



WCS Connection

November & December 2020



From the desk of the WCS Executive Director:

Looking at Life Through a Strengths-Based Approach

Dear Readers,

During the past several months, I have either written short articles, or we have featured stories in the WCS Connection, about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our employees, those we serve, and our community. One of the things that has struck me about life during the pandemic, and especially life in our community is the amount of resilience and courage I have witnessed from some of our community's most disenfranchised and underserved citizens. Initially, I believed that with limited resources and few supports, underserved individuals and communities would not have the bandwidth that is required to manage through a pandemic. (I am not sure that any of us really do.) As time went on it occurred to me that I need to reconsider and reorient my thinking by looking at things through a strengths-based approach, or lens, to better see and appreciate the resilience that all individuals and communities possess. WCS utilizes a strengths-based approach when providing services. Simply put, the strengths-based approach is a work practice theory which focuses on an individuals' self-determination and strength. It is an approach that also sees people as resourceful and resilient, especially when faced with difficult or adverse conditions, such as those that we all have been under during the past several months. This is particularly true for individuals, families and communities that faced difficult challenges before the pandemic began. And therefore, it is especially important that we recognize their resilience, self-determination, and capacity for positivity at this time. Each person is best equipped to know, and has the most expertise about, their own strengths. This also extends to communities. I would like to think that most of us have a desire to nurture and support those things that will bring about healing and moving forward into 2021. If so, I invite you to join me in seeing others through a strengths-based lens.

Have a safe and peaceful holiday season!

Sincerely,

Clarence Johnson



Treatment Alternative Program at WCS in 2021

WCS is excited to start 2021 with a new program to address substance use and racial equity in the criminal justice system. After a competitive proposal process earlier this year, the agency was awarded a Treatment Alternative Program (TAP) grant from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. TAP provides services for justice involved individuals with substance use disorder (SUD) needs. Early intervention and alternative treatment options are provided to prevent incarceration and conviction for these individuals. The program will work closely and directly with the Milwaukee County Court System and the District Attorney's Office, the Public Defender's Office, and judges in specialty courts. The intent is to identify individuals early in the process, which includes individuals who have been arrested and referred to the DA's Office; have misdemeanors offenses, Deferred Prosecution Agreements, or conditional release; and other individuals in the pretrial phase.

WCS' Treatment Alternative Program (TAP) is a recovery team approach which pairs case management services with certified peer specialists and clinical SUD treatment (and co-occurring) services, offering a comprehensive approach which addresses all risk, needs, and responsiveness to goals of the individuals receiving services. In addition to providing comprehensive services, the recovery team assists individuals with accessing additional WCS services and community resources, such as, housing, job training, benefits, support groups, and others. TAP services are designed to prevent criminal convictions and incarceration and leads individuals on a path to recovery and stabilization.



WCS Receives Special Award

The WCS Employment and Training Services area was delighted to receive the 2020 Community Partnership award from the agency's longstanding collaborator, Milwaukee Community Service Corps (MCSC). WCS partners with MCSC to provide job training skills to participants in the areas of construction and manufacturing. MCSC helps WCS recruit and retain individuals that have a desire to pursue a career and earn credentialing in the trades industry. Also, MCSC often lends their expertise on projects to restore and maintain various WCS facilities. We are grateful for local partners like MCSC who make it possible to provide meaningful training opportunities for WCS participants.

Career Opportunities at WCS

WCS is seeking caring and enthusiastic people to fill the following positions:

Forensic Specialist/Case Worker III – Conditional Release

This position provides ongoing service coordination, monitoring, and planning for individuals who are committed under WI Stat 971.17, Not Guilty by Reason of Mental Disease or Defect. The forensic specialist monitors ongoing treatment needs and compliance for all program participants by providing assessment, treatment planning, case management, symptom management, medication monitoring/observation, and crisis-intervention. They will also engage and develop a supportive one to one therapeutic relationship with each participant. This position will work in the Milwaukee County area. Candidates must possess a bachelor's degree in a related human service field as well as experience in case management and service coordination, knowledge of the criminal justice system, and mental health/substance abuse service systems.

Forensic Specialist/Case Worker III - Opening Avenues to Re-entry Success (OARS) Program

A forensic specialist is part of an intensive program that provides wraparound case management services to high risk/high need individuals with mental illness who are being released from the Wisconsin state prison system. This position specifically coordinates, plans, and ensures follow through with community treatment for individuals participating in the OARS Program. The forensic specialist will need to engage and develop a supportive one-to-one therapeutic relationship with each participant. Due to expansion of the program, the current opening is for a forensic specialist to serve Milwaukee, Walworth, Jefferson, or Waukesha County; applicants who live in or near these areas are desired. Experience in case management and service coordination, particularly for individuals with mental health and/or substance use issues or other special populations is required as well as a bachelor's degree in a related human service field.

Group Facilitator – Milwaukee County Day Reporting Center (DRC)

This position provides evidence-based programming along with the chosen curriculum of the DRC. The facilitator will conduct daily group sessions as well as provide individual sessions, if necessary. The main focus is for the facilitator to address the unique criminogenic needs of the participants as well as motivate participants to achieve their goals. A bachelor's degree in a social work field is required for the position and a minimum of two years of experience working with participants involved with the criminal justice system a plus.

Did You Know?



***WCS wishes
you an extra
happy and
safe
holiday
season!***



Resident Care Worker – Bakari Youth Residential Care Center and Youth Crisis Stabilization Facility (YCSF)

The resident care worker is responsible for the direct care and supervision of the residents at Bakari Center and the YCSF. The individual will provide services that reflect the objectives of the respective programs and includes significant attention to participant engagement, positive reinforcement, and use of evidence-based best practices for a high-risk, vulnerable youth population. They will also serve as a positive mentor for the youth in the programs. Applicants must be at least 21 years old, have a high school diploma or equivalent, and have a minimum of one year of experience with children of a similar age to the participant population.

Youth Program Coordinator – Youth Enhanced Support (YES) Program

The coordinator provides intensive in-home and at-school monitoring and support to at-risk students, in the city of Waukesha, who are beginning to exhibit issues with school attendance and/or behavior, and prior to the school filing a petition for habitual truancy. Essential functions include (but not limited to) receiving and processing referrals, communicating with school social workers and staff, maintaining face-to-face contact with students, and providing 24-hour coverage for crisis intervention. Applicants must possess a bachelor's degree in a human services field and possess a knowledge of the juvenile justice system.



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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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