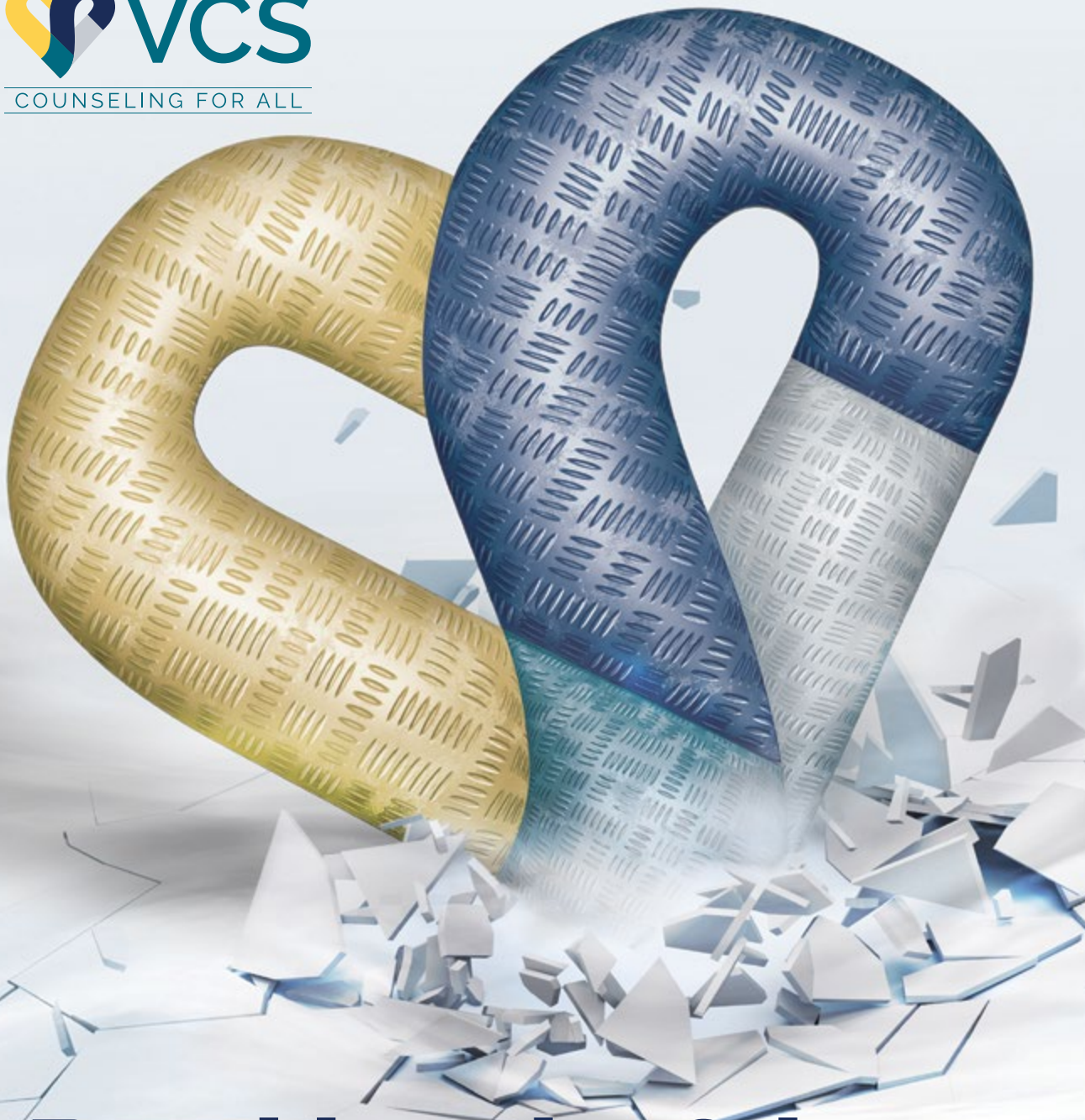




COUNSELING FOR ALL



Breaking the Stigma

2023 Annual Report

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LETTER from the DIRECTOR

Ruth Colón-Wagner

// LMSW, CEO / Executive Director //



Dear VCS Friends,

Back in 2002, 22 years ago, I became enamored with VCS despite never working or volunteering here. VCS spoke to my soul, knowing that it is up to each of us, me included, to ensure that all people receive quality mental health care that is equitable and with equal access for all. 20 years later, I would join VCS in securing our mission to provide accessible and affordable mental health care to our friends, neighbors, and all in need in our community, including services provided at no cost to those without the ability to pay. This foundation of equity and equal access for all is paramount to what VCS stands for.

In 2023, we decided to focus on "Counseling for All" as a call to action to reduce the stigma around mental healthcare. We continued our mission to reduce the stigma around mental health care at our 2023 gala, "Breaking the Stigma". At this event and others throughout the year, we were privileged to witness the power of Stories. Many individuals, including VCS Staff persons and Board members, shared their connection to mental health care either directly through personal experience or indirectly through the experiences of family and friends.

We all know the harmful effects of mental illness when people go without care. VCS is here for ALL. Please spread our mission to all as you never know what someone is feeling. Spreading the word further spreads our mission as we strive to reduce the stigma that is pervasive in our county. We have to normalize mental health care so that we may witness more and more people in need seeking out counseling and mental health treatment. VCS Inc. saves lives, enhances lives, and supports people in all aspects of regaining their hope and resiliency so they can weather the storms and come out better for it.

Mental health treatment isn't about the organization, it's about the people. Therefore, in this Annual look back on 2023, read the Stories of Us. Because while our Impact numbers are impressive and important; the Stories are what we are about. **Counseling is for All.**

Submitted respectfully,

Ruth

VCS is on a mission to provide **FREE COUNSELING SERVICES** to all in need.

MISSION

VCS EMPOWERS PEOPLE THROUGH COMPASSIONATE, CULTURALLY SENSITIVE COUNSELING AND CLINICAL SERVICES THAT ARE **ACCESSIBLE AND AFFORDABLE**; FOSTERING HOPE, AND A HEALTHIER, MORE RESILIENT COMMUNITY.



VISION

EXPAND OUR REACH, SHARE OUR EXPERTISE AND STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS TO DELIVER THE SUPPORT PEOPLE NEED TO THRIVE; CHAMPION THE PREMISE THAT **MENTAL HEALTH CARE IS HEALTHCARE**, ENSURING EQUITABLE ACCESS TO QUALITY SERVICES.

IMPACT

VCS CLIENTS

ACROSS ALL SERVICES

GENERAL
COUNSELING
& PUENTES
220

PARENTING
SERVICES
54

YOUTH
SERVICES
291

STUDENT
ADVOCACY
230
FAMILIES

UR SPACE
32
STUDENTS

FINS
29
STUDENTS

CLINIC
735

OLDER ADULT
SERVICES
(SERVICE UNITS)

500

DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE
PROGRAM
FOR MEN

89

1,889 LIVES
ENRICHED

IMPACT

VCS VOLUNTEER
HOURS PROVIDED

VOLUNTEER
COUNSELOR

7,793

SERVICE HOURS

OLDER ADULTS
COUNSELING

905

SERVICE HOURS

8,698 HOURS

BUILDING **THE FUTURE**
TO ENRICH LIVES

IMPACT

VCS VOLUNTEERS
AND INTERNS
HOURS PROVIDED

NEW VOLUNTEER
COUNSELOR

141

TRAINING HOURS

VOLUNTEER
COUNSELOR

1,146

SEMINAR HOURS

GRADUATE
STUDENT

10,541

CLINICAL HOURS

11,828 HOURS

TRAINING THE
EMERGING WORKFORCE
TO ENRICH LIVES

STRATEGIC PLANS AND GOALS

MARKETING & AWARENESS

GOAL: Ignite a powerful wave of awareness that illuminates the VCS mission

UPDATE:

- Improved the visibility of our community impact by diversifying our marketing and utilizing the expertise of the VCS Board of Directors. This included tangible support with social media and PSAs on 100.7 WHUD
- Purchased Fundraising software to aid in outreach
- Through LCM, created a dynamic new "Sponsorship" ad

CULTURE

GOAL: Achieve team engagement and overall job satisfaction

UPDATE:

- Streamlined workflows, upgraded our network, telehealth and billing technologies
- Centralized Intakes
- Increased workstations and computers
- Hired additional psychotherapists, clinical supervisors, and administrative support staff
- Implemented a new organizational structure to maximize communication
- Implemented Peer Support Services to aid in client overall success

FUNDRAISING

GOAL: Increase donations by 300% over the course of 3 years to provide affordable care

UPDATE:

- Invested in a new position and hired a Director of Development lead all fundraising efforts
- Successful Gala which doubled our fundraising dollars
- Purchased new Fundraising Software
- Increased pro bono services for those without the ability to pay

PROGRAMMING

GOAL: Expand services based on community need

UPDATE:

- Implemented Peer Support Services in the Clinic
- Implemented Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) services
- Constructed a Medical room for administering medication
- Created a full-time Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner position
- Increased Group services
- Expanded our Graduate Student Internship capacity for our Workforce Development Initiative
- Established Clinic Services onsite at Kakiat STEAM Academy

STORIES OF US

STUDENT ADVOCACY

Ana is an 11th grader and had been a part of her school district since kindergarten. Despite 12 years in the same district, Ana found herself being told her home was physically in another district (by 100 feet) and would have to change schools. Ana had friends and a support network that would be ripped away from her. Ana was extremely distressed. This was exacerbated by a language barrier between her mother and the district. They sought Ana's older sister to reach out to VCS Student Advocacy program. Beth supported the family, submitted an appeal and was able to get a stay from New York State. Through all the distress and helplessness the family experienced, VCS was able to keep Ana with her school and with her friends.

John is a very bright child who was struggling in school. The school was contacting the parents an exorbitant amount of times for his "disruptive" behavior. So much so that the parents felt the school stopped trying to help him. VCS was able to secure a diagnostic evaluation which identified an autism disorder. VCS helped the family to apply for and secure special education services for John. Now, with teachers who understand, John is surrounded by educators specially trained to support his needs. With the support of VCS, John now has a great chance at succeeding in school.

Oscar is a 13-year-old student with multiple disabilities including Down Syndrome. After several years of no progress despite his mother's plea, the family felt alone in their concerns for Oscar. VCS intervened, and facilitated an update diagnostic evaluation which clearly showed that not only was Oscar not making progress in school but his skills were actually declining!



STUDENT ADVOCACY *(continued)*

Through our work, Oscar was placed in a more appropriate program in school and now has a bright future to maximize his skills. The family is grateful to VCS!

SCHOOL BASED CLINICS

"Just being able to talk and have [my counselor] listen and validate what I'm saying means a lot to me."

A proud moment for one student, "I feel so great at how I handled this!"

CLINIC

John struggled with confidence issues in all aspects of his life, in relationships, work and entering graduate school. Through his work with VCS, he learned skills to increase his motivation and self-confidence. He uses his skills every day and has grown his self-worth. John now has hope and believes in himself.

As a teenager, **Michele** was in therapy and felt traumatized by those negative experiences. Through VCS' ongoing compassionate care, Michele has reengaged with therapy and actively engages in services with VCS. More importantly, she can feel and see the positive changes she has made in her life as a result.

Henry was consumed with anger. He was paralyzed by it. He was angry at his parents, women he wanted to date and even hate towards God. Over time, Henry built up his confidence to recognize the steps he can proactively take in his life to remove the burden of this hate. He also began to improve his appearance in search of a partner. Today, Henry found his partner and has found solace returning to God. Physically and emotionally, Henry is confident and traded in hatred for hope.



STORIES OF US (CONTINUED)

OLDER ADULTS

Nancy was diagnosed with a life-altering illness, robbing her of her ability to live independently. VCS helped her navigate from "mourning" her former self to overcoming insecurities of feeling like a burden to those around her. Over time, Nancy "found her voice" and gained confidence in expressing her own needs and desires to family and Nursing Home staff members.

Rose is 96 years old now living with her son and his wife. Rose experiences severe anxiety and fears leaving the security of home. Leaving behind her independence, Rose feels shame at being homebound and having to rely on her family. Through her work with VCS, Rose has learned skills to relieve her overwhelming anxiety so that she can be more independent. She has gained a wonderful appreciation of her own self and the life she has lived. Rose has a "giver" nature and has taken care of people her entire life. Now, she deserves time to relax and be taken care of.

DVPM

"I wasn't so sure about this when I started [the Domestic Violence Program for Men] but I have enjoyed each session and really did learn a lot. Thank you VCS for your help and kindness."

PARENTING APART

While providing much needed support to the women with active cases we serve, we find the hardest part for them is the waiting. There aren't many wins when you are being accused of things by someone you share children with. There are a few ups but many more downs. "How can they not see what is going on" is a common phrase. In the Parenting Apart group, we spend most sessions reminding these women of their value and their successes as mothers.



PUENTES CLIENTS

"Estoy aprendiendo a conocerme mejor, a prestar más atención a lo que yo necesito, y a ver las cosas desde otros puntos de vista". ~M.

"I'm learning to know myself better, to pay more attention to what I need, and to see things from other points of view". ~M.

GRUPO DE MADRES CLIENTS

"Realmente necesitaba un espacio así, donde pudiera compartir y aprender. Ya nos hacía falta que nos trajeron pensamientos bonitos". ~R.

"I really needed a space like that, where I could share and learn. We needed someone to bring us beautiful thoughts". ~R.

PARENTING APART CLIENTS

"Yo no tuve nadie que me enseñara esto antes, muchas gracias, si algún día vuelvo a tener conmigo a mis hijos, voy a hacer muchas cosas muy diferentes, para hacerlos muy felices". ~F.

"I didn't have anyone to teach me this before, thank you very much, if one day I have my children with me again, I will do many very different things, to make them very happy". ~F.

RAPP

"The RAPP group helps me feel free and confident with raising my children, and the advice and feedback I have received from others in the same situation has been invaluable."

"Being a part of this group takes away the isolation that I feel as a grandparent raising these kids."

"I am grateful that RAPP has helped me find other people in my community who share and understand my situation."



2023 VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

BARBARA PFINGST



Receiving the 2023 Volunteer of the Year Award last year was an incredibly humbling and gratifying experience. It was a testament to my dedication to the community and the passion I have for helping others. The recognition not only affirmed the impact of my efforts but also motivated me to continue giving back. Knowing that my contributions were valued and made a difference reinforced my commitment to volunteerism and the causes I hold dear.

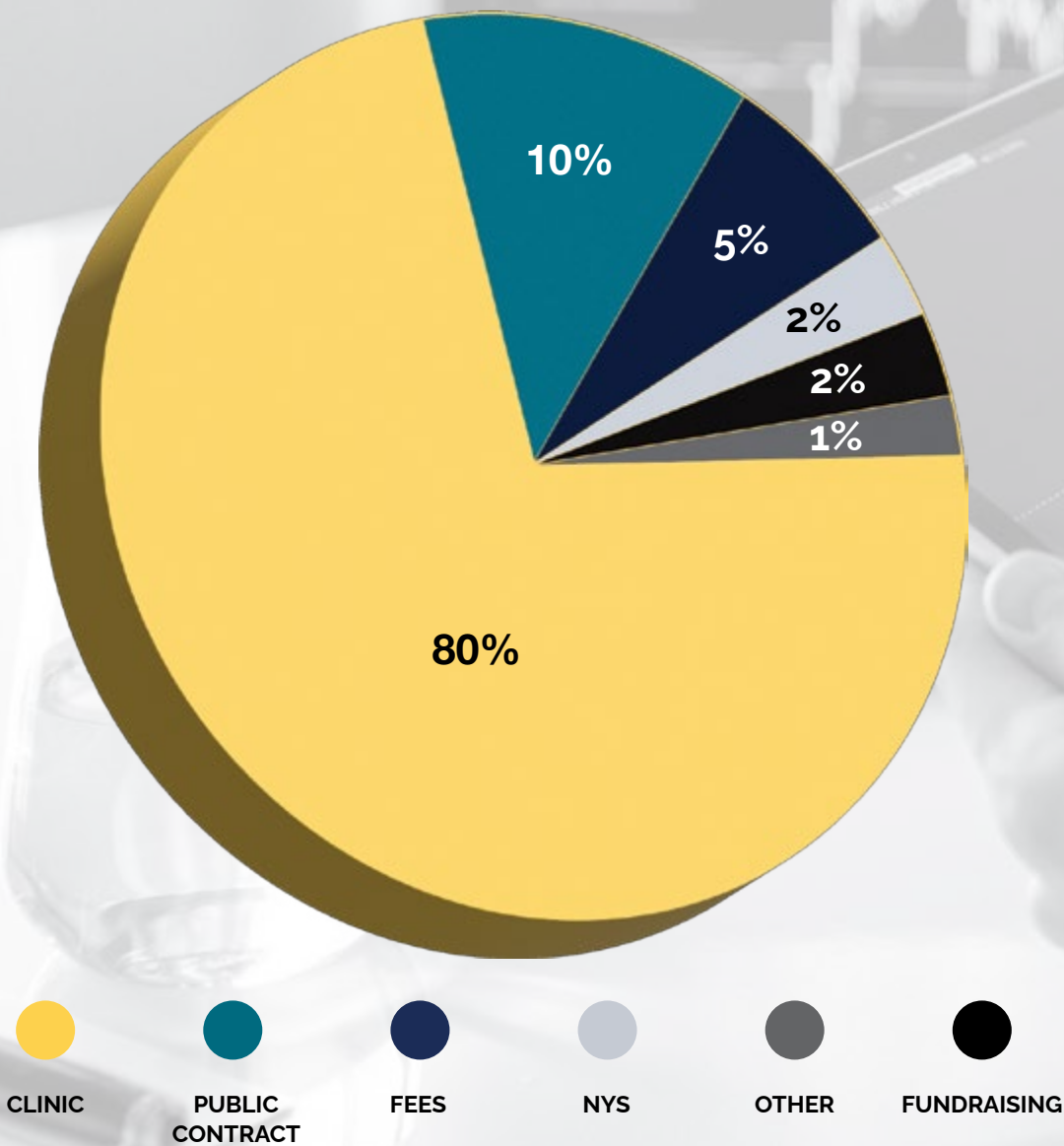
The award also brought a deep sense of gratitude for the support and collaboration of those around me. Volunteering is rarely a solo endeavor, and this recognition reminded me of the amazing team at VCS, Inc., and the community partners who worked alongside me.

It highlighted the power of collective effort and the importance of building strong, supportive networks. VCS, Inc., is committed to serving the community through its array of mental health programs and services. We are fortunate to have this amazing resource in our backyard. Reflecting on the past year, I feel a renewed sense of purpose and am eager to explore new opportunities to serve and make a positive impact in the future.

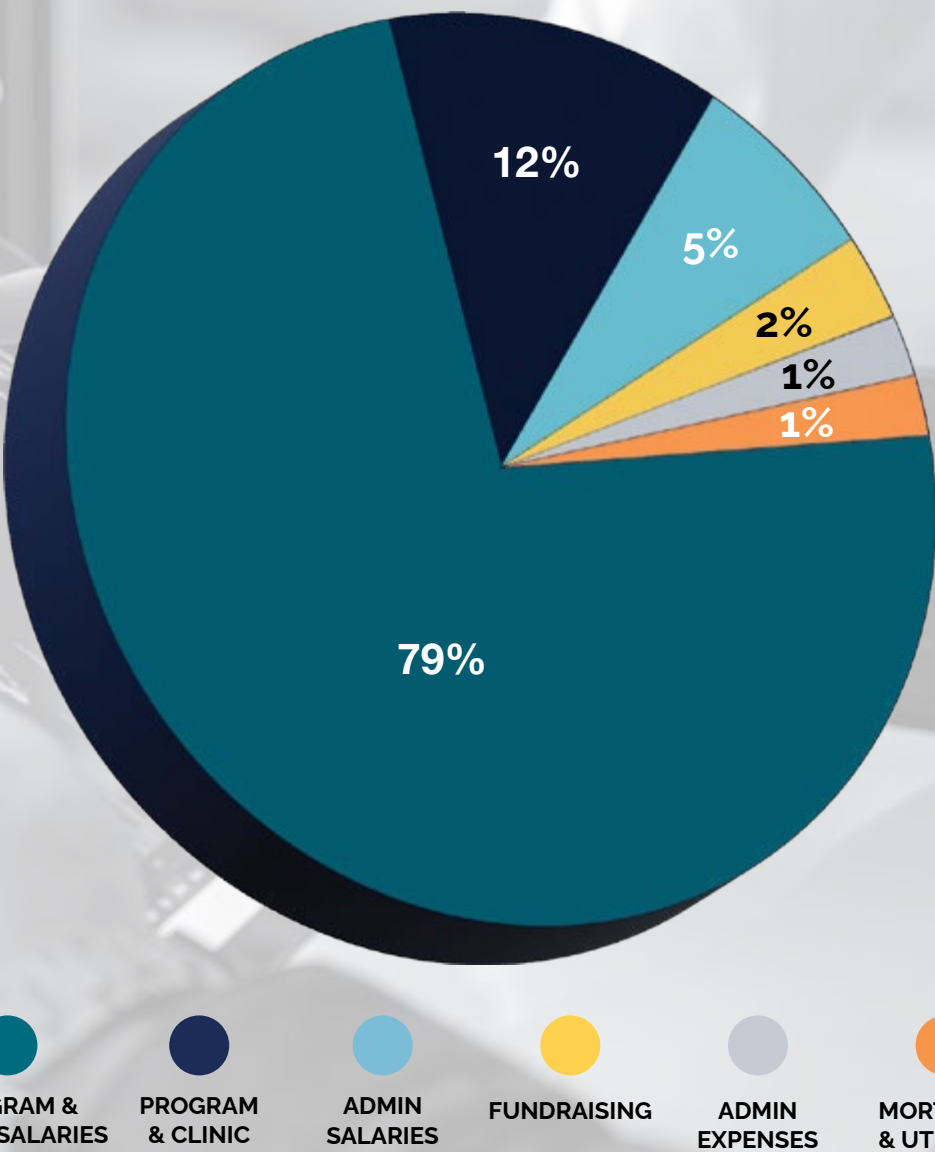
WE APPRECIATE OUR
VCS VOLUNTEERS
EVERY DAY!

2023 REVENUE

2023 EXPENSES



TOTAL INCOME \$3,180,925.00



TOTAL EXPENSES \$3,180,925.00

2023 A YEAR IN PICTURES



COLLABORATIVES AND MEMBERSHIPS

VCS continued its rich history of collaboration and mutual support with the following organizations:

- BRIDGES
- CANDLE
- Center for Safety & Change
- Children's Health Home of Upstate NY
- East Ramapo Central School District
- Family Service Society of Yonkers
- Finkelstein Memorial Library
- Haverstraw Community Center
- Montefiore Nyack Hospital
- Refuah Health Center
- Rockland Community College
- Rockland Community Foundation
- Rockland County Pride Center
- Rockland County School Districts
- Venture Together
- Westchester Community Opportunity Program

VCS is a proud member of the following organizations:

- The Alliance for Rights & Recovery
- Rockland Community Foundation
- Rockland Business Association
- Rockland Teachers Center Institute
- Rockland Women's Business Network
- United Way of Rockland County

FUNDING SOURCES

During 2022 VCS received funding from many generous private foundations, corporations and individual donors as well as the following federal, state and local agencies:

- Medicare
- New York State Medicaid
- New York State Office of Children & Family Services
- New York State Office of Mental Health
- Rockland County Department of Probation
- Rockland County Department of Social Services
- Rockland County Office for the Aging
- Rockland County Office of Mental Health
- Rockland County Youth Bureau
- United Way of Rockland County

THANK YOU.
YOUR SUPPORT GOES
SUCH A LONG WAY.

DONORS AND SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

\$5,000 or more

- Simona Chazen
- Apple Bank
- M & T Bank
- Atlantic, Tomorrows Office

\$1,000 - \$4,999.99

- PCSB Foundation
- Vista Electric
- WellCare
- Ruth Colón-Wagner, LMSW
- Mario Occhicone
- Jon Cooper
- Julie & Bob Prevost Salmon
- Mimi Gelb, LMFT
- Brian Wilson
- Arthur & MarleneRudder-Rogovin
- Derek Nelson
- Steven T. Breen
- John Sadowski
- Terry Knight
- Anita Levine
- Julie Wendholt
- Jonathan Kupperman
- Elijah Reichlin-Melnick

\$500 - \$999.99 *(continued)*

- UBS Business Solutions
- NAMI Rockland
- Michael Guarnieri
- Larry Beck
- Fred DeCicco

\$250 - \$499.99

- Berard & Associates
- Bon Secours Charity Health System
- DeCicco Family Markets
- Exigent Technologies
- Nyack Hospital
- Valentine Electric
- Sheer Strategy
- Metro Valley Advertising
- William and Cheryl McGee
- Andrew Ritschel
- Jane Kelman
- Amy Kanarek
- Beth Kipperman
- Robyn McDonnell
- Judith Ryan
- Kelly Cosgrove
- Sarah Jerrell

\$100 - \$249.99

- Beckerle Lumber
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rockland County, Inc.
- Bi-State Professional Networking Group
- Electrolock
- Hunter Financial Advisors
- MHA Rockland
- Rockland Business Women's Network
- RTC Institute
- The Little Diner
- Alliance for Rights & Recovery
- CANDLE
- Highland Medical, PC
- Bridges
- United Way Rockland
- Richard and Susan Baumeister
- Chase Bridgers
- Beth Caplan
- Anna Cuneo
- Kerry Davis
- Barry Dorfman
- Lillian and Henry Elias
- Diana Eppolito
- Shelly Gazes
- Kevin and Sabrina Greco
- Laura Greenberg
- Nathan and Ann Gross
- Carole Hinds
- Steven Kurtz
- Michael Matarese
- Nino Pesce
- Kara Pollack
- Scott Popkin

\$100 - \$249.99 *(continued)*

- Elizabeth Rosenblum
- Michael Seidenfrau
- Donna Silberman
- Joanne Sorace
- Colleen Spence
- Peter Staller
- Danilo Sulit
- Patrick Vitale

UNDER \$100

- Jean McDonnell
- Liz Alvarado
- Carol Boesch
- Carye Bye
- David Carlucci
- Lydia Harvey
- Mitchell Jerine
- Patti Kanner
- Hilda Kogut
- Gioigio Kolaj
- Don Lutz
- Bruce MacDonald
- Sylvia R. Miller
- Ellen Nash
- Dina Nejman
- Lance Patrouch
- Niurka Rodriguez
- Phil Rutigliano
- Alice Schulman
- Carmine Vella

THANK YOU.
YOUR SUPPORT MEANS
THE WORLD TO US.

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Division Director of Community Services

Darla Salmon, MFT
Director of Counseling & Family Services

Dina Nejman, MSW
Services for Older Adults
& Families Coordinator

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Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner

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Youth Services & FINS Coordinator

Paola Molina-Vivar
Clinic Coordinator

Njiriri Karumba
Certified Peer Specialist

Jean Fils-Aime
Certified Peer Specialist

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Division Director of Community Services

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Director of Counseling & Family Services

Geoffrey Cabrera
Instructor

Linda Berns
Volunteer Instructor

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Azu Nieves, LMSW
Student Internship Coordinator

THE LEARNING INSTITUTE

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Division Director of Community Services

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Betzal Alpert, MHC-LP

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Dominique Dodson, LCSW

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Hunter Harrow, LCSW

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Joan Wasser
Denise Weiner
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Steve Safran
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THANK YOU.
YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS
HAVE NOT GONE
UNNOTICED.

WAYS TO DONATE

// SCAN QR CODES
for more information



COUNSELING FOR ALL

secure.givelively.org/donate/vcs-inc/counseling-for-all

We believe that everyone deserves quality mental health counseling. However, access to counseling is not always readily available to all. Some people... our friends, neighbors, and/or family just can't find counseling that is affordable, readily available and culturally competent. Through our VCS Counseling for All initiative, we aim to make counseling accessible in the community and affordable to all. Partner with us to offer counseling scholarships to all who have financial need. We can work together to heal our community. That is who we are. We are VCS.



VOLUNTEER SCHOLARSHIP

secure.givelively.org/donate/vcs-inc/vcs-volunteer-counselor-training-model

Offer an opportunity of a lifetime to train individuals on how to provide quality mental health counseling. By supporting Volunteer Scholarships, you in turn are supporting dozens of people who will receive counseling through each volunteer you sponsor. VCS Volunteer Counseling Services is a one-of-a-kind model that trains lay people on how to provide counseling services. Each Volunteer Counselor is trained through our exclusive model and will receive weekly supervision under the guidance of a licensed clinical practitioner as well as ongoing continuing education to ensure they provide competent care.



BECOME A VCS G.E.M.

secure.givelively.org/donate/vcs-inc/vcs-g-e-m

By partnering with us through monthly giving, your contribution is used throughout the year. Give Every Month makes donating more manageable to partner with us. You can schedule your giving to your preferred dates and it will automatically submit your support and provide you with a receipt.

All donors will receive documentation for your annual tax purposes.



Special Thanks

TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS,
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