



Waterbury
Youth Services

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Fiscal Year: July 2020-June 2021

IMPACT

Since 1976, Waterbury Youth Services (WYS) has been at the forefront helping youth stay in school, strengthening families, and making our community safer.

Our 14,000–square foot campus in downtown Waterbury isn't just a youth service bureau. It's an afterschool learning laboratory where futures are reimagined through technology, woodworking, journalism, leadership forums, art, dance and martial arts.

To meet the vital and urgent needs of young people throughout Greater Waterbury, we also provide: runaway and homeless youth assistance, crisis counseling, LGBTQ+ support, transitional living support, short-term residential family intervention, juvenile justice/diversion programs, truancy prevention, mentoring, and youth employment programs. Waterbury Youth Services also runs one of the leading Child Advocacy Centers in Connecticut.

The result: bigger dreams and brighter futures for nearly 1000 young people in Greater Waterbury each year.



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Valued Friends:

FY2020–2021 was challenging for Waterbury Youth Services, as it had been for most households, businesses, and non–profit organizations. Our youth were particularly affected by the lack of in person schooling, social interaction, and supports being cut off. The lack of opportunities for social contact left many of our young people feeling isolated, depressed, afraid, tired, and feeling that life had abandoned them. Youth more than ever needed ways to occupy their time and to be kept focused and on track.

I am proud to say that our dedicated and talented Staff Team, as always, collaboratively and with great enthusiasm and energy pulled together and developed strategies to continue to provide virtually the important services that our youth, families, and community needed during this time of great stress.

Because of the added anxiety, stress, and virtual burn out, we found that more of our youth needed mental health counseling. We provided coping workshops, open discussions, connection to free counseling through our Youth and Family Emergency Services Program and clinical services via telehealth. Afterschool programs such as our Linking Academics to Life, our Youth Leadership Empowerment Team, and our 4–H and LGBTQ+ youth groups continued to assemble virtually. Judging by the attendance and youth feedback, these forums were very much needed and appreciated.

I can't say enough of how proud I am of our Staff Team, who remained positive and focused on how we needed to adapt and be flexible and creative as we looked for new ways to do what we have always done, and that is to Support Greater Waterbury's Youth!

Lastly but certainly not least, I extend a most sincere, grateful, and heartfelt thank– you to our partners, funders, and donors for believing in us and continuing to support us through these challenging times. I look forward to many more years of working together in “Guiding youth to realize their unique talents and potential for success – One Life at a Time”.

Please enjoy the Highlights section of this Annual Report and the tremendous impact that Waterbury Youth Services has had on our young people.

With sincerest thanks, warmth, and good wishes,



Kathi M. Crowe
Executive Director



OUR MISSION

Waterbury Youth Services is a non-profit organization
Guiding youth to discover their unique talents and potential for success --One Life at a Time.

2020/21 AT A GLANCE

Total Amount Raised

\$2,714,268

Towns We Serve

Beacon Falls • Bethlehem • Cheshire • Middlebury
Naugatuck • Prospect • Southbury • Thomaston
Waterbury • Watertown • Wolcott • Woodbury

Despite the challenges of Covid 19, WYS' dedicated staff pulled together and developed strategies to continue to provide services and programs virtually. To help with the increased anxiety and stress, WYS provided coping workshops, open discussions, connection to free counseling through our Youth and Family Emergency Services Program, and clinical services via telehealth. Afterschool programs such as our Linking Academics to Life , our Youth Leadership Empowerment Team, and our 4H and LGBTQ+ youth groups continued to assembly virtually.



OUR PROGRAMS

Positive Youth Development Team

- Linking Academics to Life
- Summer Camp
- Career Builders in Health
- LGBTQ+ Support Group
- Youth Empowerment Team
- Community Housing Assistance Program/Community Housing Employment Enrichment Resources Program

Juvenile Justice Team

- Juvenile Review Board
- Truancy Prevention Program
- Juvenile Justice Mentoring
- 4-H Mentoring

Clinical Team

- Short Term Family Integrated Treatment
- Greater Waterbury Child Advocacy Center
- Youth & Family Emergency Services

Partnerships

- Local Interagency Service Team
- Racial & Ethnic Disparities/Disproportionate Minority Contact





PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

At Waterbury Youth Services, we've transformed how young people experience learning and relationships with adults. The architecture for all our programs is the Positive Youth Development framework. This approach emphasizes building a young person's strengths and providing support and opportunities that help them achieve goals and transition to adulthood in a productive, healthy manner.

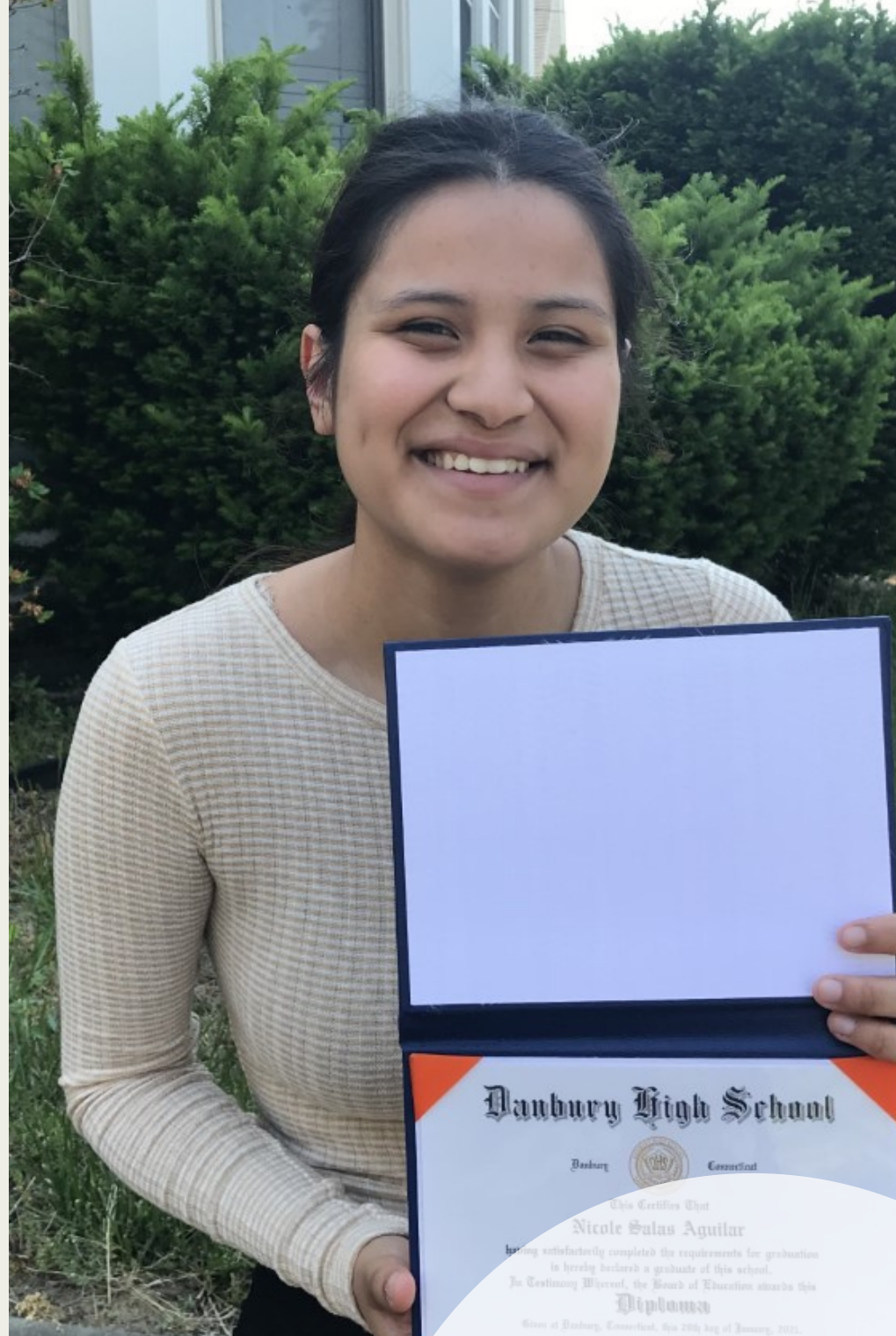
PROGRAMS

Youth Employment: Serves youth ages 14–21. Encourages the development of job skills, provides real–life work experience, and helps to build the resumes of our young people. A partnership with Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board (NRWIB).

Summer Youth Camp: Serves children ages 4–13. Provides children the chance to develop life–long skills and friendships, build character, grow more independent, gain literacy skills, discover new interests, spend the day being physically active, and reconnect with nature in the structured and fun Kiwanis Camp facility in Wolcott, CT. Activities include arts and crafts, swimming, sports, hiking, bike riding, field trips and games. A partnership with Kiwanis Club of Waterbury and Waterbury Police Activity League.

Community Housing Assistance Program & Community Housing Employment Enrichment Program. (CHAP/CHEER): serves youth ages 18–23 who are “aging out” of foster care. A partnership with CT Dept. of Children & Families that helps youth set goals, pursue higher education, find a career, develop life skills and establish independence.

Linking Academics to Life (LAL): A free college, career and life readiness after school program that helps high school students learn more about themselves, discover their potential and chart a successful life course. Four core areas: Senior Prep, Woodworking, Journalism, Entrepreneurship. Monthly stipends allow students—who may have to work otherwise—to focus 100% on academics.



PROGRAMS

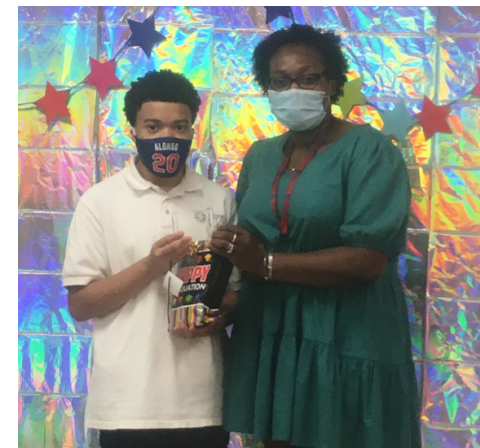
Career Builders in Health: Jump starts careers in health care for young people ages 18–24 by training, certifying and placing young adults into Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) jobs, followed by support that helps participants pursue a post– secondary education.

Truancy Prevention: Goal is to reduce absences, which will encourage completion in school and furthering education. Includes home visitation, supportive counseling, referral, advocacy, parental involvement, and case management to assist youth in reaching their full potential.

Juvenile Justice Mentoring: Individualized mentoring program for Juvenile Justice involved youth. Model emphasizes connecting youth with a mentor within their naturally occurring support system.

4–H Mentoring. The CT 4–H Mentoring Project is a year long prevention program for youth ages 9–13 designed to assist them in acquiring knowledge, building character, and developing life skills in a fun learning environment. Program activities: dance, creative arts, and karate.

Juvenile Review Board (JRB): A community–based diversion process offered to youth who have committed misdemeanor crimes or youth who are displaying at–risk behaviors at home or school that could result in an arrest or a referral to the juvenile court.



PROGRAMS

Short Term Family Integrated Treatment (S-FIT): A short-term (15 day) intensive family therapy treatment option providing crisis stabilization and assessment, with rapid reintegration and transition back home for youth ages 12–17. A partnership with the Connecticut Dept. of Children & Families.

Youth & Family Emergency Services (YFES): Provides crisis intervention for youth ages 6–24 and their families experiencing severe conflict or crisis warranting immediate intervention through: Homeless Youth Resource Center; Project Safe Place; Supervised Visitations; Crisis Counseling.

Greater Waterbury Child Advocacy Center (CAC): Works to investigate and prosecute cases where child sexual abuse or serious physical abuse is alleged or suspected. Coordinates efforts of all professionals involved in the investigation and prosecution process of child abuse. Services include forensic evaluations, medical examinations, counseling and supportive services.

Local Interagency Service Team Meeting (LIST): A quarterly, community-wide meeting facilitated monthly by WYS that provides information and training about juvenile justice issues in the Greater Waterbury area.

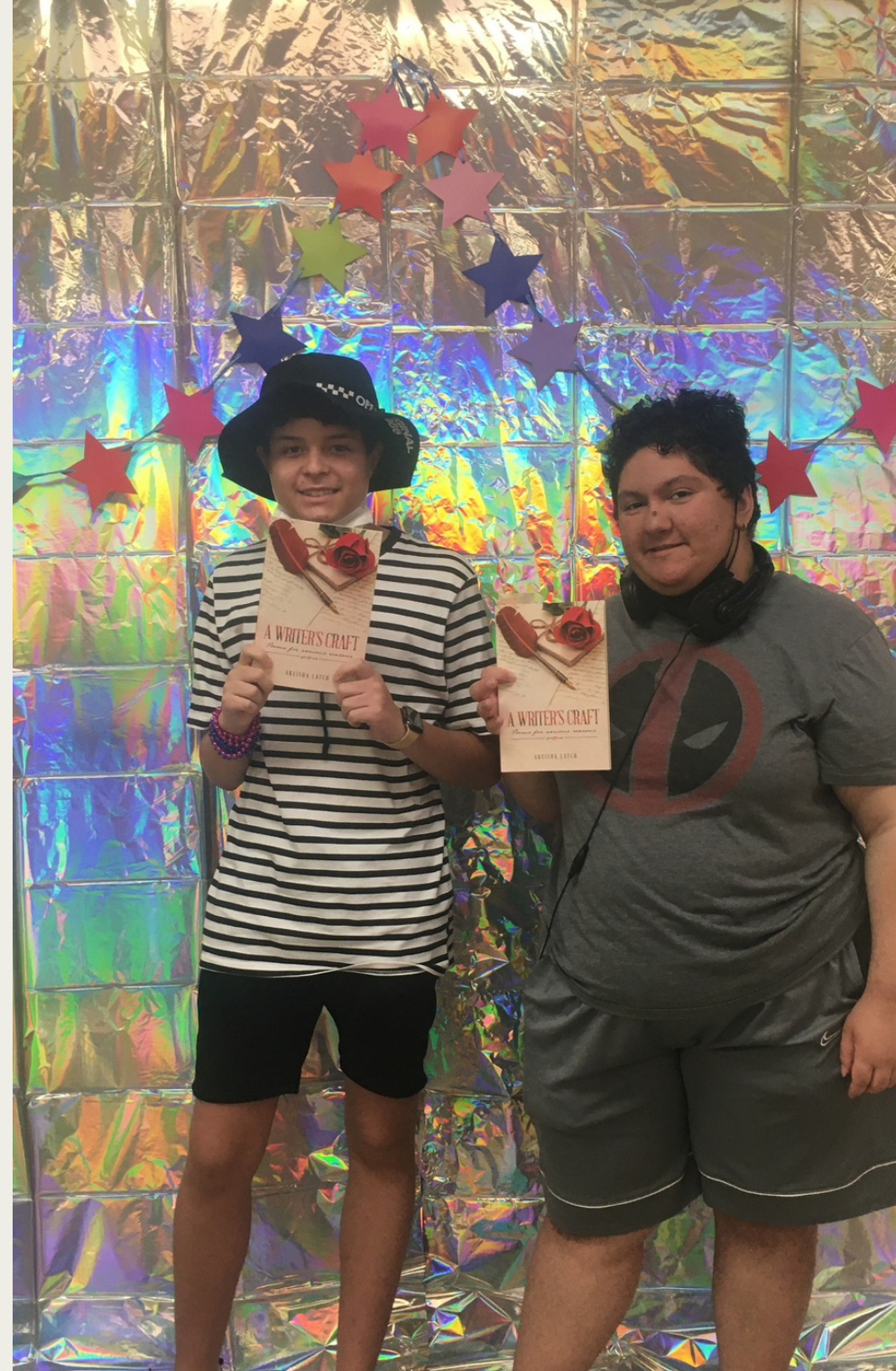
Racial & Ethnic Disparities/Disproportionate Minority Contact (RED). A community-wide meeting hosted by WYS that analyzes data on the demographics of youth involved with the juvenile justice system and with school disciplinary practices. The team monitors the disproportionate effects of local systemic practices on youth of color and looks for ways to decrease the effects on youth in our community.



HIGHLIGHTS

Short Term Family Integrated Treatment– S–FIT. As the global pandemic remained a challenge, the S–FIT Program, which provides crisis stabilization and assessment for youth ages 12–17, continued to provide clinical services and supports to referred youth and their families.


Impact: The S–FIT staff collaboratively worked together to not only address the feelings, thoughts and struggles of the youth that were often heightened or increased because of the pandemic, but ensured a warm and homelike environment. Rooms within the house were often changed over from study spaces to arts and crafts stations to gaming rooms. As things progressed and the vaccination became available, staff were able to bring the youth out to the community to enjoy not only the outdoors but educational, social, and entertainment opportunities. Together, we began to see light at the end of the tunnel and began to get back to a level of normalcy. Individual and family therapy started to be done in person again and youth visitation with families on and off campus was reinstated.



HIGHLIGHTS

Youth & Family Emergency Services – YFES.

Impact: C.T. is a 23-year-old Hispanic female who was living with her boyfriend and his family. She reached out to YFES because she was being verbally, emotionally, and physically abused by him. C.T. had just left the hospital for suicidal ideation for the 3rd time within three months. C.T. had several severe mental health diagnoses and had not been able to receive proper treatment throughout her life due to being and out of the foster care system. The YFES program helped C.T. leave her dangerous living situation and get her into a homeless shelter. Once there, C.T. worked with the YFES clinician and her shelter case manager every day to determine the best placement for her. The YFES clinician met with several housing providers and successfully advocated for C.T. to be referred to the DMHAS Young Adult Services Program which provides youth with an apartment that is paid for through DMHAS and extensive therapy and case management. The YFES clinician worked with C.T. for seven months to ensure that she was accepted into the DMHAS YAS program and provided weekly counseling and case management until C.T. was connected with a clinical therapist through the program. C.T. is now in the program receiving the treatment and case management she needs.



"You helped me deal with everything that has been happening for the last 6 months. I also appreciated feeling safe and validated by my counselor as someone who identifies as genderqueer. Thank you for everything! I can't say enough about how helpful this program has been."

-B.C.

HIGHLIGHTS

Youth & Family Emergency Services – cont.

Impact Story 2: A YFES clinician worked with a youth couple who were homeless at the end of 2020 to help them secure their own apartment and provided weekly counseling for several months to help them with employment searches, connecting them to further rental and utility assistance, helping to provide food, and providing bus passes for job transportation. The YFES clinician also worked with the couple on relationship issues and helped them with healthy communication and boundaries. The couple are successfully maintaining their apartment and living independently.



HIGHLIGHTS

Summer Youth Employment Program – SYEP.

Impact: A partnership with Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board (NRWIB), WYS employed 51 youth. They worked for 6 weeks during the summer. 9 youth were able to stay employed year-round. The youth spent 3 weeks at an in-person worksite and 3 weeks in a virtual platform. The worksites included WOW/NRZ Community Learning Center, Uplifting A Life, Bridge To Success, Synott Travel, Make A Home Foundation, and Waterbury Youth Services. They worked as camp counselors, assistants, and travel agents. They cleaned up neighborhoods and fixed furniture. Youth shared that this was an invaluable experience that gave them real life work experiences and job skills.



HIGHLIGHTS

Community Housing Assistance Program & Community Housing Employment Enrichment Program – CHAP/CHEER, a vital program for those transitioning out of Foster Care. Throughout the pandemic and, although not meeting face to face, WYS staff remained totally engaged with and dedicated to clients and their needs and provided them with resources and supports.

Impact Story 1: Lily Graduated College Cum Laude! Congratulations to Lily, originally from China, for her amazing achievement of graduating from Bentley University in Massachusetts, earning her Bachelors Degree in Finance. Lily is now studying for her Certified Public Accountant exams, plans to be a CPA, and plans to move to Boston this Fall, where she is starting a new job in accounting. She works part time at Whole Foods.

Impact Story 2: Nicole graduated High School! Congratulations to Nicole on her High School Graduation! Through the Chap/Cheer program, Nicole learned independent living skills, such as: maintaining employment, budgeting, and saving. She has an interest in Hairdressing and Early Childhood Education for post high school education. Nicole works full time and cares for her young daughter. We are so proud of Nicole as she continues to achieve her goals!



HIGHLIGHTS

Community Housing Assistance Program & Community Housing Employment Enrichment Program – CHAP/CHEER.

Betty graduated High School! Congratulations to Betty on her Graduation from Shepaug Valley High School! Betty moved to the USA from Liberia five years ago and has worked hard to earn her high school diploma. Betty learned valuable independent living skills in the CHAP Program and was able to move into her own apartment and secure a job at a family restaurant that offered child care. She also enrolled in WYS's Certified Nurse Assistant program. We are so proud of Betty! It is a passion of hers to support education for the children of Liberia. For her High School Senior Project, she raised funds for five school aged children in Liberia.



HIGHLIGHTS

Truancy Prevention Program and Juvenile Review Board. This school year the Truancy Prevention Program received 517 referrals. The Truancy team were able to serve 404 families during the pandemic. The number of referrals received had more than doubled compared to previous years due to the social isolation and stresses of the pandemic. The team worked hard and continues to work hard to serve families within our community.

Impact: Juvenile Review Board Success Story.

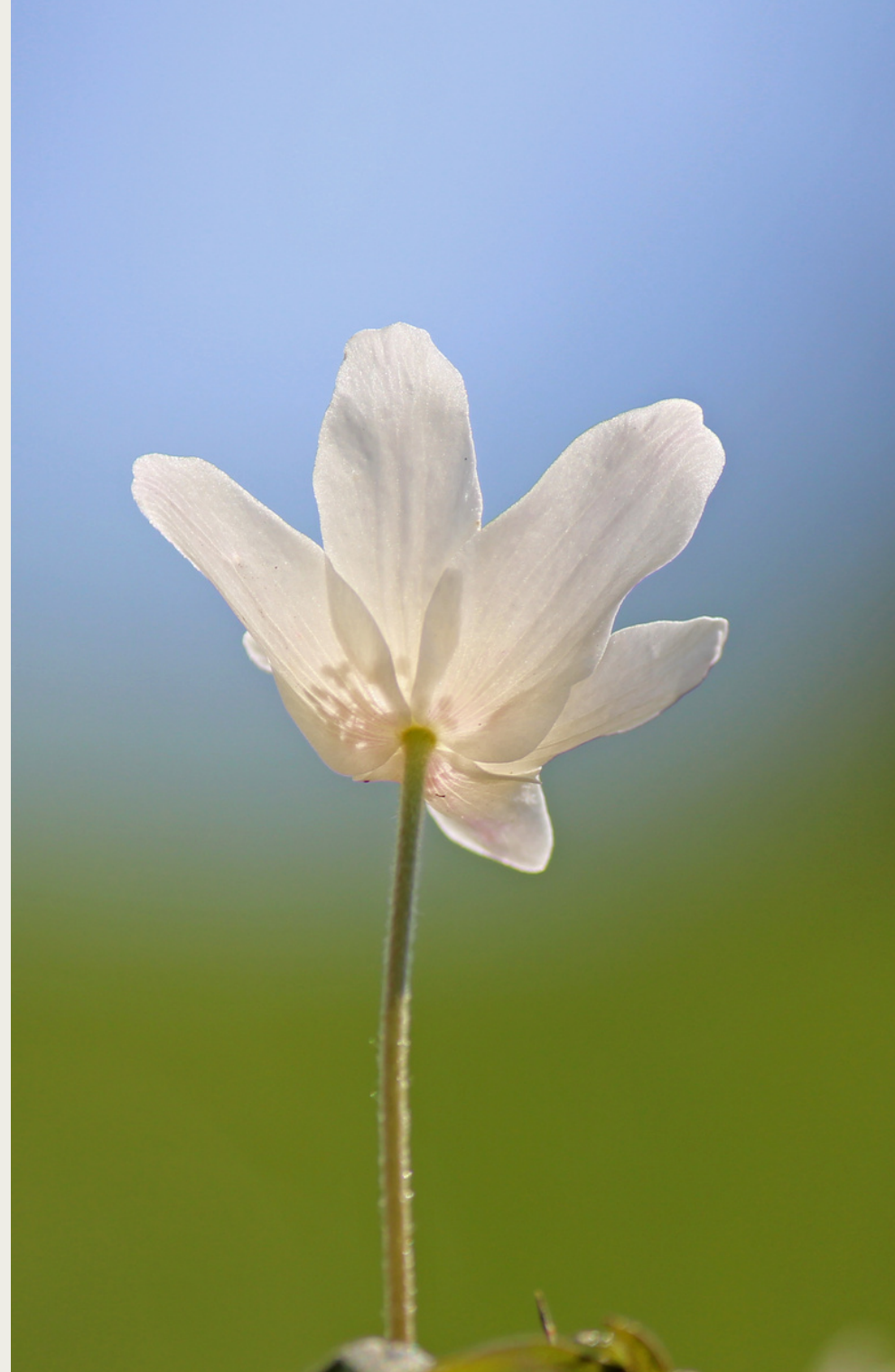
A young lady was referred to the Juvenile Review Board (JRB) for having on her possession objects that were not allowed in school. This young lady went on to complete the JRB program recommendations and obtained employment at a beauty parlor. Her goal is to study cosmetology and one day have her own beauty parlor.



HIGHLIGHTS

WYS' Child Advocacy Center (CAC) adapted to the unforeseen challenges of the pandemic in order to continue to provide much-needed services to 95 children and families. We went through a rigorous reaccreditation process with the National Children's Alliance, pivoting to a comprehensive virtual site review, and are proud to have maintained our status as an accredited center of the national governing body of the Child Advocacy Centers. Further, we focused on enhancing our repertoire of providing evidenced-based, trauma-focused mental health interventions on-site.

Impact: We now have a clinical team of providers, all of whom are credentialed in Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy (TF-CBT). Additionally, we have two therapists who have been trained to work with children who display problematic sexualized behaviors. Telehealth has extended our service delivery reach to families and technology has enabled communication between team members in ways we never thought possible. We continue to work to find innovative ways to reach the children and families of Greater Waterbury.



HIGHLIGHTS

Linking Academics to Life (LAL) is WYS' 12 year old program for under-served high school youth. Despite the challenges of Covid, all goals were surpassed and all program deliverables were met. 100% of students advanced to the next grade on time, 100% of our Senior high school youth graduated on time, and 100% showed improvements and growth in their DAP scores.

Speakers were provided via Zoom and included UCONN, Naugatuck Valley Community College, and a time management workshop which focused on identifying the challenges youth are facing in virtual learning environments and discussing possible strategies for improving time management and staying organized! The workshop focused on 5 tips for better time management and organization: (1) "chunking your time," (2) creating a joyful workspace, (3) taking a break from screens, (4) setting daily intentions, and (5) communicating with your support network! At the end of the workshop, each youth identified at least 1 tip from the presentation that they felt they could implement in their daily routine to improve their time management and organization.

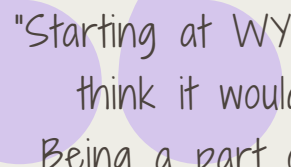
To break the monotony of Zoom, we utilized other technologies such as Scattergories which is a fun "roll the dice" kind of activity and Kahoot.IT, a quiz format.



HIGHLIGHTS

Impact #1: A festive graduation ceremony for all LAL youth and their families was held in June at our offices with boxed suppers provided by Verdi. Certificates were given to all LAL youth and awards were given to the 4 high school seniors: Jeremiah will be attending Waterbury Transition Academy in the Fall and is working for the summer at Waterbury Youth Services, Jonathon will be attending the Universal Technical Institute as an automotive technician major, LaGar'e will be attending Pace University as a film and screen studies major, Brianna will be working at Naugatuck Youth Services in Cyber Security.

Impact #2: The youth in the Journalism component of LAL created a 10 page collection of creative writing, titled Brass Scoop. The youth were Daniella, a Junior at Waterbury Career Academy and a gigantic anime and book fan, Jorge, a music obsessed high school student who is figuring out his purpose and future, Kayla, a high school student passionate about drawing and story writing, Nikole, who loves learning new things and being a voice for the Latino community, and Tassura, a sophomore and a huge manga and anime nerd.



"Starting at WYS six years ago, I didn't think it would have the impact it did. Being a part of a great community, at WYS has truly changed my life for the better, getting to be instructed by people who want to help, influence you in a positive way not only for the benefit for oneself; but to create a positive change for our community. Personally, having an opportunity to make change with WYS taught me leadership, grit, responsibility, and more. I'm grateful and indebted to WYS because they helped me become the young adult that I am today, and without their outstanding guidance and motivation to be the best I can be, I would not be the young adult that I am today." -L



OUR BOARD & STAFF

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Diane Haggis, EdD
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Janice Paul
Kelly Mannix Pinho
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Justin Golden, Treasurer
Diane Haggis, Ed.D., Vice President
Mark Lancor, President
Janice Paul, Secretary

Executive Director:

Kathi M. Crowe

OUR STAFF

Our team is comprised of 31 full time and 26 part time amazing, generous, hard-working staff members who are passionate about helping young people in Greater Waterbury succeed.

This diverse group of professionals draws upon expertise from a variety of backgrounds to support and create opportunities for our youth, including Licensed Clinical Social Workers, Bachelors and Masters Level Social Workers, Business & Finance, and degrees in Criminal Justice and Licensed Marriage & Family therapists.



FINANCIALS

Breakdown of Funds by Program Teams

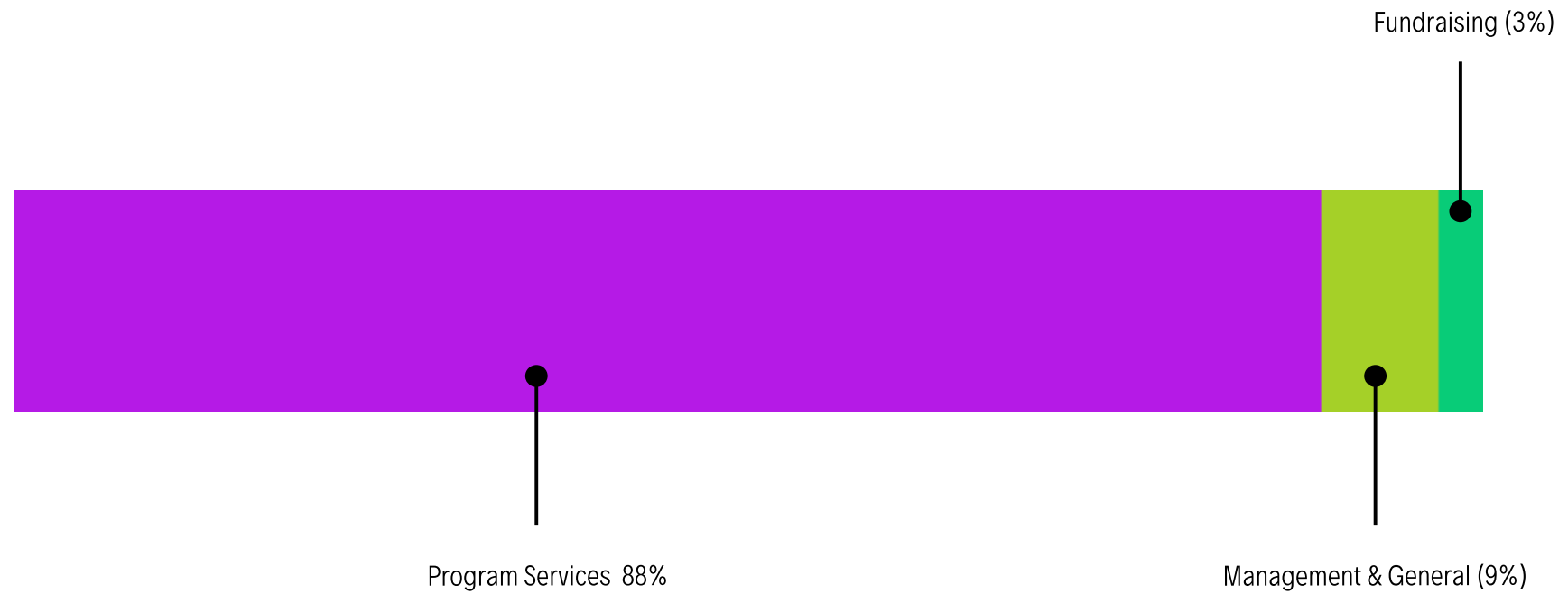
\$417,307 Positive Youth Development Team

\$1,611.853 Clinical Team

\$205,537 Juvenile Justice Team

FINANCIALS

Allocation of Expenses



DONORS

We are deeply grateful to the following donors who entrusted us with their gifts in
FY 2020/21 to help build a stronger Greater Waterbury community.

TOP FUNDERS

American Savings Foundation
City of Waterbury
Connecticut Community Foundation
Connecticut Development Block Grant
Connecticut Judicial Branch
Connecticut Youth Service Association
Department of Children and Families
Governors Prevention Partnership
Ion Bank Foundation
MacDermid Performance Solutions
Northwest Regional Workforce Investment
Board
Office of Victim Services
TD Charitable Foundation
Thomaston Savings Bank
Tow Foundation
UConn 4-H
United Way of Greater Waterbury

\$5,000–1,000

Bank of America– George and Grace Long
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Cheryl Paul
Christine Corey
Claudia Bunker
Colleen Penny

*Thank!
You.*

DONORS

<\$1,000

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Danielle McGee
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Deborah Pope
Diane Haggis
Diane Teixeira
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Wesley Wensek
William Finlay
Zackin, Zimyeski, and Sullivan

*Thank!
You!*