy days of community outreach starting with the **College and Career Fair Day** at the **Cocke County High School** on March 3, where we were able to share information pertaining to prevention education and job readiness training. During the first part of the fair, Madison provided evidence-based material from the **National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) Mind Matters Series and Drug Facts**. Madison was able to speak with 8th graders from schools within the county to equip them with the resources needed to help maintain a drug-free life while taking the next step in their lives - high school. Lisa provided job readiness materials during the latter part of the day. She engaged with the students by discussing what classes they need in school, the classes she teaches, and asking if they had any interest in those. The students asked Lisa if she would come to their school to teach them basic interviewing skills and how to set up a budget. The students felt these two things are vital for them to be successful. Lisa received an overwhelming positive response. The high schoolers were engaged with the information provided by Lisa and loved the job readiness resources she provided.

Together, Madison and Lisa were able to reach a total of 226 students!

Then, during the **National Drugs and Alcohol Facts Week (NDAFW)** from March 21 - 25, our team stayed dedicated to conducting virtual outreach. Madison, Lisa, Ross, and Shandi created unique messages from the NIDA handouts, *"Shatter the Myths"* and *"My Why,"* regarding drugs, alcohol, and other related health topics. A local radio station, **WLIK 97.9 FM**, assisted our team on how to get the word out by pre-recording our daily NDAFW messages in a radio booth. The radio station aired the daily messages for the entire week reaching out to as far as Western North Carolina and East Tennessee. Thank you, WLIK, for giving us the opportunity to expand our youth outreach!



WestCare Tennessee

@WestCareTN



## Building Excitement for Summer Extravaganza 2022

By Jessica Cerda

As the school semester winds down this spring, the students, teachers, and parents at **San Antonio Independent School District's Artemisia Bowden Dual Language Academy** are heating up the atmosphere with excitement for this year's **WestCare Texas Summer Extravaganza**.

"There is already a lot of buzz on campus," said Pam Duesing, Director of the Ella Austin Intensive Reading Intervention Program. "Staff, parents, and children are excited about the BIG summer camp that will happen on the Bowden campus this summer."

The teams at **WestCare Texas** and **Bowden Academy** have partnered to host a Summer Extravaganza on the Bowden Campus, next door to the WestCare headquarters at the **Ella Austin Community Center**.

The Summer Extravaganza is a summer camp for children between the ages of six to 15 designed to offer fun and creative learning opportunities to sharpen their reading and math skills. In addition, there will be enrichment activities involving the arts, yoga, sports, STEM, financial literacy, and educational field trips to explore different museums and attractions around Central Texas. The **NBA Foundation**, one of WestCare's Summer Extravaganza sponsors, will support the sports activities during the camp. The Summer Extravaganza will host 150 kids from June 6 to August 5, Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.



WestCare Texas



## Introducing the 'Meet the Team' Series

By Maudiana John-Baptiste, Youth Service Support Coordinator

Our Prevention Coordinator, Brandy Brookes and Youth Service/Recovery Support Coordinator, Maudiana John-Baptiste are always working to keep our Virgin Islands community updated via social media. They created and rolled out a Meet the Team series introducing **The Village's Adolescents in Recovery and Community Connections (ARCC)** adolescent program as well as the staff who will be providing the much-needed services to our 12 to 25-year-old population. They updated the community on our **Progressive Lifestyles Program**, which offers free HIV/HEP-C testing to individuals ages 12 to 24. Together, staff from both programs collaborated to serve the students at the University of the Virgin Islands' Albert A. Sheen campus where they shared information about the programs and provided HIV/HEP-C testing. The collaboration did not stop there as both programs also attended the grand opening of the Midre Cummings Park in Frederiksted. We are grateful for these opportunities to witness the continued development of fun resources for the children and their families in our community!



The Village - VI Partners in Recovery Inc / WestCare



**Honoring Veterans and Our Country's Flag**

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

Richard White, an Army Veteran and past commander from the American Legion Post 227, resides near the **Evergreen Washelli Memorial Park**, once designated the "Arlington of the West." As a child, he had visited this expansive cemetery on the edge of Seattle with his mother to place flowers on his grandparents' grave. Now, he has accepted a new mission, **The Veterans Flag Project**. He participates in leading a group of people and organizations whose vision is to educate and ensure U.S. flags adorning the graves of Veterans are given the care and handling that is due and required under the law.

This unique mission was formed in January 2022 as Richard walked the cemetery with his dog and observed hundreds of U.S. flags piled into the cemetery's dumpsters. At that moment, Richard decided we could do better than using common garbage receptacles to dispose of worn flags. He also understood this violated the U.S. Flag Code, Title 4, Section 8 which states, "The flag, when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem of display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning." He recognized this presented an opportunity to educate, involve youth and the community, and honor our Veterans.

The management of Evergreen Washelli enthusiastically supported Richard's efforts. He shared his vision with another leader from Post 227, Richard Garrison, who quickly recruited local Elks Clubs to the mission. Within weeks, this working partnership had grown to include Boy Scouts and multiple American Legion Posts and Elks Clubs. Protocols were adopted and tasks assigned for the triaging, restoration, and proper retiring of the flag in a fire pit. In less than three months, the Veterans Flag Project washed and prepared over 7,000 flags for deployment again to the graves of veterans. During that same period, almost 3,000 flags were properly disposed of in a fire pit with a ceremony, as required.

The vision of the project is to continue to educate citizens on how to properly care for and honor unwanted or worn U.S. flags. The idea is to schedule dates with a participating local company where the flags can be collected for proper restoration or retirement honors.



**Educating and Uplifting the Community**

By the Staff of WestCare Wisconsin

On March 19, **WestCare Wisconsin** participated in **Jammin' 98.3's The Gathering 2022** at the Potawatomi Hotel & Casino in Milwaukee. We are extremely proud of our team for showing up and presenting to the community all that we have to offer for those in Harambee. Our staff was able to educate our community on gun safety, community-based crime reduction, community referrals for our Credible Messengers, community cleanups, community-organized block watches, prescription drug take back events, the poster/art contest with the Drug Free Community Coalition, and an awareness campaign organized by Life Skills Training and Youth Services. We were also able to network and create connections for our weekly **WestCare Wisconsin E.A.T.S. Food Pantry**. The event was simply awesome and ended with a spectacular fashion show. Thank you Jammin' 98.3 for having us!

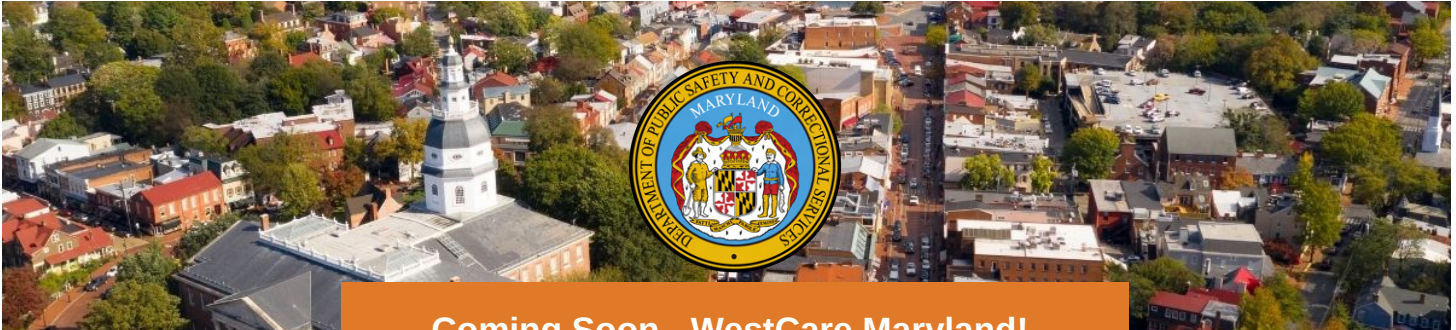


WestCare Wisconsin



@westcare.wi

# Grants & Resource Development



Coming Soon - WestCare Maryland!

By Cecily Moreland, *Grant Development Officer*

WestCare was recently awarded three contracts to provide Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Treatment and SUD Screening and Assessment Services throughout 15 **Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS)** facilities. DPSCS is one of the largest state agencies in Maryland with nearly 12,000 employees, and a budget of close to \$1.2 billion. Public Safety operates 19 institutions, including several pretrial facilities and 42 Parole and Probation offices throughout the state.

Throughout the last four decades, WestCare has experienced immense growth by entering states or territories when invited by community leaders and stakeholders to fill service gaps, provide technical assistance or to collaborate with other partners. Maryland DPSCS recognizes our expert knowledge, capacity, capability and history of success in working with offenders and their families. By infusing innovation and science into the conception, execution and evaluation of our correctional programming, WestCare ensures that our corrections partner will achieve their desired outcomes.

WestCare will establish and administer various American Society of Addictive Medicine (ASAM) levels of care treatment based on the screening and assessments conducted in three regions throughout the State of Maryland (Eastern, Western, and Central). The expected treatment levels of care will include but are not limited to the Therapeutic Community (TC) model for both residential and outpatient (OP) services and will collaborate with the DPSCS regarding Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT). WestCare will provide services and training that includes peer support (mentoring), cultural and gender sensitivity, training of custody personnel (specifically, Suboxone-related therapy and diversion prevention), alternatives to medication-based pain management, and trauma-based therapy.

As a seasoned provider, WestCare plans to create a continuum of evidence-based and person-centered care. This will be done by working with local Veteran and minority subcontractors in Maryland to provide clinical excellence, coordinated access, and collaborative innovation.

Please join us in welcoming WestCare Maryland to the family!

# Information Technology



## Overview

While social media is a fantastic way to communicate, share, and have fun with others, it is also a low-cost way for cyber criminals to trick and take advantage of millions of people. Don't fall victim to the three most common scams on social media.

## Investment Scams

Have you ever seen a post about an investment opportunity that promises a huge return on investment in an extremely quick amount of time with allegedly little to no risk? The reality is that these guarantees are really investment scams. Fraudsters simply steal your money after you pay them. These scams often include ads or success stories from past customers to promote the investments, but those are just fake testimonials to increase your trust. Often these investment scams are about investing in crypto-currencies or real estate, and payment is often made in crypto-currencies or other non-standard payment methods. If an investment seems too good to be true, it most likely is. Remember, there is no such thing as guaranteed, high-return investments. Only invest your money in trusted, well-known resources, not strangers you meet online pushing a get-rich-quick scheme.

## Romance Scams

When criminals develop an online relationship with someone they've identified as lonely or vulnerable to trick them out of money, this is known as a romance scam. The criminal will use whatever tactics they can to build trust, including exchanging fake photos or sending gifts, then share a tragic story about needing money to pay for expenses such as hospital bills or for travel costs to visit the victim in person. To avoid actually meeting in person, these criminals may say they work in an industry that prevents them from doing so, such as construction, international medicine, or the military. They often request money as a wire transfer or gift cards to get cash quickly and remain anonymous. These types of scams are not only common on social media but with online dating apps. Be careful with people you meet online, take things slowly, and never send money to someone you have only communicated with online.

Additionally, if you believe someone you know may be vulnerable to such an attack or is in an online relationship that raises these flags, offer to help them. Sometimes it can be very difficult for someone engrossed in an emotional connection to see just how dangerous the situation has become.

## Online Shopping Scams

Online shopping scams happen when you purchase items online at extremely low or unbelievable prices but never receive them. Tempting ads on social media will promote incredible prices and have links that take you to sites that appear to be legitimate and sell well-known brands, but these sites are often fake. Be wary of websites that have no contact information, broken contact forms, or use personal email addresses. Type the name of the online store or its web address into a search engine to see what others have said about it. Look for terms like "fraud," "scam," "never again," and "fake." Be very cautious of online promotions or deals that appear too good to be true. It's far safer to purchase items that may cost slightly more, but from trusted sites that you or your friends have used before.

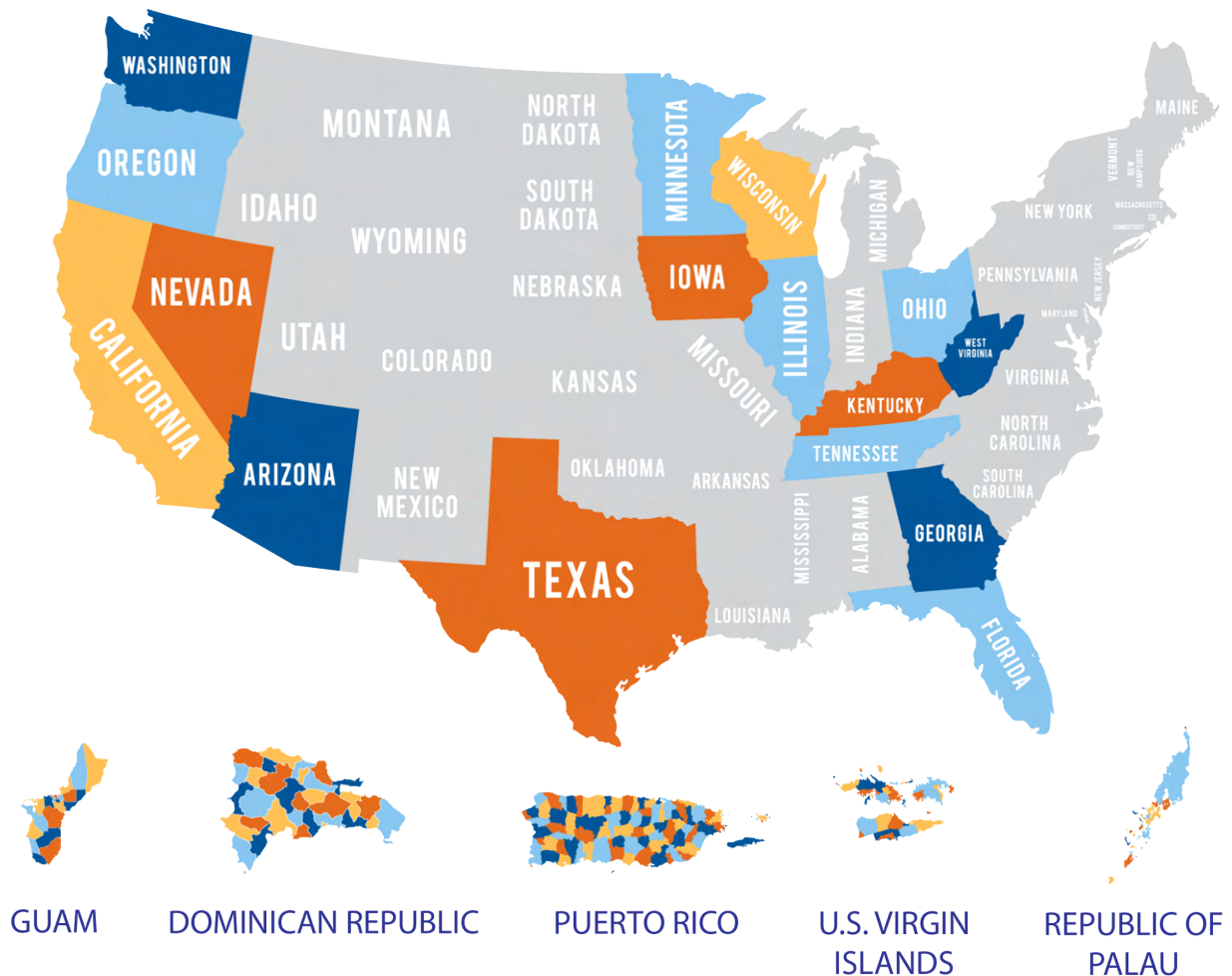
The good news is: You are your own best defense. You are in control. Just be on alert for scams like these and you will be able to make the most of social media safely and securely.

*This article originally appears in the SANS OUCH! Newsletter (SANS OUCH! Newsletter | Top Three Social Media Scams | April 2022)*

# *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.

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