

THE
WILLIAM
GEORGE
AGENCY

ANNUAL

REPORT

FY 2021-2022

Mission

We are committed to providing a safe and caring residential environment supported by proven, therapeutic, clinical and medical care for at-risk youth.



Care  First

Vision

Recognized as among the best in offering innovative, highly regarded programs to serve high-need, specialized populations who have historically been underserved.

Values

To care first about young people while helping them develop the attitudes, social skills, and self-direction enabling them to become contributing members of the community. To engage, respect, empower, and partner with families to support their efforts in successful reunification and family preservation.

OUR DEDICATED

TEAM



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A LETTER FROM OUR

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This past year presented many of the same uncertainties and challenges we faced at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite that, WGA persevered as a leading provider of therapeutic residential care for New York's most vulnerable adolescents with behavioral and mental health challenges.



As you might imagine, the starting point for all good treatment is to offer youth a staff-rich environment that allows them to feel physically and emotionally safe. Towards that end, WGA leadership partnered with other child welfare agencies over the last year to voice concern to legislators over industry-wide staff shortages and advocate for the need to infuse greater fiscal resources into the system. Thankfully, we were able to recruit qualified applicants to expand our licensed clinical and nursing staff, further enhancing our ability to offer the highest quality of medical and therapeutic services to ensure the well-being of the youth entrusted to our care.

With mixed emotions, we bid farewell to two highly-valued members of our community, former Medical Director, Dr. Mark Glosenger, and former Chief Program Officer and Executive Advocate, Ron Trumino, both who recently retired after serving our Agency for a combined total of 57 years.

Dr. Glosenger was succeeded by William Shepherd, MD, a former emergency room and family medicine practitioner who joined WGA in 2020 and now directs our new Medical Clinic. Dr. Gabriel Tornusciolo, Psy.D., joined us from Cornell University to fill the Chief Program Officer position. “Dr. T” is a licensed psychologist who began his career as a child care worker, group home foster parent, and corrections clinician after graduating from Vanderbilt University and obtaining his doctorate from Indiana University. He has intimate knowledge of the field and our organization as he worked at WGA as our Director of Special

Caring for the safety and well-being of children and staff on our campus remained our top priority, particularly concerning the pandemic, where we developed protocols involving regular testing and quarantining to promote risk mitigation. Fortunately, we were highly successful in our efforts as we largely minimized the incidence of COVID-19 on campus. In addition, we reviewed campus-wide security and emergency response protocols and implemented a new software system to help manage emergencies.

Workforce shortages, a reality experienced across diverse businesses and regions, made hiring and retention a challenge, creating the need to limit our census to preserve safe staffing ratios, despite receiving an abundance of referrals weekly. It remained difficult to find qualified applicants even after increasing the starting wage for frontline counselors. Fortunately, with Board support, we were able to incentivize our direct care and supervisory staff with enhanced overtime pay so that we were able to maintain our enriched staffing coverage.

Services for nearly 15 years from 1997 through 2011, a period of tremendous growth for the Agency.

Thoughtful discussions continue about the future and role of congregate care in the context of the relatively new federal legislation entitled the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA). While our position remains that families should be kept together whenever possible and in the child's best interest, our experience indicates that there will continue to be a need for therapeutic residential treatment within the continuum of care for children. For some children, community-based preventive services and foster care lack sufficient supervision, structure, and intensive clinical services to help youth with serious behavioral health challenges. This is especially true for youth who engage in self-harming behavior or substance abuse, have witnessed domestic and community violence, and have been victims of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse and trafficking.

Every kid is one caring adult away from being a success story.

- Josh Shipp,
Former foster child and best selling author

Over the past year, WGA began implementing a strategic plan to advance our position as a premier provider of residential treatment services in New York State and continued to explore opportunities to replicate our highly successful preventative services program for youth residing in Tompkins and Cortland counties. We continued to meet all Council on Accreditation (COA) standards reflective of the highest quality of care and to serve as a Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) under FFPSA. We are currently preparing for the reaccreditation process by the COA in the spring of 2023.

We are proud to report that with an average length of stay of just over 12 months that 96 percent of our residents are discharged to a lower level of care, having successfully completed the program, with the majority of youth returning to family or fictive kin.

The Agency has worked very hard to maintain the values, expectations, and standards that have been in place for years and represent a culture of excellence. Our work continues to build on a foundation of a 127-year heritage as the first junior republic in the United States. Though the citizen "self-government" model has evolved to our present-day clinical treatment model, albeit with a healthy dose of citizen "voice and choice", one constant has remained -- we have never wavered from our commitment to providing the highest quality of care and services to troubled youth so that they can return to their home communities with a future sense of purpose and become contributing members of their communities.

The following pages are highlights and narratives of our past year's efforts and accomplishments.

With your continued support, we look forward to another year of helping youth overcome personal obstacles and difficult life experiences. As Josh Shipp, a former foster child has so eloquently stated, "every kid is one caring adult away from being a success story." We ask that you join us in being that one caring adult.

Gratefully yours,


Executive Director



BY THE

NUMBERS

323 staff members
provide **24 hour care**
to over **225 at-risk youth**
annually between the
ages of 12 to 18+



52 of 62

counties served
in New York State



75%

of WGA youth choose to engage
in aftercare services with our
family service coordinators

10,000

miles per week put on Agency
vehicles making sure youth can
have home visits

37,000+

care days in **20** residential cottages
on **650** acres in Freeville, NY

204

clients served in our local community
over **20** years through the Therapeutic
After-school Program

2021 - 2022

HIGHLIGHTS

A Therapeutic Community of Youth, **Growing** and **Maturing** **Together** Responsibly



WGA holds a number of campus-wide activities throughout the year.

The activities foster teamwork, social-development, individual responsibility, citizenship, confidence and a sense of connection to self and others.

Here are some of the **highlights**.

Giving Back to the Community

The students and staff in WGA's Vocational Program used their skills to make two "Rim BBQs" which were donated as raffle items for the 5th Annual Swing for the Cure Golf Tournament in August 2021. The charity tournament raises funds to support a member of the local Tompkins County community who is battling cancer.

Since 2010, WGA has partnered with the Dryden Elementary School and the First Presbyterian Church of Dryden's Weekend Backpack Program. From September to June each school year, youth and staff from one of WGA's cottages volunteer their time to pack 60 bags of nutritious foods and snacks every week (1,920 food items per month) to help children and families. This past year, residents from Grace Cottage volunteered for the job and delivered the bags of food for the children's backpacks at the elementary school each Friday. Helping the next generation can be empowering.



Each year, WGA partners with the Salvation Army to raise money for families in need during the holiday season.

This past year, youth helped raise a record-breaking \$2,900 from WGA's 9th annual Walkathon in November and inaugural bake sale.

Giving back to the community helps young people develop compassion and empathy for self and others.

Building Self-Esteem

Every August, WGA's Recreation Department hosts Olympic Days - a fun-filled, three-day athletic competition among residential cottages. Activities include track and field events, swimming contests, and a highly-anticipated tug of war challenge. Youth cheer each other on, work on their



teamwork skills, and build their confidence all while having fun. Last year participants were heard saying, "I have never won anything before," and "did you see how well I did?"

Fostering a sense of self-worth is important for teens, especially those who have experienced abuse or neglect in their early lives.

Promoting Wellbeing through Positive Experiences

The simple act of learning something new while having fun in a safe, supportive environment can be therapeutic for trauma-survivors. This is especially true for youth whose idea of having fun once revolved around “getting high” and engaging in self-destructive behaviors.



The first Youth Centered Recovery Program barbeque since the onset of COVID took place this past year. The event provided residents with a chance to practice prosocial skills and to celebrate their work towards recovery-related goals. In April, WGA held a much-anticipated campus-wide Chili Cook Off. First place bragging rights went to a sober activities group facilitated by one of WGA’s Substance Abuse Counselors from the Van Clef Substance Treatment Program.

‘Going to Prom’ is a rite of passage for most teens at their hometown high school. Participating in an out-of-home program shouldn’t interrupt that opportunity. In June, 24 young adults dressed in evening wear, some donated by

the local community, and attended a galaxy-themed prom. The night started with a formal dinner on the lower floor of Ewald Dining Center, followed by dancing under the stars on the patio. The activity was made possible by WGA’s Director of Special Services, Independent Living Skills Supervisor, and a committee of Youth Care Specialists and Ewald Dining Center staff.

Empowering Youth

Weekly roundtable discussions resumed last fall between WGA leadership and youth after COVID-related restrictions began to ease. Youth from all treatment programs talked about challenges due to the pandemic, their thoughts about cottage culture, and their ideas about how programming can be improved to better meet their needs.



One of our bedrock beliefs is that youth should have a voice in those decisions that directly affect their future. It is how we honor a youth’s experience and empower them to transcend some of those difficult life experiences.

Growing through Animal-Assisted Therapies

WGA's canine and equine animal-assisted intervention programs (AAIP) provide an essential foundation for enhancing positive youth development, learning, and overall well-being by exploring and enjoying human-animal interactions in a safe and supportive way. Research shows that animal-assisted therapy may decrease general anxiety, stress, feelings of fear or worry and provide motivation and focus in learning.

In December 2021, the fifth round of WGA's dog training program known as "Paws First" was completed. Dogs that earn AKC Canine Good Citizen™ status support a variety of different WGA program areas. There have been extensive benefits to adding canines to WGA's animal-assisted intervention programming for both youth and staff members.

Over the summer of 2022, WGA's Robert L. Newman Equine Center applied to begin the process of accreditation with the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Intl). Path Intl accreditation is a voluntary membership-driven process; it focuses on the education and evaluation of an equine-assisted program using standards for health and safety considered fundamental to promoting the well-being of all participants and equines.

"... I just finished the animal-assisted interventions program with Claude. He is Mr. C's dog at recreation. Dogs and horses have been a huge part of my recovery. I have been [at WGA] since January. I have been in other residential treatment centers and inpatient facilities, but nothing helps me cope better than animals do, and no other places had an animal program. I have really bad anxiety, and Claude helps me manage it. My grandmother recently passed away, and when my counselor told me, she had asked Mr. C to bring Claude so I would have him with me. I have made it six months without cutting or self-harming! Normally, when I would get upset or get depressed, I would cut myself. I feel like having Claude there with me distracted me from thinking about negative actions. I'm happy to tell you I still haven't done any self-harming due to my being strong, my staff's support, and Claude. I wanted to express to you how thankful I am for putting together the Paws First dog training program."

- WGA Youth



Developing Transferable Skills

Two pilot vocational programs were introduced in July 2021 to expand job skill development opportunities in the community and on campus over the weekends.

The first program used a paid internship model to find suitable work with employers in the community for eligible youth. Youth wages during the first three months were reimbursed by WGA in exchange for a youth's ability to gain work experience in a real-world setting. After three months, employers could decide to make a part-time or full-time job offer to youth based on their performance. Six residents participated in this new off-campus vocational program – four getting hired and all gaining valuable interview practice.

The second program, which took place on campus in a more structured learning environment, was developed to introduce youth to different career paths. Local professionals instructed groups of 4-5 residents at a time. The carpentry group learned to make picnic tables for use around campus, the automotive detailing group practiced on cottage vehicles, and the photography group learned the basic elements to taking a good photo.



Six WGA vocational students also attended a workplace safety workshop in April 2022 conducted by Midstate Council for Occupational Safety. Youth learned about hazard identification and control, sexual harassment, violence, and bullying in the workplace.

Expanding Preventative Services

WGA's Therapeutic After-school Program (TAP) is focused on providing care to youth between the ages of 12 – 21 that reside in the local community and present mental or behavioral health needs. The primary goal is to avert residential placement while preserving the family unit through intensive family therapy, assistance with school work, and on-call crisis support. Youth in the program are often enrolled in the Day School Program at the George Junior Republic Union Free School District located on campus.

For the past 20 years, TAP has met or exceeded all eight metrics for providing high quality preventative services for Tompkins County families.

In addition, WGA renewed its participation in CHHUNY (Children's Health Homes of Upstate New York), a partnership of independent agencies working to ensure that quality family-driven, youth-guided care management is provided to children and youth in Cortland, Tioga and Tompkins counties through an experienced network of providers.

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S U C C E S S E S

Every child who comes to WGA is **unique**.



Each has a resilient spirit and enormous potential to excel.

Our staff are trained to understand the complexities and challenges of today's youth.

Here are some of the **successes**.

Building Capacity to Live With Greater Independence

“You have to clean, because it’s part of life and it’s a living skill,” says Robert*, who has been actively working on his vocational, social and educational skills at WGA over the past year and a half.

Robert started out working in landscaping but has since moved over to the recreation department to study custodial services.

He likes learning skills he knows he can use once he leaves WGA, but he most enjoys the relationships he’s created with everyone at his job and how he continues to learn there.

“It’s a very normal environment and I feel comfortable with all recreational staff; if I make a mistake they are very nice about correcting my mistakes,” says Robert. Staff are currently coaching Robert on the importance of having a consistent work effort and the value to applying himself even when he does not want to work.

“He always asks ‘how did I do’ at the end of each work day and always wants feedback and looks to improve from it,” says Greg Clendenning, Assistant Director of Recreation. “He’s been a wonderful worker, and he always aims to please.”

Robert was referred to WGA to participate in a highly-structured, therapeutic program for youth with developmental delays. Like others in the program, he receives support on how to better manage his emotions



and behavior to meet social and workplace expectations. Particular emphasis is placed on skill building with a long term goal of achieving a level of social, vocational and educational competency which allows for a higher degree of independent living.

One of Robert’s fears is growing up, “because you have to be responsible. This includes owning a home, working a job and paying bills.” Staff are helping Robert understand that responsibility does not have to be framed as such a heavy burden; sometimes it just means finishing the task right in front of you.

When thinking about WGA, Robert says the word “calming” comes to mind. “Sometimes things are hectic in life, but I can always get back to that calming environment using the skills I’ve learned here.”

** Name of youth changed to protect privacy.*

Acting Decisively in Pursuit of Important Health Services

When Nicole* came to WGA at 15, she was living with a congenital heart condition known as Wolff-Parkinson-White syndrome. The scary syndrome is not very common (1-3 per 1000 people) and results in an electrical abnormality in the heart that can cause fast heartbeats and result in passing out without warning. It was first diagnosed when Nicole was 13 after she had a few fainting episodes. For a variety of reasons, follow-up visits to a cardiologist were unsuccessful after her diagnosis, and her condition remained untreated.



That all changed when Nicole came to WGA and was seen by one of WGA’s doctors for a routine physical. Upon learning of the young girl’s condition, staff advocated for her to get proper treatment.

“We coordinated with her parent, medical specialists and insurance providers to schedule the procedure she needed,” recalls William Shepherd, MD, Medical Director

of WGA’s Medical Clinic. “Our staff made a lot of phone calls to find her the appropriate pediatric cardiologist and manage all the logistics.”

With a WGA nurse by her side, Nicole traveled to New York City to have a procedure known as a cardiac ablation.

“The procedure itself can last between 3 to 6 hours and involves inserting a catheter in a patient’s blood vessel, typically through the groin or shoulder area, up to the heart to treat the arrhythmia,” says Dr. Shepherd.

One of the scariest parts of the ordeal was when it came time for the anesthesia. Trust is hard under normal circumstances; it can be even harder for children with trauma in their past.

“Nicole was understandably nervous,” recalls her WGA nurse, Wendy Lyon. “She was also very courageous. Her parent was, too, for trusting us when we said we would take care of her daughter every step of the way.”

Once back on campus, Nicole’s recovery was monitored closely for several weeks until she was able to resume typical teen activities. Nicole’s story is one of many that illustrates the lengths and depths WGA and its medical staff will go to provide compassionate care.

** Name of youth changed to protect privacy.*

Helping Youth Live Drug Free

In New York state, 112,000 children between the ages of 12 and 17 report using drugs in the last month. Thankfully for Dan* and his family, he is no longer one of them. While at WGA, Dan achieved a coveted milestone in the recovery community – his one-year anniversary of sobriety.

Addiction and recovery services are provided at WGA via Van Clef cottage, which is home to a licensed Outpatient Substance Treatment Program that serves residents with diagnosable substance use disorders. Approximately 60% of WGA residents utilize Van Clef services. The program is licensed by the New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) and is certified as a New York State Opioid Overdose Prevention Program. Van Clef also offers Opioid overdose training to its clients.

Credentialed Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselors work with youth whose lives have been affected by any combination of personal or family substance use. Individual and group counseling takes place on a weekly basis. Most participants have co-occurring mental health challenges. Some receive counseling because of court mandates while others agree to enroll in treatment because their lives have become unmanageable. The majority have received treatment in other programs with little or no success.

“I don’t need drugs to feel good anymore, or to make money or to live a good life,” says Dan, who admits that his significant past substance use history created many issues in his life. It strained his relationship with family members to the point where they didn’t want him around. It got him in trouble with the law, affected his judgement and decreased his performance in school. “I am doing better in school and have just passed [to the next] grade finally,” he says proudly. “I just received my [driving]

In New York State, 112,000 children between 12-17 report using drugs in the last month.

- National Center for Drug Abuse Statistics

permit. I have a job that they tell me that I work very hard at, and my relationship with my family is awesome now.”

Dan looks and feels healthier, too, which is a big motivation for him to stay drug free. One of the first things he noticed after arriving on campus and being clean from methamphetamines is that he could run and breathe better.

When asked about other things he’s learned while being at WGA, Dan replies, “I talk better to people now. I am way more respectful, and I can take criticism without getting upset and just redo the right way.”

Since becoming a licensed Opioid Overdose Prevention Program in 2019, six Van Clef personnel have been certified to train clients and other WGA staff on how to prevent an opioid overdose. This is especially important given an increase in opioid overdoses observed by the New York State Department of Health, which is likely linked to fentanyl being added to other drugs. WGA also procured 72 naloxone rescue kits for each residence on campus and to place in other areas to help reverse the effects of an opioid overdose should it be necessary.

“It’s important that we have the right tools to quickly respond in emergency situations,” says Justin Herbel, Substance Treatment Program Director at WGA. “Substance misuse relapse rates are common, especially with opiate addictions. When relapse can happen in a blink of an eye, minutes count.”

** Name of youth changed to protect privacy.*

Creating a Safe Space to Heal

In late 2021, WGA began repurposing an existing building into an expanded Medical Clinic to improve the footprint and functionality of its existing Clinic. Thanks in part to a grant from The Fund for The William George Agency, the new Medical Clinic nearly doubled in size (approximately 6,000 square feet) to better support the provision of medical and behavioral health services to youth in WGA care, now and in the future.

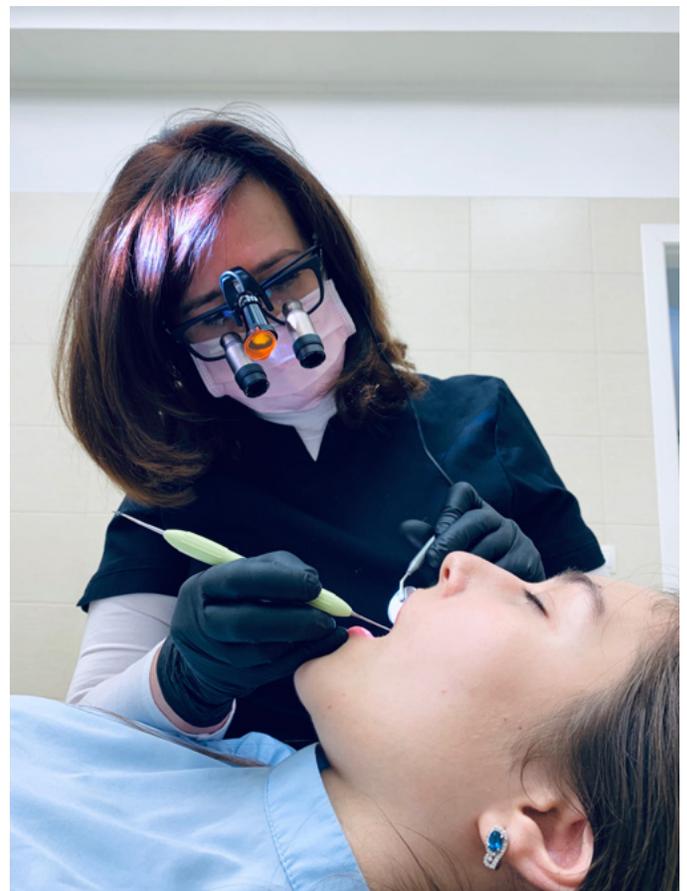
The Medical Clinic is licensed as an Article 29-I Health Facility by the New York State Department of Health and is open 7 days a week to youth on campus. A wide range of licensed professionals attend to most medical and psychiatric needs experienced by WGA residents.

The highly qualified healthcare staff include: a consulting Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner and Psychologist who work directly on campus four days a week, two Physicians who provide on-site medical coverage five days a week, and Nurses to meet the medical needs of the youth every day of the week. A Registered Nurse and a Physician are always on call when there is no medical staff on campus. Additionally, WGA has Medical Escort personnel to assist the nursing staff in providing safe transport to and from medical appointments off campus, including but not limited to vision, orthodontic care, physical therapy, and podiatry.

Former Medical Director Dr. Glosenger, WGA Leadership, and Ithaca-based Schickel Architecture all worked on the new Clinic's design, which follows a traditional

hospital floor setting with a center-based nurse's station surrounded by patient observation and exam rooms. A provision was also made for dedicated dental office space that can be used by a visiting dentist and dental hygienist for dental care procedures. There is also a small kitchen, supply room, conference space, and several administrative offices.

The new facility officially opened in June of 2022.



IN DEEP APPRECIATION:

OUR DONORS

A special thanks to these individuals, businesses and institutions that supported the work of WGA this past year through direct contributions, grants or in-kind services.

Anonymous

The American Foundation

Autoworks

Maryanne and Richard Banks

Bell's Auto Care

Bond, Schoeneck & King

Russell Booth

The Bundy Fund

Frederick & Marie Claude Butler

John & Patricia Callahan

Cayuga Health

Central New York Regional Youth Justice Team

Danielle Chase

David & Shannon Dankert

Shannon Drake

Thomas & Nancy Eron

Thomas Finn

The Fund for The William George Agency
for Children's Services Inc.

Anita Fowler

Dr. Mark Glosenger

Katherine C. Hastings

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Helen & Jeffrey Hulings

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New York State Office of Addiction
Services and Supports

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Schickel Architecture

William & Dianne Shepherd

Triad Foundation, Inc.

Michael and Kathy Troxler

Ronald Trumino & Mari-Jo Salak-Trumino

Vizella Media

Maurice & Steffi White

WXHC-FM Eves Broadcasting



Local Foundation Helps Improve Dining Services Operation

A new walk-in cooler was purchased and installed in 2021 outside WGA’s main eating facility, Ewald Dining Center, thanks to grants from The Triad Foundation and The Fund for The William George Agency. The new refrigeration system has been a welcome addition to an aging storage facility, says Chef Scott Jackson, Director of Food Services.

“It has greatly expanded our food storage capacity,” and the extra space enables bulk purchasing to help manage food costs. “With the cooler I can order more volume so we don’t have to worry about running out. This is especially helpful given the current supply chain issues. We’re also able to pull items from the freezer that may be on the menu later in the week and place them in the cooler where they can defrost over time.”

The potential for cross contamination is also reduced by having the new cooler on site, says Scott. “We can store raw meats further away from fresh vegetables, and expand on our ability to buy fresh items.”

In addition, the new cooler has made it easier to accommodate special diet requests and needs, which have increased in recent years and now account for about 30 percent of meals on campus due to food allergies, philosophical or religious beliefs.

“Now that there are two refrigeration units, we can move our food products around for easier access depending on the day’s activities. We get a lot of requisitions to assist the Independent Living Skills program with their cooking

classes in the cottages. We also provide the food and materials for special events like cookouts, Family Day, prom and graduation.”

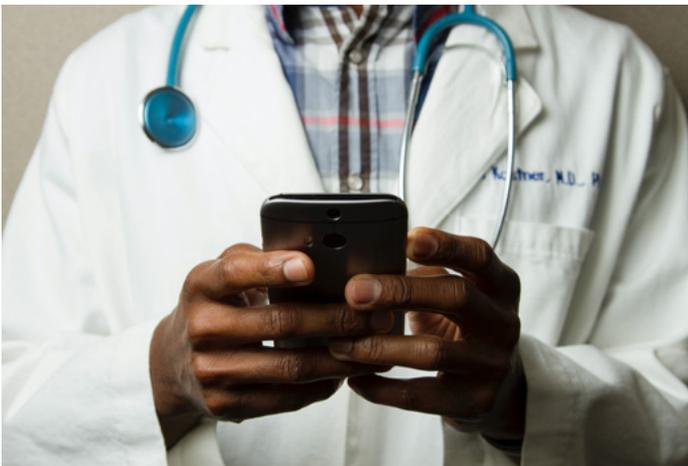
This past year, Scott calculates that 108,000 meals (breakfast, lunch, and dinner), minus special activities, were delivered by WGA’s dining services team. Over the same time frame, the staff taught food service vocational skills to approximately 8 youth.

“We want them to get the total picture of food service,” says Scott. “Training happens in two-week intervals over a 10-week period. The first four weeks are spent learning about sanitation, hygiene, safety and cross-contamination. Youth start in the dish room then move on to working with the custodian. The next four weeks are spent in the prep station and cook area where they learn such things as knife skills, appropriate temperatures for thawing, and how to prevent foodborne illnesses.” The last two weeks are when the teens get to choose what they want to do and which meals they want to prepare.



Telehealth Infrastructure Grant Aims For Better Patient Experience

WGA's Van Clef Outpatient Substance Treatment Program received a Telehealth Infrastructure grant from New York State's Office of Addiction Services and Supports to purchase equipment that will help the program deliver telehealth services more efficiently and improve counselors' abilities to share information with clients when face-to-face.



Mini Grant Supports New WGA Social Enterprise

In late 2021, WGA was awarded a grant from the Central New York Regional Youth Justice Team to purchase equipment and supplies for a new vocational learning opportunity. A portion of funds was used to purchase apparel printing and drying machines for a proposed apparel printing and merchandise social enterprise.

The enterprise has two main goals. The first is to aid in the education and job experiences of youth while on campus. Youth will earn money while learning and developing workplace skills, including business fundamentals, how to use and maintain equipment, how to deliver excellent sales and customer service, and marketing basics. The second goal is to offer companies and individuals a local, socially responsible resource for promotional apparel and select products.

WGA is seeking additional funds to purchase more equipment before the apparel and merchandise shop can be open to the public. If you would like to support this program, please contact donor services at 607-844-6243.

SUMMARY

Operating Report

Year ended June 30, 2022

Operating Revenues

Program Service Fees	29,209,776
Contributions and Other Income	1,112,271
Total Operating Revenues	30,322,047

Operating Expenses

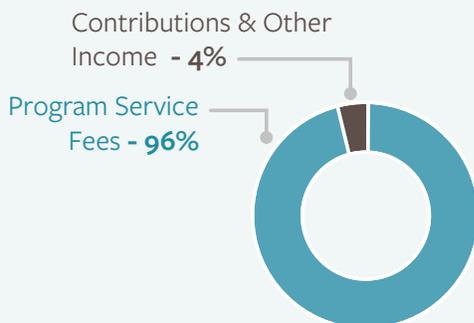
Program Services & General Maintenance	26,648,523
Management	3,315,031
Total Operating Expenses	29,963,554

Consolidated Balance Sheet

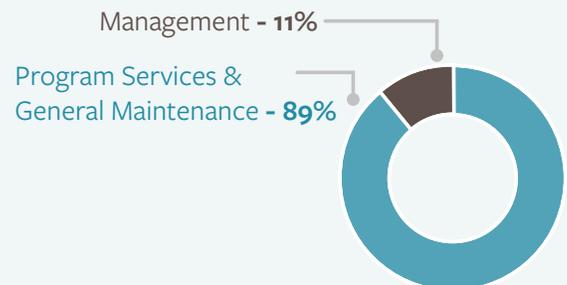
Year ended June 30, 2022

Cash and Cash Equivalents	1,256,796
Accounts Receivable	7,282,679
Property	12,166,507
Other	14,471,551
Total Assets	35,177,533
Liabilities	7,203,845
Net Assets	27,973,688
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	35,177,533

Revenues



Expenses



AN ALUMNA PERSPECTIVE:

KAREN'S STORY

Karen came to WGA at the age of 13 after chronic school truancy caught the eye of child protective services. She pretty much did what she wanted, when she wanted, without a thought for her personal safety or wellbeing.

At home, her parents struggled with poverty and severe addiction. She didn't know limits or boundaries or have the maturity to understand their importance. A temporary stay in a group home didn't last long. She recalls running away, back to "the streets," staying out and disappearing for days. That all changed when she came to WGA.

"I feel going to WGA saved my life. Being away from home saved me. I have a lot of good memories there. It's 40 years later, and it still has a very big impact on me."

I feel going to WGA **saved my life.** ... It's **40 years** later, and it still has a very big impact on me.

Karen says she "was always ambitious but struggled with structure." WGA taught her the importance of structure and routine. "It's also where I got a very strong work ethic. Nothing is free in this life. It taught me responsibility and the importance of having that work ethic."

"We all go through things that make us who we are, but I just feel like if I did not go there when I did, my life would have taken a very different path... and not a good one," she concludes. "It helped mold me into the powerhouse of a person I am today. And the relationships I built with people that were there that I still have to this day... there's nothing like it. We're still in touch all these years later."

Even though Karen had biological siblings at home whom she loved very much, she considers many of the youth with whom she attended WGA as her "sisters and brothers."

"It was a sisterhood. There's a part of our lives that no one understands because we were there together."



Photo courtesy of Karen.

WHY SUPPORT

WGA

We are a youth-centered community of compassionate, trained individuals who provide uninterrupted behavioral health care and trauma-informed therapies to teens and young adults. To many youth we serve, we become:



the patient teacher who doesn't write them off



the healing community that hasn't turned away



the skilled and compassionate alternative to juvenile detention

Our Services Help the Whole Youth

Van Clef Outpatient Substance Treatment Program

- Outpatient substance use treatment clinic
- Individual, group and family counseling
- Licensed by NYS Office of Addiction Services and Supports

Article 29-I Medical Clinic

- Full scale medical and nursing services
- Psychiatric services
- Psychological support
- Behavioral Health Services
- Routine dental and vision care
- Community based medical specialists

Therapeutic After-school Program

- Preventative services
- Psychiatric services
- Risk Assessment
- Family preservation
- Family reunification
- Respite services

Wellness & Growth Services

- Animal-assisted therapies
- Vocational opportunities
- Community integration therapies
- Adventure based counseling

George Junior Republic Union Free School District

- Accredited New York State "Special Act" Public High School follows New York State Learning Standards Curriculum
- Advanced Regents, Regents, Local and IEP diplomas are awarded to qualifying students
- Day School service contracts with local counties
- Classrooms are structured in 6:1:1 or 6:1:2 ratios
- Individualized Education Plans are developed for each student

The Risk is Great

The risk is great for these youth but so is the opportunity. Our commitment is to provide them with high quality, therapeutic care to help them tap into their best selves and reach their fullest potential. Donations from individuals, corporations and foundations help us go that extra mile for the children in our care.

If Care First is your first impulse too, please consider donating to WGA online at wgaforchildren.org or mailing a contribution to our address listed below. WGA accepts a wide range of assets, including securities, real estate, life insurance and retirement funds. Bequests are also welcomed. For more information on ways to give or to support a particular WGA program, please call us at 607-844-6243. Donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Checks made payable to
"The William George Agency"
can be mailed to:

The William George Agency for Children's Services

Attn: Donor Services
380 Freeville Rd
Freeville, NY 13068



The William George Agency for Children’s Services (WGA) is a private, co-educational, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that provides behavioral, mental health, and addiction treatment services to New York’s adolescents and young adults. Established as the nation’s first Junior Republic created by William R. George in 1895, WGA today follows a clinical oversight and therapeutic model with a strong emphasis on education and trauma-informed care for youth aged 12 – 18+. WGA is licensed by New York State’s Office of Children and Family Services and Office of Addiction Services and Supports. Counseling is an integral part of WGA services. It encourages the attitudes, social skills, and self-direction essential for youth to reach their potential, engage constructively with the community and cope more effectively with life’s challenges. Our holistic approach helps youth gain perspective and build healthier relationships with the ultimate goal of reunification and family preservation when in the youth’s best interest. WGA includes an accredited Special Act Public High School, multiple vocational training sites, 20 living units, a field house with an Olympic-size indoor pool, the James Purcell Adventure Based Counseling Ropes Course, and Robert L. Newman Equine Center on a 650-acre campus in the Finger Lakes Region.

Memberships:

- The Cortland County Chamber of Commerce
- ReBusiness Partners Program
- The Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce
- Tompkins County Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children Critical Team

Licenses:

- New York State Office of Children and Family Services
- New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports
- New York State Education Department

The William George Agency for Children’s Services Inc.
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