



WCS Connection

April 2021



From the desk of the WCS Executive Director:

The Beginning of Another Deadly Year

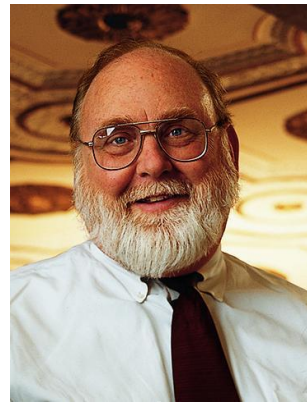
Since the beginning of this year, there have been 147 mass shootings in America. During one 30-day stretch, there were 45 mass shootings alone, including one in Kenosha, Wisconsin on April 17th, that left three dead and three wounded. Just a few days before that, there was mass shooting at a FedEx facility in Indianapolis that left eight dead, with a number of those killed under the age of 20. Many in the Milwaukee metro area are still grappling with and healing from the aftermath of the Molson Coors mass shooting in February of 2020, which happened just a few blocks from the Administrative Offices of Wisconsin Community Services, Inc. (WCS). A mass shooting is generally defined as an indiscriminate shooting that has multiple victims, usually four or more. This is not a topic with which one wants to lead a newsletter, but it is something to which we simply need to pay attention. It is an epidemic and seems to happen more frequently in the United States, which is generally considered the most advanced country in the world. Unfortunately, like most complex problems, there is no single answer to solving this vexing issue or question: Why is there so much gun violence in America? Some of the potential solutions are controversial. There are, however, some solutions that should not be seen as controversial and that many can support. This includes improving our systems for identifying individuals who may be at risk and have untreated mental health conditions. Often, these individuals may come into contact with law enforcement officials, mental health treatment systems or other entities. In many cases, family members often have insight into behavior that indicates if the person goes untreated, the outcome can be catastrophic. We can also make sure that young children who have mental health needs get the treatment and care they need to be well-functioning and caring adults. While there is no one answer that is a panacea to the problem of gun violence and mass shootings, the one thing I believe we can all agree on is that it is unacceptable. We need to do whatever we can to ensure that innocent people who leave their homes for work, go to a mall to shop, or to a service station for gas, return home to their loved ones.

Clarence Johnson



Introducing Swigart House Supportive Housing Services

WCS is excited to announce the opening of the Swigart House Supportive Housing Service Program. In collaboration with the Wisconsin Department of Corrections Division of Community Corrections, the program provides supportive housing for 24 male residents who receive case management, substance use treatment, cognitive intervention, and employment services at the Men's Community Transition Services Center (MCTSC) located at 10th Street and Highland Avenue. Swigart House provides a safe, supportive, and sober environment for individuals as they work to overcome barriers for a successful reintegration back into our community. Services offered at Swigart House include peer support, support groups, and Community Building workshops.

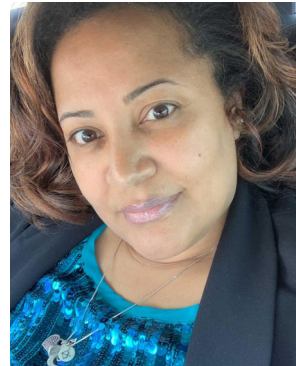


The program was named to honor the legacy of Steve Swigart. Before his untimely death in 2013, Steve dedicated 33 years of his life to working at WCS serving those involved in the criminal justice system. He was a strong advocate of treatment versus incarceration, and was involved in the creation and administration of many programs and services, including residential reentry centers, pretrial services, mental health and substance use services, and restorative justice and youth justice programs. Steve retired in 2007 after serving the last seven years of his career as WCS Executive Director.



New Changes in Agency Programming

WCS has combined its Milwaukee Youth Services Division and Court Services and Community Alternative Division into one division - the Court Services and Community Alternatives Division. We are happy to welcome and introduce the Division's new administrator, Holly Akinsanya. Holly comes to WCS after almost 14 years with the Department of Corrections, extensive experience with Evidence Based Practices, the justice system, court related programming, and re-entry initiatives. She has a deep understanding of unmet behavioral health needs of the individuals WCS serves, such as substance use and mental health. Holly has strong relationships with justice and community partners and leadership which will contribute to her success in her senior leadership role. We welcome Holly to the WCS family!



"Knowing the importance of working with all people to achieve success and move beyond their past to future independence, I knew that WCS was going to be the agency I wanted to join. My 14 years of experience at DOC, in a variety of positions, contributed to my understanding that staff and programs are at the heart of serving our community. I have already found this heart in the people and programs at WCS which has made me look forward to working with such a committed group."

Holly Akinsanya



We're growing and need your help!



WCS is currently expanding services in Milwaukee County and is launching a new Hub and Spoke Health Home Program. The program serves people with substance use and co-occurring physical or mental health needs.

WCS is recruiting for the following positions:

*Peer Specialists
Health Educators*

*Transitional Specialists
Team Supervisor/Clinician
Clinical Assessment Coordinators*

*Benefits Specialists
Care Coordinators*

[Click here](#) for current openings and detailed instructions for the online application process.



Career Opportunities at WCS

WCS is looking for devoted and compassionate people to fill the following positions:

Care Coordinator - Adult Comprehensive Community Services (CCS)

We are looking for a kind and compassionate team player for this full-time position. The Care Coordinator will work with participants in CCS, a psychosocial rehabilitative program, to help them understand, navigate, and progress in their recovery. Qualified candidates must have a bachelor's degree in social work or a related field (master's degree preferred). At least one year of experience working in the mental health and substance use field is preferred.

Recovery Services Coordinator – Wisser Choice

As a Recovery Service Coordinator, you will organize AODA treatment and recovery support services for 10 to 15 participants. These participants are returning to the community from Wisconsin Department of Corrections (DOC) facilities, may be assigned to DOC Community Corrections Probation and Parole, or be part of the general population. Some of the Coordinator's duties include developing a recovery plan to help participants; promoting self-sufficiency and assisting participants with rebuilding relationships and daily living; and being an advocate on behalf of the participant regarding the Court system and other institutions. A bachelor's degree in criminal justice, social work, or human services and three years of related experience are required.

Jail Screener - Waukesha County Pretrial Jail Screening Program

This is a unique entry-level position for an independent, strong-willed individual who will be responsible for conducting criminal background checks of inmates in the Waukesha County Jail. As a Screener you will submit Public Safety

Did You Know?

Steve Swigart's kind heart, round face, jovial laugh, and abundant white beard made him a perfect fit for his other important role, playing Santa at all the WCS residences and for children in the community!



Assessment (PSA) reports to Court officials to assist in making release decisions of defendants. Applicants need to have an associate's degree in criminal justice, sociology, psychology, social work, a related field, or be actively working on a degree within the criminal justice field.

Youth Care Worker – Youth Shelter Care Program

As a Youth Care Worker, you will provide the essential supervision of the youth placed in the WCS Youth Shelter Care Program. This includes implementing the daily schedule of activities. You will also serve as a mentor and role model for the program's youth. A Youth Care Worker will need to work 12 hour shifts on weekends. Applicants must have a minimum of three years of experience working with teenagers and a high school diploma or GED/HSED.



Wisconsin Community Services, Inc.

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Wisconsin Community Services, Inc. (WCS) advocates for justice and community safety, providing innovative opportunities for individuals to overcome adversity.

WCS is a 501(c) 3 non-profit agency that provides services in southeastern Wisconsin.
WCS has been serving the community successfully for over 100 years.

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