



UPLIFTING THE HUMAN SPIRIT · UPLIFTING THE HUMAN SPIRIT · UPLIFTING THE HUMAN SPIRIT



WESTCARE EXPRESS

DECEMBER 2020 THE WESTCARE EXPRESS NEWSLETTER

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A Welcome by our President/CEO, Dick Steinberg



Dick Steinberg

“WestCare Family,
 Welcome to WestCare’s National Newsletter, **The WestCare Express!** As this year comes to a close, I’d like to take this moment to reflect on the high points of what has been an unprecedented year for all of us. Amidst the challenges, our organization has continued to grow. Our stateside operations saw new programs open in AZ, CA, GA, IL, KY, NV, OH, TN and TX while our overseas operations in Guam and Puerto Rico collectively welcomed on three new programs. These are all remarkable results of the hard work and dedication of each of our team members. In direct response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we saw our staff and leadership truly go above and beyond in so many ways that were awe inspiring. From swiftly developing protocol for how to continue providing our services in accordance with the CDC’s safety guidelines to transitioning case management to a virtual format in an effort keep the safety of our staff, the individuals that we serve and our families as our top priority. These were just two of the ways that we all worked together to find the safest and most effective way to continue the amazing work that we do within our communities across the organization.

While this past year has had its challenges, please know that all of your efforts have truly been taken to heart. Heroes do in fact work here and I am confident that we will continue to rise to the occasion to serve those who entrust us with their care! Thank you all for doing your part to Uplift the Human Spirit!”

Thank you,
 Richard “Dick” Steinberg
 President & CEO

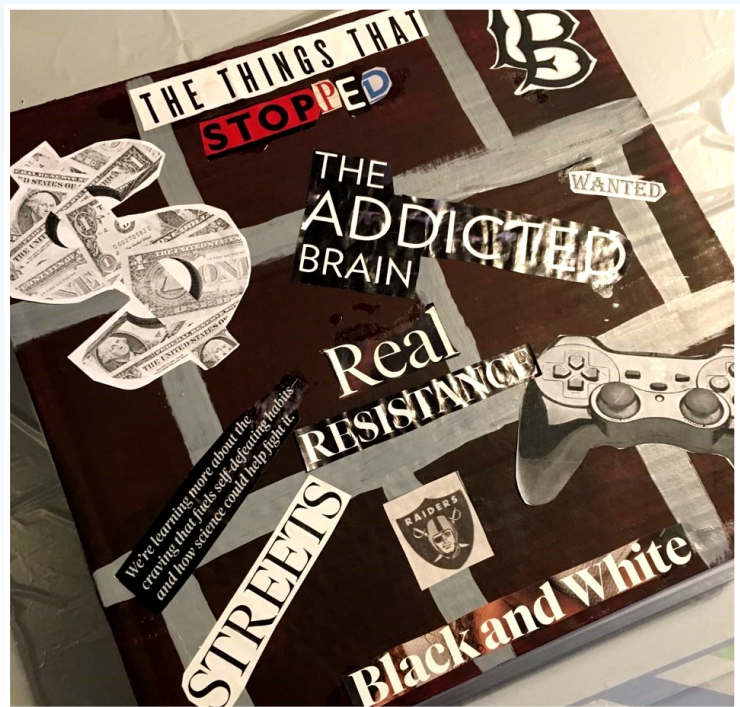
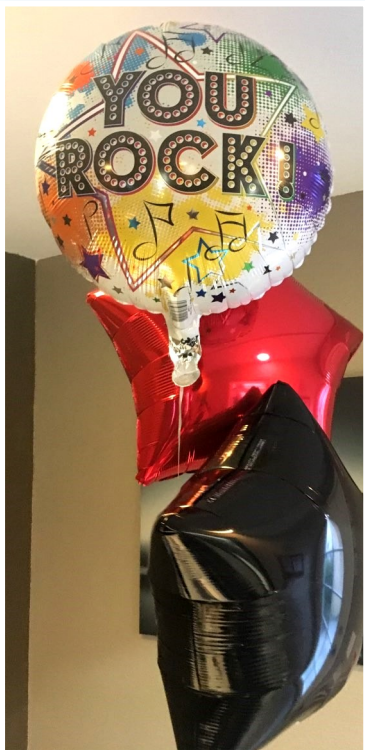
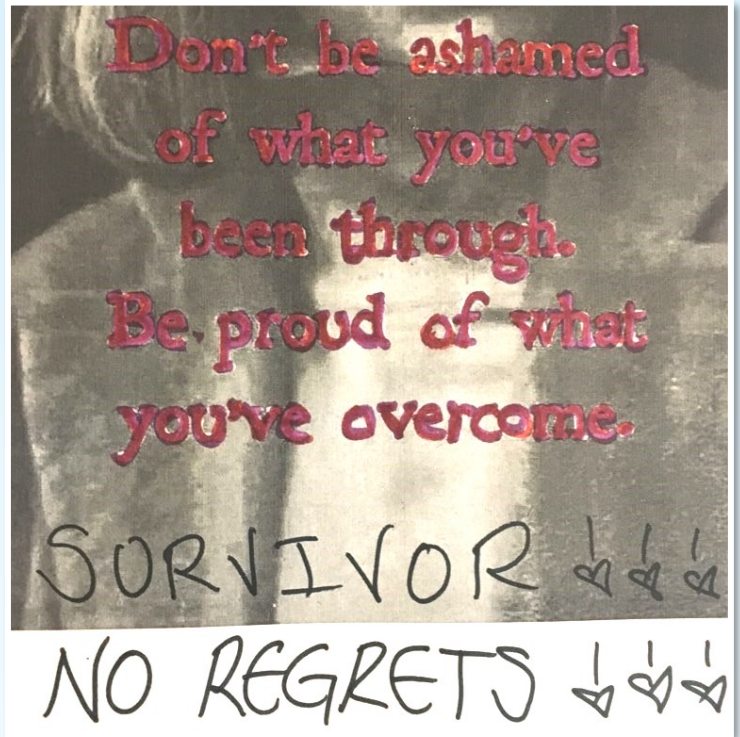




ARIZONA: "Graduation at Hildy's House!"

By Emily Selby, Case Manager/BHT, WestCare Arizona

"WestCare Arizona's Hildy's House residential treatment program is proud to announce that we have had two graduates within the past month! We are extremely proud of the graduates as they have worked hard to achieve personal goals. The knowledge gained at Hildy's House will help them as they continue on their path of recovery. Our program has been up and running and proves to be a success as we watch the women that we serve thrive for a better tomorrow! Each graduate receives a private ceremony and certificate of completion. We look forward to these milestones for each woman that enters our doors. It is uplifting to say goodbye to them as they enter society as clean and sober women!"



**CALIFORNIA: “The Bezos Day 1 Families Fund”**

*By Michael Mygind, Marketing Specialist,
WestCare California*



“In December, we were honored to be selected as a recipient of a **\$2.5 million grant** on behalf of the **Day 1 Families Fund** to continue helping those who are experiencing homelessness find and maintain permanent housing!

“Our organization prides itself in the impact that we have made, with the support of the other agencies in our community, to successfully transition the men, women and families that we serve from a state of homelessness to one of dignity, confidence and security. With the generous support that we have received from the Day 1 Families Fund, we will assist even more families in obtaining housing. On behalf of our staff and those that we serve, thank you for joining us in Uplifting the Human Spirit!” said **Shawn Jenkins, Deputy Chief Operating Officer of WestCare Foundation’s Western Region.**”

Through the generosity of the Bezos Day One Fund, we will be able to continue to house and assist more Central Valley families like Akisha’s. This is her story:

“Akisha enrolled at WestCare California’s Home Sweet Home rapid rehousing program in September of 2019. In her initial meeting, our Case Manager learned that her Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) was ending and her CalFresh and CalWorks benefits were deactivated. She expressed feelings of frustration and later as we built a relationship, her Case Manger learned she was going through grief and her emotional and mental health desperately needed support.

Step by step, as we set her goals and in a matter of four months, Akisha worked hard and was able to reenroll in her public benefits, gain more income, achieve Section 8 residency and enroll in mental health services.

In late October 2020, she moved out with her daughter, Shairone, into permanent housing, renewed her guard card and is in the process of looking for employment. Shairone is graduating high school early and is already applying to colleges and universities with an interest in pursuing a degree in the medical field!

No matter how tough things became, through hard work, Akisha never stopped trying. The results of her perseverance are a testament to her accomplishments!”



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: “Guara Bi - DR Signs a MOU With the UTESA”

*By Yolanda Gonzalezmalave, Program Assistant,
Caribbean and Latin American Region*



“On November 11, 2020, Mr. Ivan Moratiel and Mr. Yuniór Sánchez from Guara Bi - Dominican Republic signed an agreement with Mrs. María Elena Cruz, Rector from the Technological University of Santiago (UTESA) - the second most prestigious university in the Dominican Republic. With this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), the university will send students to offer assistance in psychology to all of our clients. Additional members of senior management of the university were also on hand for this event.”



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: “Guara Bi - DR Receives a Visit From the NDC”

*By Yolanda Gonzalezmalave, Program Assistant,
Caribbean and Latin American Region*

“Guara Bi - Dominican Republic also received a visit from leadership on behalf of the National Drug Council (NDC) of the Dominican Republic. Dr. Rafael Guerrero Peralta, MD, President of the NDC, expressed his intention and interest to maintain collaboration with Guara Bi. Meanwhile, Dr. Carmen Rodríguez Del Rosario, MD, the new head of the NDC’s User Services Department, expressed just how impressed she was with the order and cleanliness of our facility.”





FLORIDA - Florida Keys: "The G/CC Highlights The Heron"

By Clare Condra, Administrator, Guidance/Care Center

"This has been a difficult year for us all, with challenges we never thought that we would be facing. **The Heron**, a state licensed Assisted Living Facility, has been on lockdown since March with restrictions on visitors and community activities for our residents. We have been very fortunate so far to have avoided any cases of COVID-19.

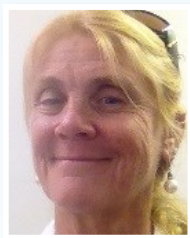
The Heron has been providing a safe home and supportive services for up to 14 adults in Marathon, FL since 1988. Our staff and residents have adapted to the many changes imposed by this pandemic and as we work in our new reality, we have seen relationships grow stronger as we all pull together. With our residents staying home each day, there has been a greater demand for in-house activities and creative ways to offer our services masked face to masked face - all while socially distancing! We have been providing telehealth services and have communicated virtually to keep everyone connected. Staff from the Personal Growth Center have been providing groups virtually and on-site with the inclusion of a morning exercise class to keep everyone moving. Our residents have kept busy and have had fun taking part in games of BINGO as well as quizzes, meditation, arts and crafts or by renewing former hobbies such as writing, playing

guitar and gardening. In September, residents were excited to welcome visitors back under strict guidelines and helped prepare a space for outdoor visitation. By doing this, some were able to reunite with family members.

Many of our residents will not be visiting family this holiday season, so now more than ever, they are looking forward to a Christmas celebration with gifts, tree and decorations here at The Heron. We have been working closely with our local Moose Chapter who have provided Halloween candy, a Thanksgiving dinner and are now busy Christmas shopping for our residents. Additionally, at this time of the year, we send out our annual holiday fundraising campaign letter to the community.

These essential workers having been working tirelessly and doing all that they can in these difficult times to provide our high-risk population with as much normalcy as possible to keep them healthy and engaged during the current pandemic. The Guidance/Care Center appreciates all that they do for our community.

We wish you a very happy holiday season and a peaceful and healthy New Year!"



Susan Ambrosius



Mo Casas



Ceri Checkley



Clare Condra

Our Frontline Heroes



Sina DeAsmundis



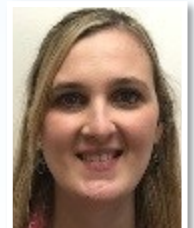
Preston Hickson



Alma McClintock



Tina Perez



Brittany Shedd



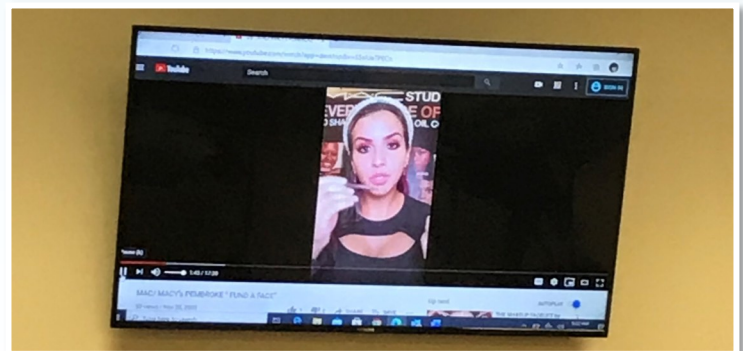
FLORIDA - South Florida: "Giving Tuesday: Fund-A-Face"

*By Beatriz Del Rio, Marketing Director,
WestCare Florida – The Village South*

"As part of Giving Tuesday, observed on the following Tuesday after each Thanksgiving, The Village South launched the Fund-A-Face campaign in collaboration with Macy's and MAC Cosmetics. The focus of the campaign was on helping our clients who were ready to re-enter the workforce. For every \$90.00 donation, a MAC Cosmetics makeup kit was purchased and given to the women and mothers that we serve as they prepared for interviews. Through our efforts, we were able to provide a kit to all 24 of our women served thanks to our generous donors! On December 16th, we hosted a Q&A makeup tutorial session for our residential clients at The Village South featuring a tutorial created by MAC'S makeup artists!

More than just a path to financial security, employment has tangibles ranging from personal happiness and other mental factors to one's physical well-being. When individuals maintain steady work, they also strengthen their families' bond and are able to contribute to the communities in which they live.

Through workforce readiness services provided by our Individual Placement Support education and employment programs, we are able to help the women that we serve gain their confidence back. Our partnership with Macy's and MAC cosmetics has allowed us to give our clients a self confidence boost to not only love, but believe in themselves! On behalf of our staff and the women and families that we proudly serve, we would like to send our most heartfelt thanks to these wonderful community partners and our donors who truly gave from their hearts! Thank you all for joining us in fulfilling our mission of Uplifting the Human Spirit!"





GEORGIA: "The John A. Bascom VetsCare Complex Receives a Special Veterans Day Visit"

By Eldredge Washington, Community Service Coordinator, WestCare Georgia

"In observance of Veterans Day in November, the Brothers of the Nabbar Temple No. 128 Prince Hall Shriners came to honor former WestCare employee and Veteran, John A. Bascom, as well as the residents of the John A. Bascom VetsCare Complex that was named in his honor. They brought along with them gift bags filled with hygiene items, snacks, socks and more! We would like to thank them for this warm gesture and their continued support of all of those who have served for our country!"

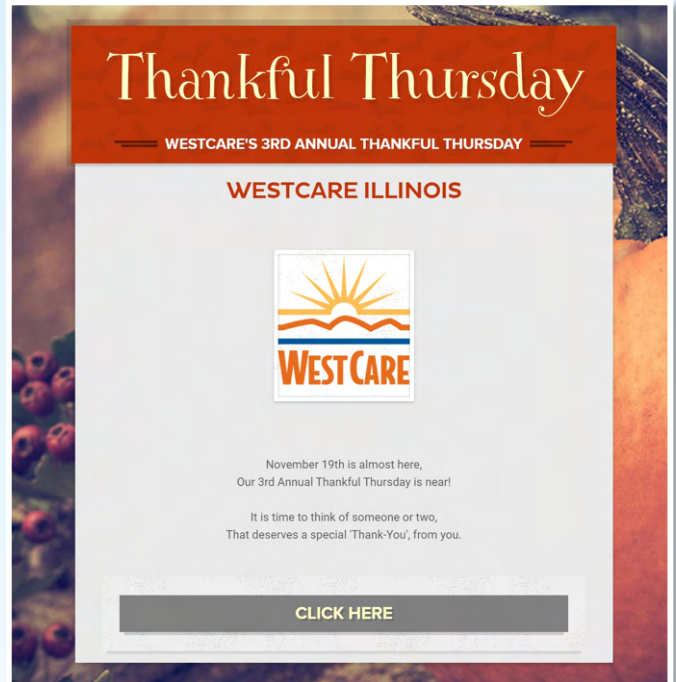




ILLINOIS: “Thankful Thursday”

*By Melissa Valentine M.Ed., CADC, Program Coordinator,
WestCare Illinois*

“During the month of November, WestCare staff in Illinois participated in Thankful Thursday social distanced style. Despite being conducted virtually as opposed to our regular in-person exchange of thank you cards to fellow staff, it may have been even more sincere and heartfelt than it has been in years’ past due to the effort that everyone put forth to ensure that that we celebrated one another during this difficult time. This year was a unique effort as we celebrated what we were thankful for as an entire state rather than at each individual facility.”



ILLINOIS: “The Chicago Cermak Office Continues to Thrive!”

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



“The Chicago Cermak office, which provides outpatient substance use disorder (SUD) treatment, youth mentoring and their new Partnership for Success program, has been thriving during these trying times. They have been able to meet with clients in unique ways and have also been participating in local events pop-up events to educate neighborhoods about the harm of drug use and how they can combat it and if needed, seek assistance. On November 16, they teamed with a local charity to hold a very successful and uplifting food drive and celebrate Thanksgiving with all involved!”



IOWA: "A Veteran Gives Back During the Holidays"

By Barbara Ruiter, Data Entry/Receptionist,
WestCare Iowa/FAVA



"There is a Veteran in our Forest City Continuum of Care (CoC) House that helps fill the Toys for Tots box every year. He does it with such joy that it is truly

wonderful to watch him. He chooses to support with toys for

boys as the box generally receives toys for girls, especially Barbies. This year, he donated fire trucks, a helicopter, a dump truck and other fun things. He makes a point to show the Family Alliance for Veterans of America (FAVA) staff how they work when he brings them in, noting each toys special features. He's always overjoyed and excited to bring in the toys.

Prior to joining our program, he had been homeless for 16 years, living in an older camper, with no electricity or water. This was not living, but surviving at best. It offered protection from the wind, rain and snow but it could not have been warm in the brutal sub-zero winters of Northern Iowa.

His past didn't change his generosity for children during Christmas time. Our hope is that the children receiving the toys are equally as excited. Happy Holidays and thank you for your ongoing support!"



IOWA: "A Local Air Force Veteran Pays It Forward!"

By Tami Nelson, Veteran Advocate, WestCare Iowa/FAVA



"Jeff Mitchell has owned and operated the Mitchell's Bar and Grill in Leland, Iowa since 2008. Mitchell's is known for its fantastic chicken, delectable ribs and Friday fish fry's. Jeff is also a proud sponsor of FAVA. He first became acquainted with our program in 2013 when he participated in our first chili cook-off. A Veteran himself, Jeff served four years in the U.S. Air Force and was stationed in Colorado. He loves to give back to local Veterans.

Jeff is an outstanding member and contributor to his community! He recently sponsored a take-out dinner a week before Thanksgiving in November for our local fire departments, police, EMTs, healthcare providers and essential workers in our area. He is also a proud sponsor of many local organizations in and around Winnebago County such as the Funky Monkey Gymnastic School.

Jeff once again outdid himself with his generosity by sponsoring a drive-up/take out dinner on Sunday, December 13th, 2020 with proceeds going to support our services and Veterans served at FAVA! All in all, he raised \$3,500 in support of our program!

Thank you, Jeff, for your ongoing support! We appreciate your thoughtfulness!

We encourage all local patrons to support his restaurant to help keep them open for years to come!"

**KENTUCKY:** “WestCare Kentucky Hosts a Job Fair”

*By Jeremie Delauder, MAT Research Assistant,
WestCare Kentucky*

“With the anticipated opening of our new substance abuse facility for women, the **WestCare Kentucky Center for Healthy Families** in Lookout, KY hosted a job fair on November 10th for our WestCare programs in Pike County.

There were a host of positions available for applicants to interview for including openings at our men’s and women’s treatment programs at the **Pike County Detention Center (PCDC)**, the **Kentucky Center for Healthy Families**, the **Hal Rogers Appalachian Recovery Center** and the **Perry Cline Emergency Shelter**.

The optimism of providing employment opportunities to a small community that has suffered since the loss of coal mining related jobs was high for WestCare Kentucky. Although participation was not as high as expected due to the current pandemic, organizers of the job fair were able to make recommendations that filled most available positions. Any positions that remained open are always available by visiting <https://westcare.com/page/get-involved> 02f

WestCare Kentucky is very excited to welcome each of our new employees to the team!”



**WESTCARE
JOB FAIR**

Held at the previous Lookout Elementary
November 10, 2020
10 a.m.—2 p.m.

Counselor technician, case manager, &
counselors positions available at Pikeville,
Ashcamp and Lookout locations.

Interviews will be conducted on site.





NEVADA: "The Nevada CAC Gives Back To the Men of Harris Springs Ranch"

By Darlene Terrill, Regional Administrator of Iowa Operations and Director of Special Projects, WestCare Nevada

"WestCare's adult male residential program, **Harris Springs Ranch**, located on Mt. Charleston was double blessed by the generosity of the **Nevada Community Action Council (CAC)**, whom blessed the men with a delivery of new sweatshirts, hats and gloves. The mountain is starting to get snow filled and it is cold in the evening and early morning hours, so this gift was an absolute necessity! Along with this gift, WestCare

Foundation's new **Development Officer, Mr. Andrew Moran**, made a special delivery on Thanksgiving Eve on behalf of the CAC. The smell of a traditional Thanksgiving meal filled the air with turkeys, all the fixings and pumpkin pies cooking in the kitchen. We are grateful for the generosity of the CAC for making this holiday season a memorable one for our clients receiving treatment services on the mountain. Thank you for sending warmth and good tidings our way!"





OHIO: *"The Senior Prevention Program Promotes Empowerment and Independence"*

By Abby Hofrichter, Communications and Social Media Coordinator with contributions from Wendy Berkshire, Prevention Program Coordinator, Elizabeth Freeze, FARE (Food Access Resiliency Enterprise) Coordinator and Karen Via, Health, Safety and Prevention Initiatives Manager, WestCare Ohio

"The month of November was a time for us to reflect on our gratitude for what we already have and for what we've received at East End Community Services.

In early November, East End received a donation through the Montgomery County Drug-Free Coalition to create care baskets for individuals going into recovery treatment. Two of our mentors, Kelly and Caroline, were tasked with coordinating these baskets. Simple comfort and care items are often so meaningful for individuals entering treatment - providing small bursts of joy and a reminder of their community's support for them.

We were equally grateful to help serve over 100 households meals, including a wonderful Thanksgiving meal in partnership with Miami Valley Meals. Our Food Access Resiliency Enterprise

(FARE) team became aware of some additional need for non-perishable meals in addition to the frozen meals that this program provides and organized a canned food drive to help bridge that gap.

Finally, our Camp Mariposa campers attended their 2nd successful virtual camp in late November. Each camper received a hand-delivered basket with supplies including hot cocoa and cookie decorating, art project supplies, games and group activities. The two-day camp was filled with discovery, bonding and cheer. Even more exciting is that despite being virtual for over 6 months, this camp created for kids grades 6 -12 who have been affected by a family member's substance abuse, continues to see new enrollment!

To add a little icing to our cake (*and give credit where credit is due*), our Program Coordinator, Wendy Berkshire, was quoted in Eluna's year-end appeal after the director and her team attended one of East End's Camp Mariposa Virtual Campfires. Great Job, Wendy!"





PACIFIC ISLANDS: “Partners Come Together To Give Thanks”

By Brandon Cobb, Veteran Advocate, SSVF/WestCare Pacific Islands

“Most say Guam has only two seasons: Wet and dry. However, Guam also has a third season that WPI’s Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) embraces fully: The giving season. If anything positive has come from the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been the reminder of how our privileges afford us not just the opportunity, but the obligation to give back.

August through November saw COVID cases spike exponentially. As a result, SSVF wanted to expand how we serve our Veterans to show gratitude. This served as a reminder

of the spirit of the season and provided vestiges of normalcy in an abnormal time. SSVF collaborated closely with our **Community Action Council, the University of Guam’s JROTC program** and a local media affiliate, **KUAM**, to deliver 200 meals to our Veteran families with distribution running from Veterans Day to Thanksgiving.

SSVF keeps fulfilling our obligation to give by preparing and distributing holiday packages to our Veterans. While these packages may not replicate the joy of previous holiday seasons, we hope they serve as reminders to our Veterans and ourselves that joy is still possible.”



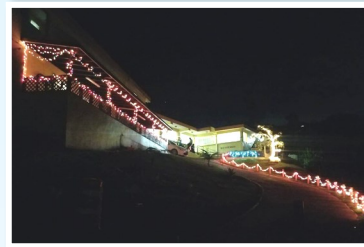


PUERTO RICO: "Thanksgiving and Christmas Lights!"

*By Belinda Morales, Program Assistant,
Guara Bi - Caguas/WestCare Puerto Rico*

"During the past weeks, Thanksgiving lunches and dinners were held in our different facilities. Our clients, staff and family members helped in the preparation of these lunches and dinners.

Also, our staff along with some very excited clients, gathered and put up Christmas lights and decorations. Everyone, with happiness and hope for a brighter future, enjoyed the teamwork and companionship that characterizes **Guara Bi** and the value that comes with brotherhood and our shared love for life. All of us at Guara Bi - Puerto Rico would like to wish the entire WestCare family a very Merry Christmas and a happy, better and brighter New Year!"



PUERTO RICO: "Staff From The Virgin Islands Pay Us a Visit!"

*By Yolanda Gonzalezmalave, Program Assistant,
Caribbean and Latin American Region*

"Ms. Patricia George and Yomayra Melendez, Direct Care Workers from **The Village - Virgin Island Partners in Recovery** visited Guara Bi in November and toured all of our facilities. They were able to witness the operations and treatment models implemented in our

different programs. In particular, both enjoyed a whole day of being a part of the staff of **Guara Bi - Caguas'** treatment and transitional housing programs, which offer services very similar to those offered by them at **The Village - VIPIR**. Both Patricia and Yomayra will be able to put these practice models and skills to use when working with those that they serve in the Virgin Islands! We truly enjoyed their company and wish them all the success in the world!"





TENNESSEE: "RCRC Graduates Lend a Hand in Their Community"

*By Janice Church, Program Coordinator,
WestCare Tennessee*

"WestCare Tennessee is the treatment provider for the Roane County Recovery Court (RCRC). Participants of the RCRC must do a project to give back to the community at least 60 days before their graduation date. For this project, we had two participants that decided to collect food and donate it to the Roane County Sheriff's Department for their Thanksgiving food drive. One participant also worked with the sheriff's department to pack and distribute the food. One of the participants, JL, organized a fall festival event at the local park and asked for donations of food. After the event, she collected over 300lbs of food! TT, the other participant, also helped her set up different activities and collect food. After gathering it together, the food was donated to the sheriff's department to distribute to people in our community including families that we serve. TT helped other volunteers and the sheriff's department pack and distribute it throughout the community. Both participants reported that it was an amazing feeling to be clean and sober and be able to help the community in a way that they never thought that they would ever be able to! Thank you both for Uplifting the Human Spirit!"





TEXAS: "NFA Paint-A-Thon Brings Volunteers, Police and Homeowners Together to Fight Against Crime"

By Linda Papayanopolus, Community Engagement Coordinator, WestCare Texas



"WestCare Texas teamed up with the Neighborhoods First Alliance (NFA), KROV Community Radio and local volunteers to sponsor the 'Take Pride in

the Eastside Paint-A-Thon' at the home of Gilberto and Alicia Aleman on Saturday, November 21, 2020.

Gilberto, 82, and his wife, Alicia, 68, live a few doors away from the Hays Food Mart, which had over 1,000 police calls in the last five years for all kinds of criminal and drug activity. Hays Food Mart was recently forced to close, as a result of the community organizing efforts led by WestCare Texas and the NFA. The Alemans have lived in their home for over 30 years and been active in their East Side neighborhood as block captains, keeping an eye out for trouble in their neighborhood and assisting those in need.

There are many seniors and disabled homeowners in the Harvard Place neighborhood who are not able to do home maintenance themselves and cannot afford the upkeep of their homes. Over time, more homes deteriorate and it changes the physical condition of the neighborhood - making it more susceptible to crime.

Research has demonstrated that blight, crime and violence often go hand-in-hand. One reason this holds true is because blight decreases residents' use of outdoor spaces. Criminals, in turn, are more apt to use those spaces to carry out illicit activities, believing that no one is likely to intervene. As crime increases, residents flee, which leads to more blight and more crime.

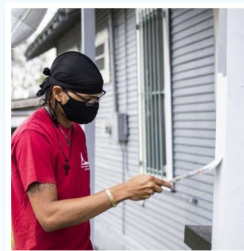
San Antonio Police Chief, William McManus, was on hand greeting neighbors and speaking out against violence. 'This event is one of the best ways that the police can work with the community to establish a good relationship and to let folks know in the neighborhood that we are here and we care,' said McManus.

WestCare Texas is currently partnering with the NFA for community organizing efforts in the Harvard Place Eastlawn Neighborhood aimed at building the capacity of neighborhood residents, community groups, and law enforcement to take back their neighborhoods from crime.

'The NFA has a history and a track record of organizing communities and cleaning up neighborhoods,' said Tommy 'TC' Calvert, President of the NFA. 'We don't agonize. We organize.'

KROV provided a Live Remote Broadcast at the event which featured live radio interviews with Ron Nirenberg, Mayor of the City of San Antonio; The Honorable Tommy Calvert Jr., Bexar County Commissioner for Precinct. 4; Kathryn Brown, Bexar County Constable Precinct. 4; Mario Salas, Former City Councilman for District 2; William McManus, Chief of Police of San Antonio Police Department (SAPD); Captain Troy Torres, Eastside SAPD Substation; Sgt. Dean Reuter, SAPD Eastside SAFFE; Mary Emerson, President of the Harvard Place Eastlawn Neighborhood Association; Sister Gabriella Lohan, Sisters of the Holy Spirit; Greg Jackson, Nation Of Islam; Beverly Watts Davis, Senior Vice President, WestCare Texas and Tommy 'TC' Calvert, Sr., President of the NFA. All event participants received protective masks donated by the Jane Gonzalez, Business Owner of MEDwheels.

'It's events like this that demonstrate WestCare's vision to connect people and resources in order to address our community's most pressing issues,' said Beverly Watts Davis, Senior Vice President, WestCare Texas. 'By working together in the best interest of the neighborhood and by leveraging programs, projects and initiatives that focus on and address the root causes of crime, we can create effective and sustainable change for better outcomes in our community.'





VIRGIN ISLANDS: "Thanksgiving and Christmas Decorations at The Village"

By Yomayra Melendez, Direct Care, WestCare Virgin Islands / The Village - Virgin Islands Partners in Recovery

"The clients and staff of **The Village - VIPIR** enjoyed a Thanksgiving dinner together and gave thanks for all of the blessings that they've received as well as the opportunity to serve some of the most vulnerable communities and uplift their spirits. Decorating our facilities and office during the holiday season has also been a great way to lighten up the mood, embrace festivities and bring all of our staff and clients together. These Christmas decorations are sure to give our office a very festive spirit. From the Caribbean island of St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, we wish to all of our WestCare family a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!"



WASHINGTON: *“WestCare Washington/WAServes: Reducing Historic Artificial Barriers to Transform the Lives of Veterans”*

By Donald Lachman, Special Projects Coordinator and Andrea Talmadge, Regional Coordinator – WestCare Washington/WAServes



“How would you respond if Bill Gates contacted you directly to invite you to help him increase his distribution of billions of dollars in assistance to your

Washington state clients? Well, a scenario similar to that occurred when **Pritz Navaratnasingam, Director of the Seattle VA’s Regional Office**, asked us to assist him and his leadership team to design a new services strategy for rural Veterans. He requested a program approach that benefited from our experience in organizing successful rural outreach practices with innovative community collaborations.

Washington is home to numerous military installations with thousands of active duty service members including those stationed at the largest military installation on the West Coast, Joint Base Lewis-McChord. Additionally, over 700,000 Veterans, dependents and widows call Washington home. Reflecting our nation’s changing demographics, we are experiencing what is often referred to as a ‘Graying of America,’ with over 50% of Washington’s Veterans now being 65 years of age and older.

Data from the U.S. Census Bureau states that the number of Americans age 65 and older is projected to nearly double from 52 million in 2018 to 95 million by 2060 and that the age group’s share of the total population will rise from 16 percent to 23 percent. ‘Baby boomers’ or people born between 1946 and 1964, are now entering or in their 60’s.

These demographic changes are also linked to the increasing population of older adults who must manage their daily needs or those of a spouse while experiencing challenging health, social and financial factors directly affecting their quality of life. Many have expressed that their most important goal is ‘To remain in their community and housing of choice for as long as possible.’

As we know, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), with

resources at historic levels, is our country’s most influential governmental partner responsible for serving our nation’s Veterans. The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), an agency within the VA, holds a powerful position. It is directly responsible for turning on the economic, social and health care engines exclusively available to our Veterans as well as their dependents and widows/widowers. Its mission influences the quality of life for millions of Veterans and often directly determines an individual’s ability to reside in their preferred housing safely.

The VBA is responsible for over 580,000 Washington state Veterans and their dependents receiving approximately 1.5 billion dollars in annual compensation and pension benefits. The majority of these compensation and pension dollars are reinvested back into local economies - benefiting many rural communities.

In Washington, Pritz Navaratnasingam, has responsibility for over 800 full-time employees who help drive over a billion and a half dollars in annual benefits and compensation flowing to Washington Veterans and their households. In November, Pritz reached out to WAServes because of our experience and statewide network.

He requested assistance developing a new rural outreach strategy that will achieve:

- 1) *Increased engagement with clients and providers.*
- 2) *Improved access to timely accurate information.*
- 3) *An increase in fully-developed claims resulting in compensation and benefits.*

Historically, there has been an artificial bureaucratic barrier between the VBA and many community-based Veterans service organizations. This invitation from Pritz may provide an opportunity to reduce barriers and promote a more customer-centered approach to Veterans services stressing a ‘one-on-one’ continuity of attention often needed by Veterans experiencing physical, emotional, environmental or functional challenges.

This also comes at a time when nationally, many Veterans service organizations are experiencing a steep decline in their memberships due to aging participants and other factors. This unfortunate situation continues to reduce the pool of trained service officers sponsored through these organizations to assist Veterans develop their VA claims for benefits and pensions. It will require new strategies and collaborations involving the VBA as well as the community if we are to address this growing gap and ensure all Veterans can obtain the benefits they earned by serving our country.”



WISCONSIN: "Providing Nutrition and Support During the Holidays!"

By Felicia Williams,

LST Program Director, WestCare Wisconsin

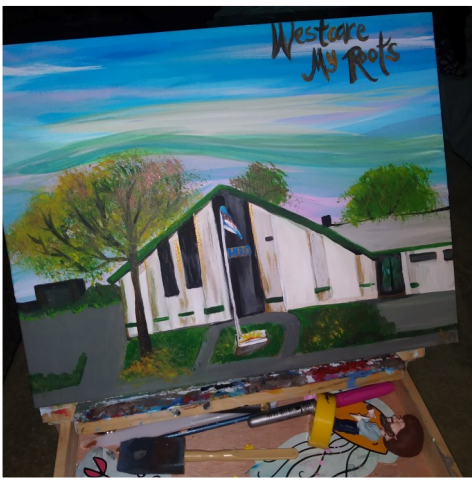
"WestCare Wisconsin has always prided itself in being of assistance to the Harambee Community. During the month of November, there were several Feed the Families events. Our **Community Organizer, Martinez Milton**, joined forces with the **Martin Luther King Jr. Heritage Community Clinic** on Friday November 20th as they provided enough food to feed over 3,000 families! Also during this season, our **Life Skills Training (LST)** program collaborated with one of its partnered sites to provide 35 food boxes to families in need. Robert M. LaFollette Elementary School sent out an S.O.S. for families in need and our **Prevention Specialist, Brandie Bell**, answered the call - communicating with the mobile pantry team to make it happen, ensuring that we could assist by Uplifting the Human Spirit in our own way!"





KUDOS: Our Monthly Shout-Outs to Exceptional Employees

(California) Joslynn Brooks-Davis



“We’d like to thank Joslynn, women’s counselor in Fresno, for once again using her gift of creativity to uplift spirits - this time with

a tribute to a facility that has changed the lives of so many, MLK Residential! Thank you, Joslynn!” - *Michael Mygind, Marketing Specialist, WestCare California*

(Illinois) Carol Rudnick-Goldblatt



“Congrats to Sheridan Correctional Center’s November Employee of the Month, Carol Rudnick-Goldblatt!

Carol started as a Certified Substance Abuse Counselor in November 2017 and she consistently goes above and beyond to do her job efficiently and offer assistance to

others. We appreciate the care, concern and encouragement you provide to your co-workers and clients in which we serve.

Thanks for all that you do!” - *By Melissa Valentine M.Ed., CADC, Program Coordinator, WestCare Illinois*

(Illinois) The Sheridan’s Administrative Staff

“Kudos to the Sheridan administrative staff for all of their assistance with preparing homework assignments for staff to provide to our clients so that they can continue to receive daily treatment. Your hard work and support for our staff and clients is truly appreciated!” - *By Melissa Valentine M.Ed., CADC, Program Coordinator, WestCare Illinois*



(Florida - FL Keys) The Staff of the G/CC

We’d like to share just some of the winners of the Guidance/Care Center’s Autumn 2020 Door Decorating Contest! Congrats to everyone who participated!



Annie Rojas and Maria Sanchez



Sandi Lightfoot



Ceri Checkley

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS: *Celebrating Our WestCare Family!*



Arizona

- January 25th: Donna Sanborn

California

- January 1st: Veronica Gonzales
- January 1st: Michael Mygind
- January 1st: Monica Rodriguez
- January 2nd: Jenny Magdaleno
- January 2nd: Kim Multani
- January 4th: Quendessa Hopwood
- January 6th: Sean Smith
- January 7th: Megan Mahoney
- January 7th: Roy Warren
- January 10th: Nathaniel Brown Jr.
- January 12th: Zhobeida Cruz
- January 12th: Jamison Medcalf
- January 12th: Arcadia Meza
- January 12th: Maria Rodriguez

- January 20th: Ruben Cueva
- January 20th: Jasmine Wendels
- January 23rd: Joseph Cortez
- January 23rd: Stephanie Gonzalez
- January 24th: Manuel Yopez
- January 25th: Edward Crossman
- January 25th: Patricia Rangel
- January 27th: Alicia Ledesma
- January 27th: Marilyn Sataua
- January 29th: Elizabeth Arcila
- January 29th: Karen Trexler
- January 30th: Jennifer Childers
- January 30th: Dawn Davis
- January 30th: Erin Shelton
- January 30th: Ramona Velasquez

Florida

- January 1st: Julio Castro-Gayol
- January 1st: Gregg Cosgrove
- January 1st: Laurence McArthur
- January 1st: James Pressley
- January 4th: Anne Clacema
- January 4th: Diana Clement
- January 4th: Fredeline Merone
- January 4th: Doreen Mobley
- January 5th: Terrian Denny
- January 6th: Andrew Cacciatore
- January 6th: Alexandra Kirkland
- January 6th: Latoya Robinson
- January 7th: Deborah McElroy
- January 7th: Lenisha Watson
- January 10th: Allie Boykin
- January 11th: John Stadelman
- January 12th: Jacklyn Spatzer
- January 12th: Katrina Taylor
- January 13th: Paulina Bollat Alvarez
- January 13th: Artesia Brown
- January 13th: Elaine Comer

- January 14th: Patricia Freire
- January 15th: Jacara Williams
- January 16th: Gwanda Thompson
- January 19th: Sandra Patnode
- January 21st: Patty Hodges
- January 21st: Ruth Valentin
- January 24th: Mallory Delay
- January 24th: Megan Davidson
- January 25th: Gary Messick
- January 26th: Eva Pizarro
- January 26th: Andrea Ramirez
- January 27th: Abbe Schefflin
- January 30th: Shajuana Williams
- January 31st: Mindy Bates
- January 31st: Karen Hubbard

Foundation

- January 5th: Ronda Lieberman
- January 8th: Mary Ellen Pistalu
- January 15th: Daniel Stiles
- January 20th: Patricia Kuhns
- January 22nd: Breyanna Coleman
- January 27th: Michelle Mullins
- January 27th: Juan Toplin

Georgia

- January 24th: Joyce Randle

Illinois

- January 1st: Tina McGee
- January 12th: Kathryn Forst
- January 13th: Ashley Riley
- January 17th: Kristy Hall
- January 21st: Kelley England
- January 21st: Glodonna Trimby
- January 23rd: Lori Andrew
- January 30th: Vicky King

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS: *Celebrating Our WestCare Family!*

Nevada

- January 2nd: Inedria Smith
- January 4th: Judy Palumbo
- January 7th: Laurie Parker
- January 8th: Cassandra Singh
- January 9th: Justin Miller
- January 14th: George Kaiser
- January 23rd: Montana Sie

Ohio

- January 17th: Joshua Francis
- January 26th: Nanci McGuire
- January 27th: Kari Seymour

Oregon

- January 27th: Raymond Powers

Pacific Islands

- January 3rd: Daniel Duenas
- January 3rd: Mildred Lujan
- January 7th: Clarissa Wilson
- January 8th: Christina Cruz
- January 11th: Kathleen Aguon
- January 18th: Jean Macalinao
- January 22nd: Troy Cruz

Puerto Rico

- January 2nd: Jetsenia Rodriguez
- January 4th: Dayana Calderon
- January 7th: Anabel Vazquez Berrios

Tennessee

- January 27th: Kayla Johnson
- January 31st: Sonya Gibson

Virgin Islands

- January 4th: Zulima Webster
- January 26th: Patricia George
- January 30th: Marsha Taylor





EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT: *Congratulations to all Winners of the Wise@Work 30 Day Challenge!*

“During the month of October, WestCare, along with more than 60 organizations globally took part in a 30 Day Mindfulness Challenge to record ONE MILLION MINDFUL WORKPLACE MINUTES! Not only did this group meet the challenge, but we exceeded it! Our WestCare staff recorded 32,500 mindful minutes. Congratulations to all who participated. Thanks to Wisdom Labs for providing us with free access to the premium Wise@Work app. The app features hundreds of science-based mindfulness exercises with iconic teachers like Jack Kornfield and Tara Brach. They even extended our free use through the end of this year! This will help to provide stress relief during the 2020 holiday season.” – *Susan A. Rinaldi, Director of Employee Engagement, WestCare Foundation*

The Following Four Employees Won Annual Premium Memberships from Wise@Work!



*Linette Escobar,
Training Coordinator,
Caguas, Puerto Rico*



*Linda Gilliard,
Counselor,
St. Petersburg, FL*

Not Pictured:

- *Tamara Casey, Supervisor, Laughlin, AZ*
- *Jenzel Rosa, RN, Marathon, FL*

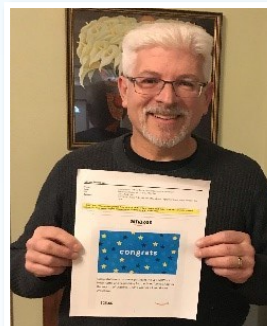
The Following Eight Employees Won \$25 Amazon Gift Cards!



*Melissa Gaither,
Counselor II,
Fresno, CA*



*Sainabou Njie,
Lead Navigator,
Atlanta, GA*



*Carlos Rodriguez,
Program Director,
Chicago, IL*



*Daisy Santiago,
Case Manager,
Guara Bi, Puerto Rico*

Not Pictured:


- *Sage Bierster, BHT, Key West, FL*
- *David Rosynsky, Director of Innovation & Standardization, St. Petersburg, FL*
- *Elvira Gisog, Research Assistant, Hagatna, Guam*
- *Chris Upton, Administrative Services Manager, Henderson, NV*





WESTCARE EXPRESS EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT: January Kindness Calendar

"Hello, WestCare Family. New Year, new calendars? You can let me know if you like it or if you prefer the previous style. Either way, it is time to look forward to a wonderful and promising New Year! Are you ready to become the best version of yourself? It is your time to sparkle. Best always..."

- Susan A. Rinaldi, Director of Employee Engagement, WestCare Foundation

JANUARY 2021



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<p>DECEMBER</p> <table style="font-size: 8px; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>Th</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td></tr> <tr><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td></tr> <tr><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td></tr> </table>	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	29	30	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	<p>FEBRUARY</p> <table style="font-size: 8px; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>Th</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td>31</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td></tr> <tr><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td></tr> <tr><td>28</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td></tr> </table>	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	29	30	31	<p>NEW YEARS DAY 1</p> <p>Plan one big new adventure this year; go skydiving or travel somewhere new!</p>	2
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<p>3</p> <p>Create a care bag for an unhoused person with some gloves, scarf, treats, hygiene products and a gift card.</p>	<p>TRIVIA DAY 4</p> <p>Gather a group of friends online for a fun game of trivia.</p>	<p>NATIONAL BIRD DAY 5</p>  <p>Spend the afternoon in nature bird watching.</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Make an appointment for an annual checkup with your doctor and dentist.</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Participate in a coat drive and place encouraging notes in the coat pockets.</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Share your career goals with your supervisor or a colleague.</p> 	<p>9</p> <p>Collect baby clothes and supplies and donate to new parents who need them.</p>																																																																																																		
<p>10</p> <p>Spend time with your family or friends playing board games, sharing laughs and creating memories.</p>	<p>CLEAN YOUR DESK DAY 11</p> <p>Organize and clean your office today, kicking off the new year with a fresh start.</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Place positive body image quotes in pockets at a department store.</p>	<p>MAKE YOUR DREAMS COME TRUE DAY 13</p> <p>Make a list of goals to accomplish that will help make your dreams come true.</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Donate interview appropriate clothes to disadvantaged individuals entering the workplace at dressforsuccess.org</p>	<p>NATIONAL BAGEL DAY 15</p> <p>Show appreciation! Bring a variety of bagels to work for your team to enjoy.</p>	<p>16</p> <p>FREE DAY! Live your passion.</p>																																																																																																		
<p>17</p> <p>Surprise your local cashier with a flower bouquet and thank them for all their hard work.</p>	<p>MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY 18</p> <p>Reflect today on how you can make a positive difference in the world.</p>	<p>NATIONAL POPCORN DAY 19</p>  <p>Have a movie night at home with popcorn.</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Donate shoes, boots and warm clothes to a local shelter.</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Donate to a charity that helps protect endangered species.</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Plan a neighborhood clean up day & encourage everyone to pick up around the community.</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Volunteer to feed the hungry at a shelter or assist in a local food drive.</p>																																																																																																		
<p>24</p> <p>Start a healthy routine.</p>	<p>COMPLIMENT DAY 25</p> <p>Give at least three compliments out to strangers.</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Write encouraging letters to friends, family and acquaintances who could use an uplift.</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Bake a chocolate cake to enjoy.</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Fulfill an item on a strangers Amazon wishlist (teachers, foster kids, etc.)</p>	<p>29</p>  <p>Listen to an inspiring podcast.</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Plan a spontaneous date with your partner doing things you both love.</p>																																																																																																		
<p>HOT CHOCOLATE DAY 31</p> <p>Enjoy your favorite cup of hot chocolate with those you love.</p>	1	2	3	4	5	6																																																																																																		

Visit www.randomactsofkindness.org for more kindness ideas. © The Random Acts of Kindness Foundation

* "For more great tips and strategies regarding self-care, coping and mindfulness, stay tuned to your email for monthly content as the Coping and Resilience Resource Guide is returning! Remember, in order for us to effectively Uplift the Human Spirit of those that we serve, we must not forget to take proper care of ourselves. As always, be well." - Susan

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT: *Starting January 1, 2021, WestCare Will be Relaunching our Wellness Program with WellRight!*



What can you expect in 2021?

- No new registration! Log into <https://wellness.westcare.com/> with your original email and password.
- Haven't registered? Not a problem! Look out for a registration email that will be sent out on January 6th.
- Your points will refresh back to zero. But, don't worry. You'll have multiple opportunities to earn over 10,000 points throughout the year!

How can you earn points?

- **Baseline Activities:** Similar to last year, don't forget to complete the AgeGage Challenge. Along with that, did you know that WellRight has an app that you can download? Download the app for points!
- **Preventative Exams:** Get points for getting your preventative exams throughout the year.
- **Quarterly Challenges:** Each quarter, WestCare will be focusing on a different WellBeing topic. You can earn up to 250 points for each challenge you complete! Look on the homepage to see all of your options.
- **Personal Challenges:** Participate in a 30 day challenge of your choice! With the new Peer to Peer feature, you can even challenge a colleague to a personal challenge. Earn up to 50 points per challenge!
- **Health Insurance Premium Reduction:** Learn how you can get a \$50.00/month health insurance premium reduction by earning certain point levels!

Should you have any questions:

- **WellRight Support:** WellRight has a great Support Team that can assist with all of your questions! Feel free to reach out to support@wellright.com.

Lastly, be on the lookout throughout the year for new REWARDS that we will be launching.

As always, don't forget to have fun!

Susan A. Rinaldi, Director of Employee Engagement, WestCare Foundation, (727) 490-5371

*By Lisa Jackson, GPC - Interim VP of Grants,
WestCare Foundation*



“Many of you already know Beverly, but there is even more to know! Beverly, WestCare’s Chief Officer of Program Support and Resource Development and Senior Vice President for Texas has a lot on her plate. She is the supervisor of the Grants Department and brings a wealth of knowledge about grants, funders and program development to that process. She is well-connected, having worked at SAMHSA for several years and was involved with the creation of their Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) Initiative. She served as the Director of the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention and worked on multiple taskforces, committees and programs within the federal government.

An alumna of Trinity University of San Antonio, Texas, she has been inducted into the San Antonio Women’s Hall of Fame and was honored by the San Antonio Bar Foundation (SABF) with their prestigious Peacemaker Award.

With her many contacts, she has been crucial to WestCare’s advocacy in D.C. She is working with liaisons and lobbyists to ensure the needs of our communities are considered when funding is allocated by congress and the federal government. She works with legislators and federal staff to protect the current funding and to seek out new opportunities. On top of all of these important tasks, she is also responsible for operations in Texas. This means that beyond supervising the Grants Department with its nine Grant Development Officers, she also supervises the growth of Texas’ programs. In the last year, Texas has secured two applications from the federal government and has doubled its program staff to eight full-time employees. WestCare Texas:

- Offers services to seniors including free meals
- Runs a drug free community coalition that works to prevent youth substance misuse
- Operates a program to improve police and community relations
- Manages a program focused on youth, young adults and parents to prevent the onset of and reduce the progression of substance use and its related problems
- Administers a program to help high-risk youth and young adults resist the misuse of drugs while preventing HIV infections and involvement with violent crime through peer navigation

This is just a small peek at her many jobs and accomplishments. She is a leader in her community and has ushered WestCare into the prevention and community development arenas during her short tenure here. We appreciate all that she has done and all that she will do in the future. It’s been a privilege to get to know her and we are thankful for her service with us!”

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY: *“The Tale of CDS: WestCare’s Clinical Data System & Electronic Health Record - Part 2”*

By Diane Ludens, Director of Software Development, WestCare Foundation



Continued from Part 1 of the CDS Saga in the November issue of the WestCare Express...

“The Clinical Data System was now in the first stage of development and further research was underway. The next step was a Community Involvement Center in Fresno, California. WestcareDB, a Microsoft Access database, had been created by the local data team to track contract billing and client data required for the California Outcomes Measurement System. Since the original developer of the database was a WestCare employee, there was no need to dig through piles of documentation. Questions could be quickly answered and the system explained in full detail - quite the opposite of the prior project. The most important

discovery at this point was that multiple contracts needed to be considered because clients could be covered under county grants, federal grants or insurance. As opposed to the standardized state reporting for the Florida Department of Children and Families and the EDI 837, these contracts required custom invoices be generated based on each funder’s proprietary format. A new module was created, Contract/Grant Management, to keep track of the unique billing characteristics per contract as well as the grant that originated the funding.

During the visits to Fresno and the Keys, multiple other areas of clinical operations were identified as needing electronic intervention. Among these were a waiting list, treatment planning, a medication administration record, client satisfaction surveys, scheduling and group counseling notes. The concept was that as long as the foundation of the system was flexible in nature, those features could be folded in piece by piece as time allowed. The soon-to-be infamous mantra, ‘Phase 2!’ could often be heard during these times, because with deadlines looming, the building blocks of CDS had to be rapidly assembled. The system, at minimum, had to be designed to integrate functionality of the existing systems from the East Coast to the West Coast. A new entity relationship diagram was drawn up for the database. Web-based forms were designed to capture every screen of data and dozens of reports were built. Conversion scripts were created to sanitize and incorporate historical information from both MS Access and CMHC’s SQL into the new unified data structure.

At long last, CDS was ready for its first rollout. Surely it was ready? But, even with the comprehensive requirements-gathering that had been conducted, more lessons were to be learned. Training on the system had been split into groups by job workflow and with each session, the enthusiastic staff piped in with, ‘What about this?’, ‘How would we do that?’, ‘Could we eliminate this paper process?’ and so on. Pages of to-do’s came out of the rollout and a follow-up trip was planned after additional programming could be completed. Back at the Las Vegas Foundation Office, the next strategy began. The workload had become too much for one software developer to travel, gather requirements, code, deploy the application, administrate the database, train staff and provide phone support. Two developers were brought on board and a previously one-person office was split into cubicles. The work was divided and programming resumed at a feverish pace. The computer equipment was also outgrowing its shared rack space inside of a locked closet adjacent to the reception with the tech support staff. Keeping a comfortable temperature and enough room for multiple humans and machines proved tricky. Meanwhile, the servers were relocated to a secure data center offsite.” *(Continued on Page 28)*

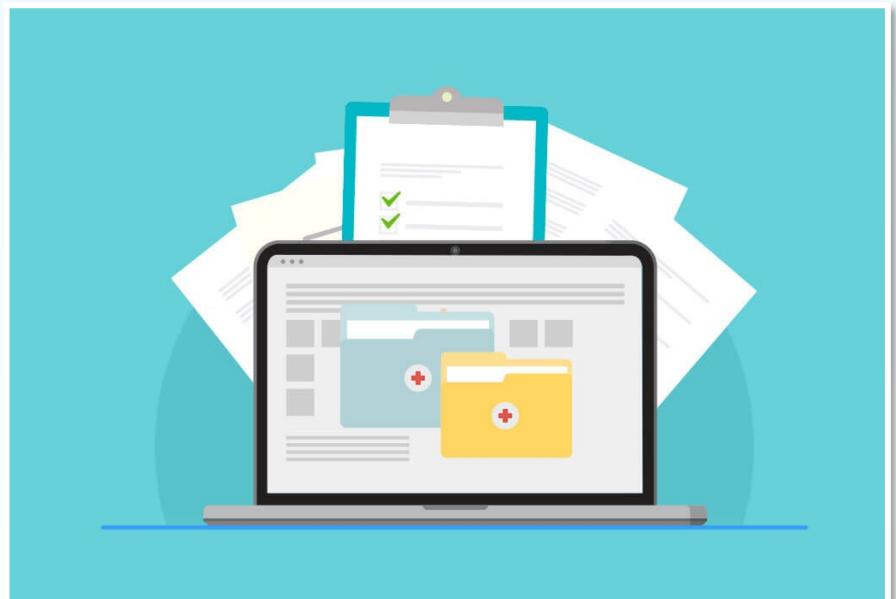
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY: *“The Tale of CDS: WestCare’s Clinical Data System & Electronic Health Record - Part 2”*

(Continued from Page 27) “The cycle continued with deployments, training, enhancements and revisits until a system that produced the necessary clinical and statistical outputs was stabilized. A campaign was initiated to vote on renaming CDS – you know, something snappy with an acronym that tied into the mission statement. But that ship had sailed; everyone was already calling it by its maiden name. There was no time to slow down because the next challenge came along with the Support2020 software that was being retired in St. Petersburg, Florida. Out of this came a new type of billing capability in CDS where treatment costs were deducted and incentives were reimbursed against client paychecks. Knowledge was continuously being gathered as locations were added to the itinerary. Multiple visits were made to **The Village South** group in Miami where they had a Pascal-based program in need of a transition plan. Installs were done from Wyoming to Kentucky to the Virgin Islands. Every stage of the process was increasingly successful due to staff contributions. A form-builder was created to assemble assessments, which would grow to contain hundreds of clinical documents. Several versions of treatment plans, case notes and the ASI were added to the mix. A new international classification was introduced for diagnosing and an overhaul had to be done to transition from the DSM-IV. The residential programs in Nevada were brought on, as well as the ancestor of them all... the Las Vegas CTC system!

Along came the age of the certified Electronic Health Record, the new industry standard. Extensive market research was done and a myriad of products were being considered as replacements for CDS. Tied into the decision were the ancillary systems that the programming team had been working on in parallel, because company needs were not limited to clinical. Paperless versions of other operations, such as incident reporting, maintenance, vehicles, inventory, inspections and timecards were all a part of the product line and had ties into CDS. The homegrown style of development for the Intranet / CDS made it highly customized, so anything ‘off-the-shelf’ just didn’t fit. At the end, the cost of using a third party to create an equivalent was deemed too high. A decision was made to tackle the Electronic Health Record certification in-house. After all, CDS was designed by WestCare for WestCare! The system was put through the paces to comply with EHR standards established by CMS and the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC). It was also time to move to ‘the cloud’ and out of the local Las Vegas data center, allowing for enterprise level capabilities in computing.

Epilogue...

Today, CDS continues to expand to meet the ever-changing demands in the behavioral health space. A formal EHR Steering Committee has been assembled to collaborate and strategize on the future of CDS. A team of project managers now build, implement and provide training for the programs. Software developers are constantly at work on new features. A quality assurance analyst keeps the enhancements moving and adhering to strict testing guidelines. The application support team is ready on the front lines to resolve any issue that comes their way. Lastly, there is yours truly, that hopeful computer programmer from 16 years ago who watches over the incredible transformation as CDS grows up with its WestCare family.”





ABOUT WESTCARE: *Uplifting the Human Spirit Since 1973!*

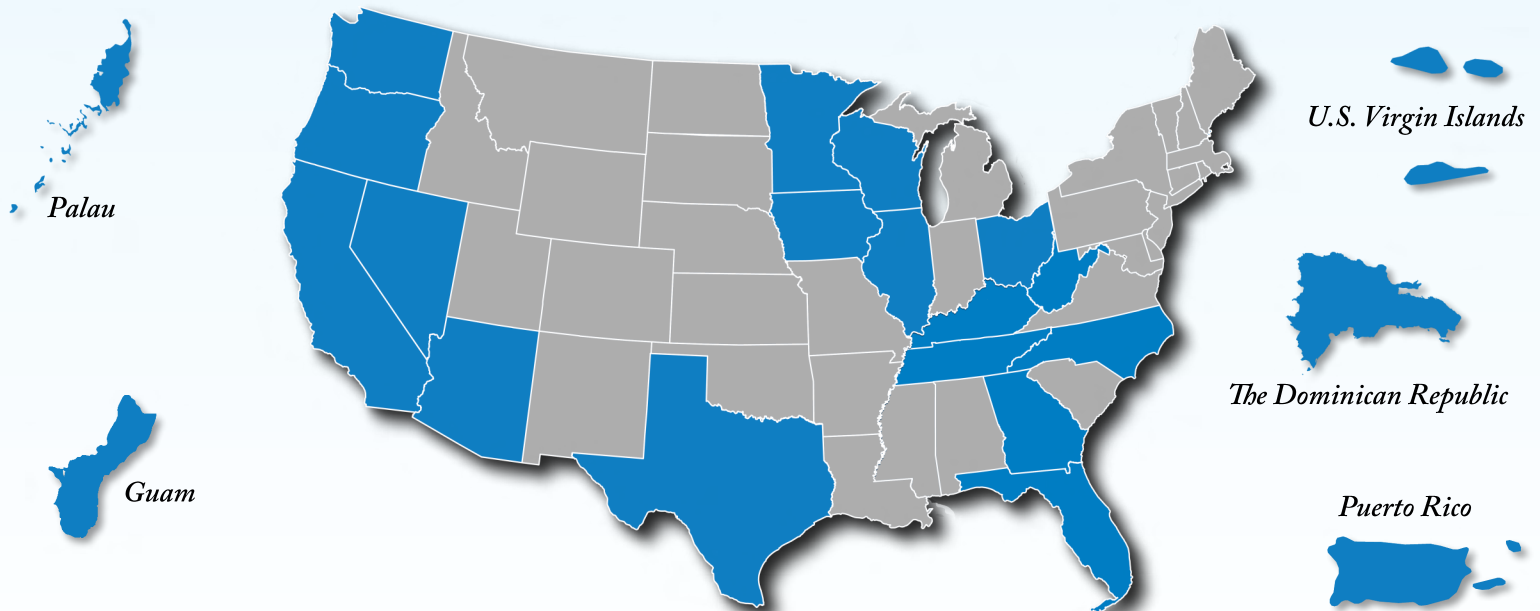
WestCare, a family of tax-exempt nonprofit organizations founded in 1973, provides a wide spectrum of behavioral health and human services in both residential and outpatient environments. Our service domains include **Treatment and Rehabilitation, Mental Health, Veterans Services, Criminal Justice, Housing Opportunities, Education and 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.



WHERE WE SERVE

WestCare proudly operates programs in 17 states, three U.S. territories, the Dominican Republic and the Republic of Palau!

- *Arizona*
- *California*
- *Florida*
- *Georgia*
- *Illinois*
- *Iowa*
- *Kentucky*
- *Minnesota*
- *Nevada*
- *North Carolina*
- *Ohio*
- *Oregon*
- *Tennessee*
- *Texas*
- *Washington*
- *West Virginia*
- *Wisconsin*



For more information on WestCare's many services and locations, please call (702) 385-2090 or visit westcare.com



Meet The Editors!



While the Express newsletter wouldn't be possible without the regular submissions that we receive from our amazing staff, it wouldn't come together without our editors, Gabriela McNiel and Michael Mygind! When they're not working on The Express, they're handling various marketing duties including promotional materials, social media, event planning, video production and more!

CA: Gabriela Espinosa-McNiel, Director of Marketing and Michael Mygind, Marketing Specialist



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How Can Anyone Support WestCare Online?

If you know someone who loves to shop online, they can help WestCare by shopping at *AmazonSmile* (bookmark <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/86-0852629>) and selecting WestCare Foundation. A portion of the purchase will be donated to WestCare at no cost to the shopper.



WestCare is registered with *PayPal Giving Fund*. When shopping on eBay or using PayPal online, users can select WestCare as their charity of choice. Donations can be made by visiting <https://www.paypal.com/fundraiser/105865137050618816/charity/74402>



WestCare is also on *Mightycause*, the online fundraising engine. The organization participates in events like #GivingTuesday. Donations can be made by heading to the following link: <https://www.mightycause.com/organization/Westcare-Foundation>

