

THE *Express*

OUR WESTCARE STORIES
FROM AROUND THE WORLD



Welcome from Dick Steinberg

President & CEO

Team, we have officially made it halfway through 2021. With June closing out our fiscal year, we can report that we have seen significant revenue growth for WestCare, even through the pandemic. Despite the challenges caused by COVID-19, our workforce remained intact with no layoffs and all of our facilities remained open and operating. Our dedicated WestCare team continues to step up and ensure that we stay open and are available for those in need of care. We have made a statement to local, state, and federal officials that they can continue to count on us as they have for nearly 48 years!

With new grants on the way, we believe that our dedication to service will bring additional opportunities to meet the needs of the communities that we serve. Additionally, we have been making strides in making our organization more known publicly through our marketing efforts and our partnerships in Washington D.C. and look forward to the advocacy efforts we will be conducting in the coming months.

I ask all staff to remain vigilant and steadfast in our policies and procedures as the pandemic is not over. We have even seen a rise in cases with a more contagious Delta variant of COVID-19 nationwide. It is critical to get vaccinated, wear our masks, avoid significant public gatherings, and maintain social distancing and healthy hand hygiene. Following the guidance mentioned above will help to ensure that the health of our staff, their families, and those that we serve remains paramount to our continued delivery of services.

We look forward to all of the exciting new partnerships, opportunities, and potential awards that await us in this second half of 2021 and are always looking at ways to not only do more but provide a higher quality of services to

our communities in need! With that said, please see below for a few exciting things awaiting us in the second half of this year!

Stay safe and stay well,

Dick Steinberg

Here are just a few exciting developments with our WestCare family of programs that you can expect in the second half of 2021! On August 18th, we will be holding a ribbon-cutting in **Kentucky** for the Judi Patton Center for Families women's residential treatment facility. In the next six months, we will be planning to officially break ground for the construction of The Village at the Women and Children's Campus in **Nevada**. Meanwhile, at **The Village South**, we are preparing to open the Pembroke Pines Children's Academy.

We are also excited about expanding some of our services and new property acquisitions. **Arizona** will be adding a new women's recovery residence facility, **Tennessee** has purchased a men's sober living home, **Wisconsin** received a facility in the Harambee community to serve as a drop-in center for police officers, and East End in **Ohio** is receiving a donated building that will enable us to expand our community development services from 10,000 sq. ft. to nearly 24,000 sq. ft.

This news of growth is an absolute testament to the fantastic work that you all do day in and day out! Thank you for joining us in Uplifting the Human Spirit!

– **Ken Ortvals**, Executive Vice President / Chief Financial Officer, WestCare Foundation





Education At a Glance

By Iris De Leon, *Clinical Coordinator*

In June, a training was held for clinicians in Argentina with the theme of, *"Motivational Interviewing: Implementation of an Evidence-Based Model."* The training was divided into two topics, the first was titled, *The Use of Scientific Methodology*, and the second was, *Counseling Practice for Health Conditions Using Motivational Interviewing*. The objective of the training was to present trainees with evidence-based practices and the historical background behind its use. Both trainers for the event, Ms. Iris De Leon and Ms. Irisbel Núñez thanked everyone in Argentina for their cooperation that made the event a huge success. Even though there was a lockdown in Argentina due to the pandemic, our [WestCare Puerto Rico](#) staff were still able to attend virtually.



A Member of Congress Visits Hildy's House!

By Emily Selby, *Case Manager/BHT*

Arizona Congressman, Paul Gosar and his **Chief of Staff, Tom Van Flein**, paid a recent visit to **Hildy's House**. They were joined by **Mohave County Supervisor for District 2, Hildy Angius**, and toured the center while learning what treatment is all about. The women of Hildy's House welcomed our guests with open arms and were thrilled to be a part of the excitement. Gosar and Van Flein talked with the women and staff, gaining insight into the beauty of recovery. The visit was a success and the women of Hildy's House were left feeling uplifted and honored to have had this experience!



Learn more about Hildy's House



WestCare Arizona



@westcareaz

A Housing Success Story Featuring Fred and Marcie G.

By Michael Mygind, *Marketing Specialist*



Fred and Marcie experienced homelessness for several years before they began receiving housing assistance from our [Project LiftOff](#) program for a period of three years. Prior to that, Fred was making great money as a licensed contractor but fell and lost everything to drug abuse and homelessness. But, he and his wife, Marcie bounced back. They overcame their addictions and began their recovery upon entering the program. They battled anxiety, stress, a lack of faith, and a fear of not getting out of homelessness. But, all the while, they continued moving forward towards their dream of stability.

One time when his Case Manager, Pablo, visited, Fred asked if he should get his commercial driver's license (CDL). He was asked what he was doing right now and

told that he had nothing to lose. At that moment, it hit him. So, he went through with it. Fred said in regards to the unit that they were living in, *"Once I get my job and I get a sign-on bonus, we're going to move out so that someone else can move in and let this program help them."* Meanwhile, Marcie got a job and helped build up their income. This past June, he received his CDL, and earlier this month, he received his truck!

After spending the last couple of years with the program, they have officially embarked on the open road together! At the time that we wrote this, they were on their way to make a delivery in Texas! On behalf of our Housing Services team, we are proud of you both and wish only the best on this exciting new chapter in your lives!



Read more stories online



WestCare California Inc.



@WestCareCA



@westcarecalifornia



Community Outreach Day

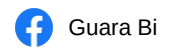
By Yolanda Gonzalez Malave, Program Assistant & HR Coordinator

Guara Bi - Dominican Republic in coordination with the **National Drug Council**, held an outreach day focused on health, education, and prevention regarding the use and abuse of controlled substances. In addition, they offered food to those in need.

Later that day, **Mr. Yunior Sánchez**, Director of Guara Bi - Dominican Republic, along with the President of the National Drug Council, **General Jaime Marte**, visited several caves located on the reefs of Santo Domingo's Malecón, to locate, assist and offer services to individuals with substance abuse problems who have used the caves as shelter. Guara Bi joined these efforts to provide assistance to those who have fallen into the clutches of drug abuse and require professional assistance to get them back on their feet. With this first direct contact, a profile for each person encountered was created to open a case and lay the foundation needed in order to achieve a definitive solution for their needs.



Read more stories from Guara Bi



G/CC Staff Get Creative to Bridge Treatment Gap

By Kristin Flores, MS, MCAP, Lead Substance Abuse Counselor, JIP

I was contacted by an attorney about a client who needed treatment but ran into a snag within the justice system. The client was mid-transition from male to female, had violated her felony probation, and was now in jail. She wanted treatment, but since she was in the middle of medically transitioning, no treatment program would accept her. I met with the young lady who desperately wanted treatment. Due to the halted transition, the jail was unsure of where to place her in the facility and opted to place her in the housing unit reserved for special populations. For any individual to participate in a **Jail In-House Treatment Program (JIP)**, they are required to be housed in one of the men's or women's JIP dorms. I spoke with the major of the facility who agreed to set an appointment with me and several other administrative staff within the jail to discuss options for this young woman. Initially, the jail agreed to move her into the JIP men's dorm, but I insisted this was not a safe option for her. Their perspective was simple - she had not yet fully transitioned into a female, so she was,

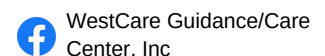
'still a male,' which meant housing her with other men in the jail was the best option. I knew this was not an ideal scenario and thought that she would feel safer and better suited with other women. Despite providing numerous reasons as to why housing her with women would be clinically appropriate, the jail expressed realistic concerns regarding liability. I posed another choice for our young client, what if she remained in her current dorm but each day, a deputy would escort her to the women's unit where she would physically attend a live group. Everyone agreed that this would be an excellent option.

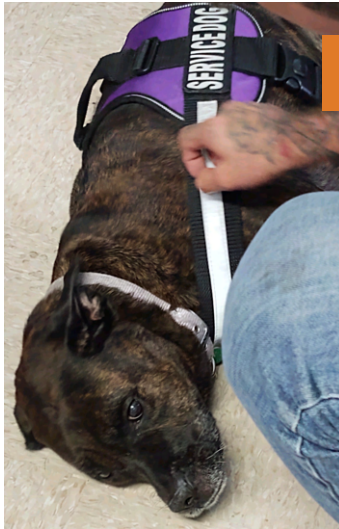
Sadly, a few days after her sentence to JIP, the jail experienced a COVID-19 outbreak and they were no longer going to allow our new client to attend live groups due to safety precautions. After another meeting with jail staff, it was decided that JIP staff would bring a jail-issued laptop down to the young lady and place it in her single cell. The laptop had a web camera and microphone, which meant that she was permitted to join by video

presentation and interact. This is normally not an option for any inmate in the facility. The JIP counselor would take a second laptop to the women's group therapy session, with a camera and audio capabilities as well and would link the computers so our young client was able to participate in group therapy. This was done each week from Monday to Thursday. The client was moved to tears and stated that she was shocked by the JIP staff's willingness to go above and beyond for her as she has always been excluded because of, *"being different."* I looked at this entire situation, overall, as a win in so many ways. The administrators in the facility acknowledged that they were behind the times with gender concerns. They told me that this experience helped them see how important it is to include everyone.



Connect with the G/CC





Canine Compassion

By Jack Shaw Ed.D, *Clinical Supervisor*

We'd like to send a big thank you to Teena Bilotta, Residential Counselor at the **Davis Bradley Community Involvement Center** in St. Petersburg, Florida for bringing in her service dogs to work with our Veteran clients! Bella and Boscoe were true professionals and helped this group process a recent event. They also helped identify those who were struggling and comforted them as only a dog can!



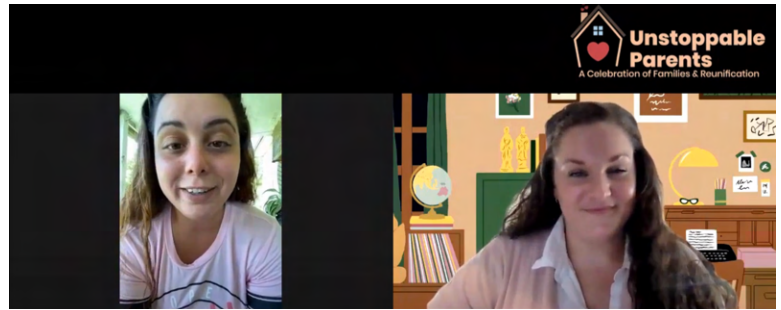
[View more photos online](#)



WestCare GulfCoast - Florida



@WestCareGCFL



Can't Stop the Unstoppable!

By Chawntelle Morman-Shanks, LMHC, *Lead Therapist*

Who comes to mind when you think of courageous individuals who have worked tirelessly to rebound from life's challenges and reunify their families? Unstoppable parents - that's who! The birth parents who have achieved this coveted esteem have proven to the child welfare system that they are not only loving but also capable of adopting a more effective parenting style that nurtures the safety, stability, and wellbeing of their child(ren). Community partners across Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties joined together to celebrate **National Reunification Month** on June 26th with this year's theme being, "Unstoppable Parents." This virtual affair, "Unstoppable Parents, a Celebration of Families & Reunification Month 2021," presented by the **Southern Region System of Care**, showcased special appearances from representatives of **The Village South**, the **Unified Children's Court**, the

Florida Guardian Ad Litem Program, and **Thriving Mind South Florida**, just to name a few, who delivered heartfelt messages of inspiration and well wishes to the birth parents of more than 3,900 children who were successfully reunified between 2015 - 2020. The Village South was among the many behavioral health providers represented, offering motivational words of support to parents served by such programs as the **Family Intensive Treatment Team (FITT)** program, specifically for parents determined as unsafe by child welfare system standards who are seeking solid substance abuse recovery to strengthen and improve their caregivers' protective capacities.

The event highlighted interviews of reunified birth parents by Allison Schild, Peer Services Manager of Thriving Mind South Florida. The overarching theme of each parent's personal account of their

child welfare experiences was that with the proper support, change is possible and reunification is possible. Movements such as the **Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI)** continue to work with parents and collaborate with community partners to advocate for the removal of barriers that impede the process of reunification as well as to destigmatize the population of parents in pursuit of family preservation that requires a network of legal, therapeutic, medical, case management, and peer support. These family profiles recognized are the undeniable evidence that invested support, compassion, and motivation fuel birth parents' journeys to achieve reunification - making them virtually unstoppable.

[You can view the entire event by clicking here](#)

[For a recap of the month-long celebration of events, click here](#)



Connect with The Village South



The Village South, Inc



@thevillagesouth



@thevillagesouth



Celebrating Twelve Years of Excellent Service

By Michael Langford, *Regional Vice President*

We are Blessed to have an all-around professional administrative supervisor who goes the extra mile in her service to help keep **WestCare Georgia** on track.

Joyce Randle is a dependable individual that has shown flexibility by taking on additional tasks in order to assure that our organization is successful in fulfilling its mission. She is oftentimes the very first person that the public will communicate with when they are in need of our services, and she does a masterful job in connecting them with the appropriate program. She is a valued member of our leadership team and in addition to handling HR and administrative issues, she has successfully managed the eight-unit VetsCare Apartments for the last two years.

While we don't express it enough, we truly appreciate your consistent and professional service and down-to-earth approach in communicating with others.

Congratulations on 12 faithful years of service and we wish you many more!



Follow for more about Georgia

WestCare Georgia @westcarega

Georgia's Annual Juneteenth Celebration

By Miltina Fraser, *Program Director, CARES*

As part of **WestCare Georgia's** efforts to join the national movement to celebrate Juneteenth, our board member, **Derrick Boazman** and WestCare staff joined forces with our neighbors in the Pittsburg community to sponsor the annual Dashiki Block Party, an annual cultural gathering which celebrates Juneteenth through poetry, music, dancing, food and the spoken word. The **WestCare CARES** Team was on hand providing HIV/AIDS testing and education to the community. We are amazed at the level of excitement by the community, who turned out despite pouring rain, which couldn't dampen the spirits of those in attendance for this historic celebration! We look forward to next year's Juneteenth celebration!



Community Partnerships Blossom and Services Expand!

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

The month of June has been very eventful for the WestCare Illinois Team!



WestCare Illinois in collaboration with **Grand Boulevard Prevention Services (GBPS)**, is connecting young people to sustainable agriculture skills and tools by partnering with the BIPOC-led **New Life Baptist Church, Olive Harvey Middle School**, and local farms through funding provided by **The Chicago Region Food System Fund**.

Additionally, we teamed up in June with **Fathers Who Care (FWC)** as part of the **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Agency's**

(SAMHSA) Partners for Success grant and enjoyed an outing sponsored by the **Chicago Yacht Club**. More than 15 youth from Chicago, under the leadership of the **West Garfield Park Youth Council**, were treated to lunch and a one-hour yachting tour of Lake Michigan.

WestCare DuQuoin began providing in-person services to the individuals in custody that are completing the **DuQuoin Structured Impact Program (DQSIP)**. This program gives first-time male offenders ages 18 - 35 the opportunity to

complete a structured, disciplined, and treatment-centered program lasting 120 days in lieu of sentences of up to eight years.

Meanwhile, our 26-bed **WestCare Decatur** dual-diagnosis program began providing services to justice-involved females on July 1st. Our staff is excited about expanding services to another institution and providing more women with access to care/services that they may not have otherwise received.



Follow Illinois online for more

WestCare Illinois



The Simplest Action of Kindness Meant the World to this Veteran!

By Darlene Terrill, *Regional Administrator*

When a Sioux City client of ours lost his belongings in an apartment fire, the things that he missed the most were his houseplants. He loved watering, transplanting, and watching them grow. The fire caused him to become homeless until he entered our program.

Two of our FAVA staff went out to the Thil's acreage where they told us to pick out whatever we wanted from their jungle of house plants. We were able to pick out three beautiful plants for our Veteran in need. Tim, in his mid-70's, got down on the ground, dug the plants, put them in potting soil, and made sure that they were ready to go!

Our **Families Alliance for Veterans of America (FAVA)** office in Forest City, Iowa put the plea out to local florists. **Lola's Plant and Gifts** responded with the donation of a lovely and colorful plant. We'd like to thank the mother-daughter duo of Lorae and Lindsey Current that runs the shop!

We then found larger pots and potting soil in our office basement and gave everything that the Vet needed to have houseplants back again. He was all smiles as the plants arrived. He was very happy and expressed his gratitude for the generosity of these donors to help him have new houseplants to care for. It truly takes a village to care for our Veterans. Thank you to everyone who answered to call to help make his wish come true!

Then there were our private donors, **Tim and Donna Thil**, also from Forest City. They have been big supporters of WestCare Iowa and FAVA for many years. Their son, a Desert Storm Veteran, made it through the war, and for that, they were very grateful. Now, they want to help all Veterans with their needs. We have been so appreciative of their financial support of donating thousands of dollars to our program.



[Read more](#)



FAVA (Family Alliance for Veterans of America)



JPCHF Awarded the Kentucky Colonels Grant

By Jeremie Delauder, *MAT Research Assistant*

WestCare Kentucky's **Judi Patton Center for Healthy Families (JPCHF)** received a grant from the **Kentucky Colonels' Good Works Program** for the addition of a computer lab at their facility. A computer lab will help JPCHF clients receive telehealth services from community partners and conduct employment searches as they prepare to re-enter society.

The **Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels** is a voluntary philanthropic organization that recognizes individuals for their service and accomplishments on behalf of others.



Follow for more in Kentucky



WestCare Kentucky



The Good Works Program annually provides over \$2 million in grants to Kentucky nonprofits that together help over 3.9 million individuals. Since 1951, the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels has granted \$53 million to more than 1,600 nonprofits. These grants are entirely dependent on the support of over 30,000 active Colonels throughout the world, who have chosen to continue their charitable efforts through contributions to help Kentuckians.



The Village at The WCC Gains Attention and Support

By Andrew Moran, *Development Director*

On July 3rd, our team was proud to give a tour to the **Las Vegas Sun** of the **WestCare Nevada Women and Children's Campus (WCC)**. We also discussed The Village at the Women and Children's Campus, a planned 57,999 square foot 84-unit convalescent care complex to be built on the five-acre property that the WCC occupies. This new facility would offer up to 84 women who have successfully completed their residential treatment in private homes where they can continue to safely raise their children. Units will range from one to three bedrooms and be open to single women and women with children up to age nine.

With grants covering their stay, they can work and save money as they prepare to reintegrate into the community. At the Village, our women served

will have access to social and medical services, vocational training, and education on financial literacy. Many women graduate and are put back into the same situations they were in before they entered treatment. We want to stop this vicious cycle and recidivism and provide them the opportunity to feel safe in their own place with their children and the tools needed to maintain their sobriety.

We have currently raised nearly \$3 million in individual gifts and grants from multiple foundations towards the estimated \$12.9 million needed for full construction. In June, we were thankful to receive a generous \$2 million dollar donation from an angel investor! With \$250,000 in funds provided by **The Engelstad Foundation** this past April, we will be breaking ground as

soon as this coming fall! This would include initial construction that consists of building utility linkages, trenches, sidewalks, exterior walls, and landscaping for the facility as well as the first two apartments. The recent gift of \$2 million will fund the construction of an additional 14 apartments!

We believe that our mothers served can find the motivation to fight addiction when they have their children with them and that our programs and services can give them the encouragement and strength to make it. The Village has been a goal for years in the making and it is our hope that it will be another beacon of hope and support among the many other amazing programs that WestCare is so proud to offer!

[Click here for the Las Vegas Sun's recent coverage](#)



[Learn more about Nevada](#)



WestCare Nevada



@westcarenevada



@westcarenevada



Celebrating Making a Difference to Children Month

By Abby Hofrichter, *Communications & Social Media Coordinator*, Hofrichter Creative LLC

Our year-round mission to nurture our community's children towards success made for a perfect celebration of **National Make a Difference to Children Month!** **Miracle Makers**, an after-school and summer learning program aiming to boost students to their full potential through academic, extracurricular, social, emotional, and familial support, celebrated its first few days of Summer Camp with an incredible one hundred and twenty-five registered campers! Ellen Mays, Director of Child & Youth Development Programs at **East End Community Services**, leads our Miracle Makers team and has done a wonderful job once again this year!

The theme for this year's summer camp is, "*The Great Outdoors*," which meant that our Pre-K to sixth-grade campers or "*rangers in training*," as we call them, are headed for a few weeks of outdoor adventures at local

camp, nature centers, and the zoo. In addition, they'll be partaking in activities focused on arts and crafts, personal development, and more. While we look forward to watching our campers grow and seeing what they've learned at our Jamboree Extravaganza at the end of camp, we don't want our 24th year of summer programming to go too fast!

Special Kudos to our Camp Mariposa team and their Director, Wendy Berkshire, for a successful start to all three of our summer sessions at Camp Kern, Camp Chautauqua, and Teen Camp. June was the first time that our Camp Mariposa campers and mentors have been back together for a full camp weekend since before March of 2020 and we're already in awe of the growth and resilience of the campers!



[Learn more about East End](#)



East End Community Services



@eastendcommunityservices

Welcome to the Team!

By Raymond Powers, *Program Director*

I would like to introduce two new employees to our WestCare family who are working here at **VETcare Oregon**. Please join me in giving them a warm welcome to Morgan and Matthew!



Morgan White, our new Mental Health Counselor



Matthew Beardsley, our new Case Manager



Ready. Set. Summer!

By Kathleen Aguon, *Program Manager*



After months of virtual service delivery, **WestCare Pacific Islands'** four youth prevention programs have teamed up to deliver a packed three-week in-person summer program to middle school-aged youth. Teams from **I Linala-Hu (My Life)**, **Project Isa-Ta (Our Rainbow)**, **Maolek Na Lina'la (Life is Good)** and **Thrive Coalition (Drug-Free Communities grant)** set out to equip youth with adulthood preparation skills and prevention education. The summer camp focused on creating healthy relationship skills, substance use prevention, and boundary-setting skills. Through its partnership with Thrive Coalition, the **Dededo Mayor's Office** provided an in-kind contribution of access to the Astumbo gym facility.

curricula with activities that re-enforced the core competencies of each module. Throughout the day, socially distanced games were played to build camaraderie, improve interpersonal skills, strengthen self-leadership and increase self-esteem. The days concluded with our participants' creative recap of knowledge and skills learned from the lessons and activities they received, expressed through rap/poetry, skits, interpretive dance and drawing.

Our team crafted a daily agenda that maximized our time spent with the youth participants. Each morning, the camp started with a roaring cheer-off competition that elevated energy and promoted team connection. The programs also delivered their respective evidence-based

In community work, collaborative partnerships are necessary and often forged between organizations. WPI programs also place this same value in a strong partnership with each other so we can be of better service to our community. Just like a guāfak, a mat woven from the leaves of a pandanus tree, our innate strength comes from the close and fortified connections that start at home. WPI programs weave this mentality into the fabric of our services as our little slice of paradise works to reclaim face-to-face connections.



Continue the journey online



WestCare Pacific Islands



@westcare.pi



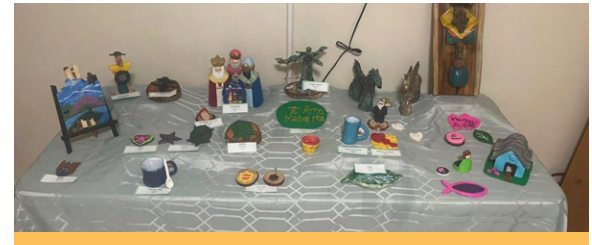
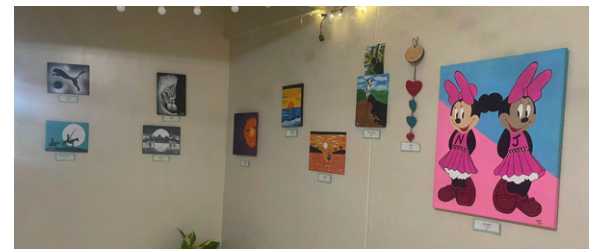
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Gallery Night at Guara Bi Caguas

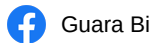
By Yolanda Gonzalez Malave, Program Assistant & HR Coordinator

Because of the many effects of drug addiction, recovery requires ingenious solutions and one of them is art therapy. This is why **Ms. Lymaris Rodriguez**, artisan, and member of our Board of Directors, led art workshops with clients at our treatment program, **Guara Bi - Caguas**. Afterward, it all culminated with a "Gallery Night", where clients exhibited their works of art for the enjoyment of all who gathered.

Art therapy has been frequently used as part of drug rehabilitation for about 50 years. It is very interesting how the act of making art absorbs the whole mind, releasing the creative energy that inhibited the patient. Studies have shown that making art has very positive effects on brain chemistry. That's what this beautiful activity was all about - empowering the minds of our customers with positive, healthy, and creative building blocks to help them in Uplifting the Human Spirit.



Follow the journey online



Highlighting Members of our Dandridge Team

By Renee Salyers, Regional Administrator



Lisa Pfiffner

BJA Recovery Employment Navigator
at the Dandridge Outpatient WestCare TN office

Lisa is an Illinois native who has served in non-profits for many years. She earned her M.A. in Counseling and Human Services from Roosevelt University and has spent the last several years working for mission centers as a trainer and instructor. Her job skill and life skill classes incorporate humor as she enjoys blending her education and experiences into theater, reaching, and teaching. She lives in Sevierville with her husband, who is a master Raku ceramic artist. Together, they have three grown children scattered in three different states. Lisa believes in the WestCare mission of Uplifting the Human Spirit... for everyone!



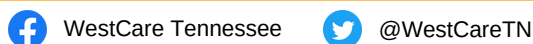
MaKayla Calloway

BJA Youth Activities Coordinator
at the Dandridge Outpatient WestCare TN office

MaKayla is the Youth Activities Coordinator and serves Jefferson and Cocke Counties, TN where she educates and coordinates with teachers and counselors to provide programming for substance abuse exposed youth. She studied psychology at Tusculum University and is a former Childcare Co-Site Director for Greene County Schools. She spends her free time nature-trekking with her family and enjoys gardening, reading, and crafting.



Meet more of the team





Walk a Mile In My Shoes

By Jessica Cerda



Read more online



Amidst Juneteenth Celebrations across San Antonio, the **Walk a Mile In My Shoes Workshop** was held for the first time since the pandemic lockdown on Saturday, June 19th at the Second Baptist Church Community Center. Walk a Mile was designed to allow local law enforcement officers and community members to switch places to see things from each other's perspectives and most of all, as human beings.

WestCare Texas first partnered with Walk a Mile in 2018 and has supported their programming ever since. "Building mutual trust and respect between law enforcement and the communities that they serve is essential to having a safe community," said Beverly Watts Davis, Chief Officer of Resource Development and Program Support for WestCare Foundation. Watts, who also serves on the Police and Community

Relations Council as a Mayoral Appointee, continued, "This program serves as a bridge to achieve that goal!"

Founder and creator of the Walk a Mile In My Shoes program and retired San Antonio Police Officer, Troy Smith, says programming is ramping up with more training and community events such as movie nights where police and the community can interact and get to know each other.

Everyone who goes through their training is given a shirt that reads, "Worthy of Respect." Smith explains, "What I love is that everyone looks the same with these shirts on. Even though we are different, it allows us to see each other as people." He further details how the shirt is somewhat of a badge of pride in the community for those who have completed the Walk a Mile

training. "Many officers who complete the training will wear it under their uniform shirts and reveal it whenever they encounter community members with the shirt. It sparks a conversation with officers and people who have gone through the training."

Space was limited due to caution regarding COVID-19, however, a capacity crowd of 40 citizens including eight officers participated in the recent training event. WestCare Texas staff members Martha Hernandez, Melinda Orta, Debbie Howelton-Cruse, and Costella Green participated and received certificates. The day-long program commenced with a lecture series - then the training moved into scenarios in the afternoon where the role play and switching of places occurred. New training events are slated for late July and early August in San Antonio.

For full news coverage of the aforementioned training courtesy of KENS5, [click here!](#)

Introducing the St. Croix Community Action Council (CAC)!

By Yolanda Gonzalez Malave, Program Assistant & HR Coordinator

In late July, the first **WestCare St. Croix Community Action Council (CAC)** meeting was held. We are privileged to have several representatives of the island's government sector, among them we are joined by:

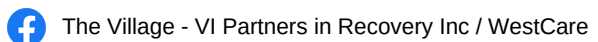
- **Mr. Samuel Sanes**, St. Croix Administrator from the Office of the Governor
- **Mrs. Allison DeGazon**, Director of the Bureau of Economic Research
- **Ms. Naomi Joseph**, Chief of Detectives at the VI Police Department
- **Latashia Edwards**, Office of the Adjutant General
- **Dodson James**, Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Public Works
- **Ms. Nikita Ward** from the Office of the Adjutant General.

During this meeting, everyone got to know each other and **The Village – Virgin Islands Partners in Recovery** staff presented their clinical, programmatic, and administrative reports to the council members.

Each CAC member and supporting staff will maintain their priority of helping our clients and all individuals and families in our communities to achieve WestCare goals as we do our part in Uplifting the Human Spirit in the Virgin Islands. They will strive for excellence in WestCare's mission of empowering others to enhance the quality of their lives and share in the promise and many opportunities that await them within our communities.



Follow along for more





WAServes Positions to Reopen in Post COVID-19 Conditions



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

Throughout the pandemic's risks and restrictions, **WestCare Washington/WAServes** continued advancing our presence in Washington as well as seeking out new and sustainable funding opportunities. Our quest to provide high-quality and coordinated case management to Veterans and their households across Washington state has remained a priority. Even as the pandemic and uncertainty surged, WCWA and our small team of professionals experienced the absolute best in people, organizations, and communities - bonded by a common desire to help Veterans.

Joint planning with our trusted partners laid the groundwork for our continued ability to assist

Veterans while meeting all pandemic safety measures. This can-do attitude became a catalyst for select community alliances that teamed up to assist many homebound Veterans during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our long-term alliances with partners included the **Home Depot Foundation** and local employees, **Operation Military Family**, the **American Red Cross**, **Veterans Outreach**, the **Bob Woodruff Foundation**, **Heroes' Café**, **Lacey American Legion Post 94**, and the **Lacey Veterans Services Center**. These partnerships provided us the resources and labor necessary for us to continue to address the needs of many homebound and often rural living Veterans.

Our experience with the COVID-19 pandemic validated the critical importance of constantly investing in meaningful community relationships. It is through these trusted collaborations with people and organizations that allow us to sustain the delivery of services during challenging conditions, be it a pandemic or wildfires, earthquakes, extreme weather, or other isolating barriers.



The 50th Annual Juneteenth Celebration in Wisconsin

By Felicia Williams, *LST Program Director*

Juneteenth was declared a federal holiday a few days before the event here in Milwaukee which made the occasion even more of a celebration. On June 19, **WestCare Wisconsin** worked with the Northcott Neighborhood House to plan one of the most memorable and talked about celebrations for the **City of Milwaukee**. Monet Johnson and Markeda Williams handled the Kid-Free Zone and we are so proud of them. This was their first major event as a team and they really knocked it out of the park! The Kid-Free Zone was new this year and included rides, games, and even a train that babies could ride since they weren't big enough to ride the other rides. Did I

mention that there was also a petting zoo? The planning committee for the event wanted this to be an experience that none of the kids in Milwaukee County would forget. Not to mention, for the City of Milwaukee, this was the 50th Annual Juneteenth Celebration - 50 years of culture and it went off without a hitch.

We'd like to send shout-outs to the rest of the team from our Vice President, Travis Landry, who ensured that our young ladies were always receiving the support needed to be successful. We'd also like to thank the grill team, David, Dominique, Audrey and our volunteers, Pastor

Eugene Cowan, and his family because they worked very hard to keep the food coming to feed the families. Additional kudos go to Tatiana and Felicia F., who assisted in the Kid-Free Zone as well as the grilling area. We also can't forget to thank the parade crew, Felicia W., Reshar, and our four youth who braved the alarm at 5:30 a.m. to walk and proudly display the WestCare Wisconsin banner and signs to share a snippet of what we are about. The team did such an amazing job from the parade to the grill to the Kid-Free Zone! We simply can't stop smiling at how successful the entire event turned out to be for the City of Milwaukee!



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Grants & Resource Development



Welcome, Patricia Chamorro!

By Lisa Jackson, GPC, *Interim Vice President*

The grants department is welcoming back Patricia Chamorro in her new position as Grants Development Officer. Patricia previously worked with WestCare Foundation as a grants assistant from 2017 to 2020 and this past year, she worked as a grants specialist at a law enforcement agency where she managed and developed state and federal grants.

Patricia has been working in the non-profit sector since 2015 after she graduated from Seton Hall University with a Master's Degree in Diplomacy and International Relations. She gained an interest in pursuing a career as a grant professional after volunteering at a local grassroots organization where she helped the agency secure their first local government grant that funded an art program for children.

Patricia is a member of the Grants Collaborative of Tampa Bay where she has served on the social media committee since 2017. She is also a member of the National Grants Management Association (NGMA) and the Grants Professional Association (GPA) since 2020 and is looking to be a Certified Grants Management Specialist (CGMS), an accreditation developed by the NGMA.

Some personal things that she would like to share about herself are that she is a proud military spouse and has a two-year-old son. She also studied abroad in Paris and loves anything French. Last but certainly not least, she is currently training to run her first marathon in January 2022!

Welcome back to the team, Patricia!

Human Resources



Hindsight Being 2020

By Diana Alvarez-Mendez, *Human Resources Manager, Florida*

To be honest, I could never imagine my career in anything except for the Human Resources (HR) field. I consider myself to be an employee advocate, while still ensuring the risk management of the agency. But, my true passion is taking care of the people that we serve - which is all of you.

HR was tasked with writing a piece for *The Express*. I believe that most of my colleagues are going to write about information regarding HR policies and procedures that will assist in your day-to-day operations, no matter what your position is within WestCare.

For those of you who know me well, all things are really all about me. So, with my more than 23 years with WestCare and more than 38 years in the HR field, I thought it would be nice for everyone to see the evolution of HR through my eyes.

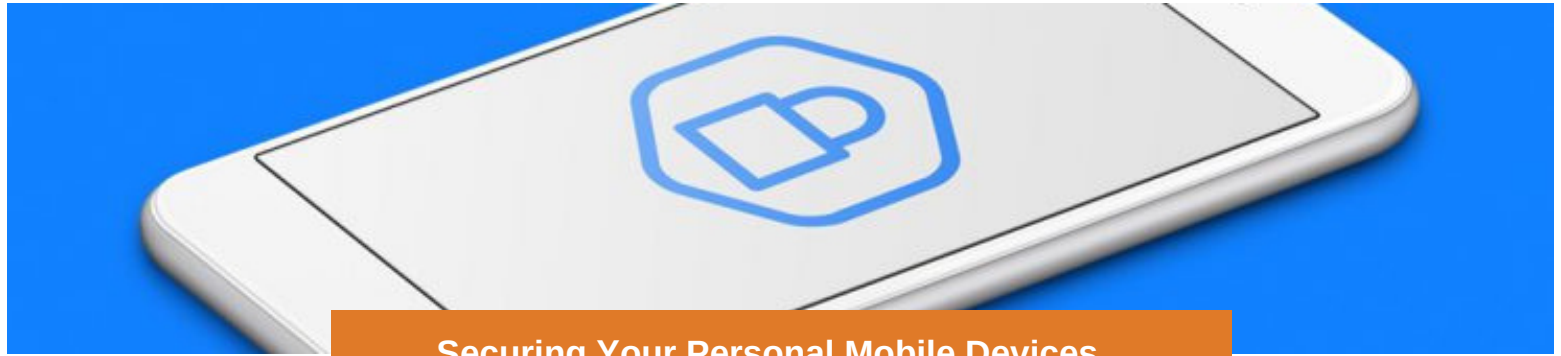
When I started my career in the '80s (I hope no one is doing the math now... stop it!), the job description looked completely different. The focus was on employee engagement and policing rules and regulations - along with the normal benefit questions and help.

Who would have thought that HR would become involved in the personal safety of our staff, clients, and community that has surfaced during the COVID-19 pandemic?

We are now tasked with ensuring that WestCare's pandemic safety procedures are followed, which includes being the "social distancing and mask police," in addition to the day-to-day tasks of our job and being available to all of you.

Hindsight being 20/20, who would have ever thought that statement would come to mean something completely different? Stay vigilant, safe, and always know that your HR department is here for you!

Information Technology



Securing Your Personal Mobile Devices

Wire Article by Jeroen Beckers as published in the SANS Institute's July Issue of the OUCH! Newsletter

Mobile devices are an amazing and easy way to communicate with friends, shop or bank online, watch movies, play games, and perform a myriad of other activities. Since these devices are such an important part of your life, it is essential to keep you and your devices safe and secure.

It may surprise you to know that the biggest risk to your mobile device is most likely not cybercriminals but you. You are far more likely to lose or forget a mobile device than have someone hack into it. The number one thing you should do to protect your device is enable automatic screen locking when the device is idle. This means that to use your device, you have to unlock the screen with a strong passcode, your face, or your fingerprint. This helps ensure that it is much harder for anyone else to access your information if your device is lost or stolen. As a bonus, for most mobile devices, enabling the screen lock also enables encryption, helping protect the data stored on the device. Here are several more tips to help protect your devices:

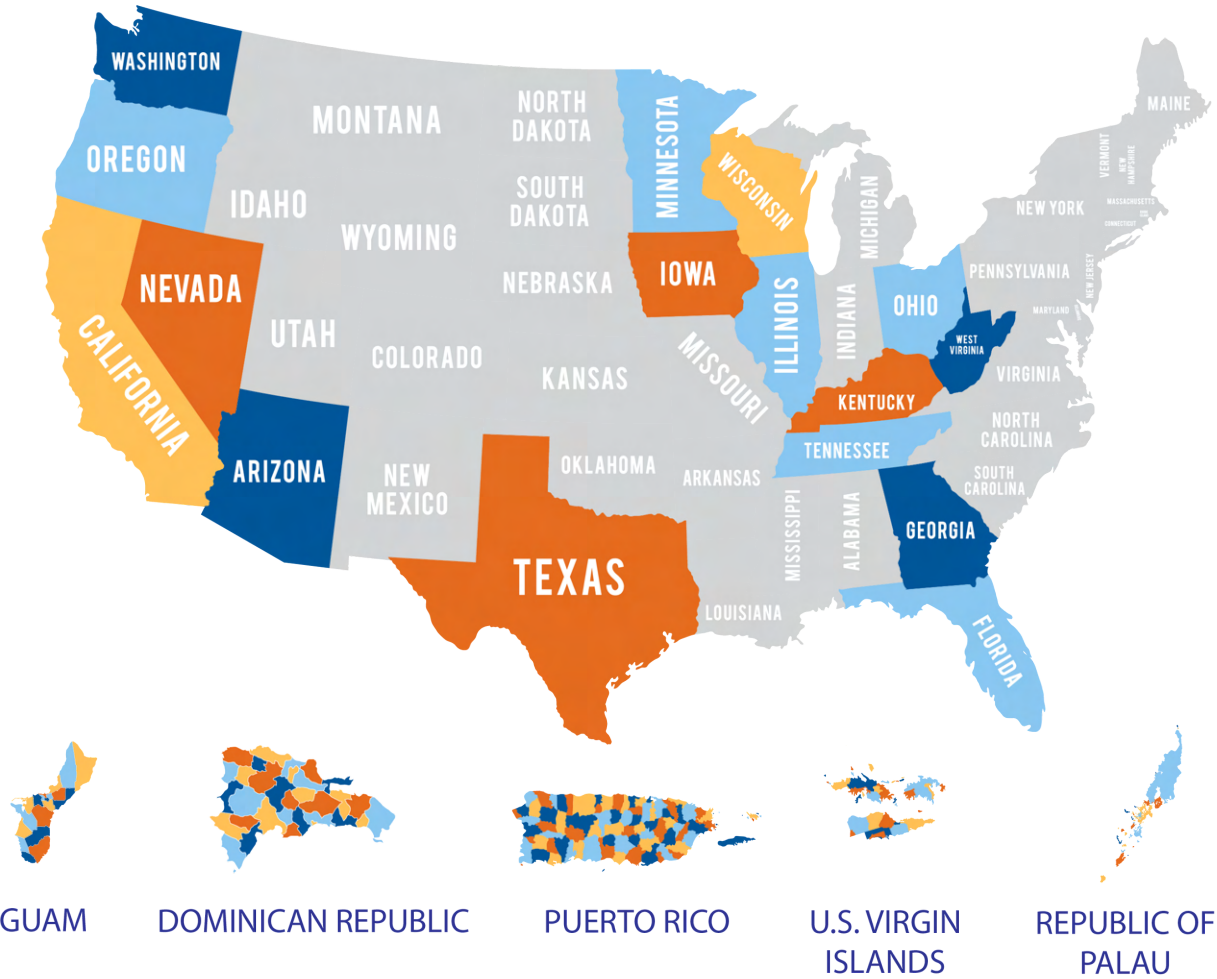
1. **Updating:** Enable automatic updating on your devices, so they are always running the latest version of the operating system and apps. Attackers are always looking for new weaknesses in software, and vendors are constantly releasing updates and patches to fix them. Keeping your devices up to date makes them much harder to hack. When choosing a new Android device, look at the vendor's commitment to keeping the device updated. Apple iOS devices are updated by the company itself, while Android mobile devices are updated by the vendor that sold you the device, and not all vendors actively update their devices. If you are using an old device that is no longer supported or cannot be updated, consider purchasing a new device that is fully supported.
2. **Tracking:** Install or enable trusted software to remotely track your mobile device over the Internet. This way, you can connect to it over the Internet and find its location if your device is lost or stolen or remotely wipe all of your information in a worst-case situation.
3. **Trusted Mobile Apps:** Only install apps you need and stick to trusted sources. For Apple iOS devices such as iPads or iPhones, that means Apple's App Store. For Android devices, use Google Play; for Amazon tablets, utilize the Amazon App Store. While you may be able to install apps from other sites, these are not vetted and are far more likely to be infected or outright malicious, either of which could compromise your privacy. Also, check to make sure the app has lots of positive reviews and is actively updated by the vendor before downloading it. Stay away from brand new apps, apps with few reviews, or apps which are rarely updated.
4. **Privacy Options:** Mobile devices collect extensive information about you, especially since you take them everywhere you go. Thoroughly review your device's privacy settings, including location tracking, and make sure sensitive notifications (such as verification codes) don't appear on-screen when the device is locked.
5. **Work:** Be sure any mobile device you use for work is authorized for work use. When at work, be extra careful and never take any pictures or video that may accidentally include sensitive information, such as pictures of whiteboards or computer screens.

Your mobile devices are a powerful tool – one that we want you to enjoy and use. Just following these few simple steps can go a long way to keeping you and your devices secure.

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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