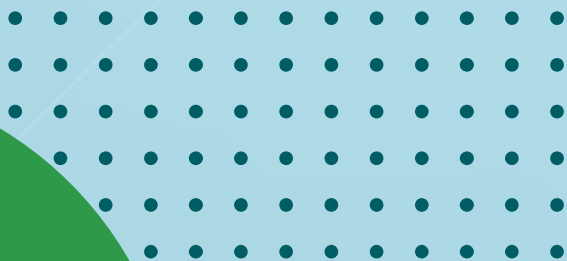




Mission
WEST VIRGINIA

CHANGING THE LIVES OF **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**



2023
ANNUAL REPORT

ABOUT MISSION WV

Our Mission

Mission West Virginia changes the lives of youth and families. We promote positive futures by recruiting foster families, providing life skills education, and creating community connections.

Our Vision

One people, one state, working together to provide every child with a loving family and the knowledge to make positive choices for a healthier future.

A REASON TO CELEBRATE...

Our organization has secured its most significant grant award, nearly \$10 million, dedicated to educating over 65,000 teens!

We have **doubled our capacity** to support youth in foster care through our mentorship program!

All students under our mentorship **graduated** high school!

We are working on hosting the state Adoption Photo listing website!

The Glam Gala event was once again a **sold-out** success.

We have **produced** our very own short film for educational purposes.

And so much more as we work to improve the lives of children and families in our state!



FROM OUR DIRECTOR

Dear MWV Supporters,

There are moments that possess the extraordinary ability to halt us in our tracks, compelling us to pause amidst the daily grind and reflect on our mission as a nonprofit and the work we do. This report serves as a testament to some of our most cherished accomplishments—those instances where we bore witness to the transformation of our students, children, and families as they discovered hope, took courageous steps forward or initiated meaningful change for their futures.

One moment in particular that stands out was when an extra special referral came in on the first day of school. It was a 9th grader referred by his older brother, a recent graduate and program participant. Big brother told him, “Take this program seriously – it really works.” As this freshman, grappling with attendance, behavior, and academic challenges, met his Mentor for the first time, he expressed... *“I was wondering when you were going to find me.”*

His anticipation and desire to be found are great predictors of this student’s potential. There is nothing that can speak more to the effectiveness of our services than this referral and statement.

These moments propel us forward, motivating us to serve more children, families, and students than ever before. The news that we received our largest-ever federal grant provided a sense of assurance and security, reinforcing our capacity to make a lasting impact. Additionally, an unexpected year-end donation has opened new avenues, ensuring that we can extend our reach even further where grant funds end.

An unspoken but widely observed trait held by many on our team is that we are up to doing more. In most instances, our staff refuse to settle. Their dedication to the well-being of children and families is at the heart of everything we do at Mission West Virginia and our number one driver in doing more, being better, and continuously improving.

To our volunteers, donors, supporters, friends, and board members, Thank YOU, too, for being part of their story. This teamwork has enabled us to achieve the results summarized in this annual report. Thank you for your support and for being part of the crucial work to ensure our children have the best shot at a childhood full of love, safety, and a future full of hope!

With sincere thanks,

Kelly

Kelly Thompson, MSW/LSW MWV Executive Director

Now let’s take you on a walk through our year...



FRAMEWORKS

FrameWorks is a dedicated program aimed at connecting loving families with children in the foster care system, finding adoptive families for older children, and assisting kinship caregivers along their journey.

FOSTER CARE INQUIRIES: We are your first stop in that journey for all who have thought about fostering or adopting! In an average year, our team makes an impressive 15,000 to 16,000 follow-up contacts with families contemplating foster care certification, ensuring a personal and supportive approach throughout their journey. We maintain up-to-date listings for ten foster care agencies spread across the state, providing vital information about where families should turn to foster. We ensure a seamless and informed connection between families and the resources they need.

KINSHIP NAVIGATORS: We also serve as a point of contact for those kinship caregivers who have found themselves raising children and facing obstacles during that process. Whether it's navigating legal complexities, accessing essential services, or offering emotional support, FrameWorks stands as a steadfast companion, ensuring that kinship caregivers receive the comprehensive assistance they need and deserve.

Featured: Dr. John DeGarmo, International Speaker and Foster Care/ Parenting Expert

OUR REACH

Over **99.9%** of our inquiring families receive follow-up contact within two business days.

We received **1,052** INQUIRIES about foster/adoptive care.

116 FAMILIES became certified to foster or adopt.

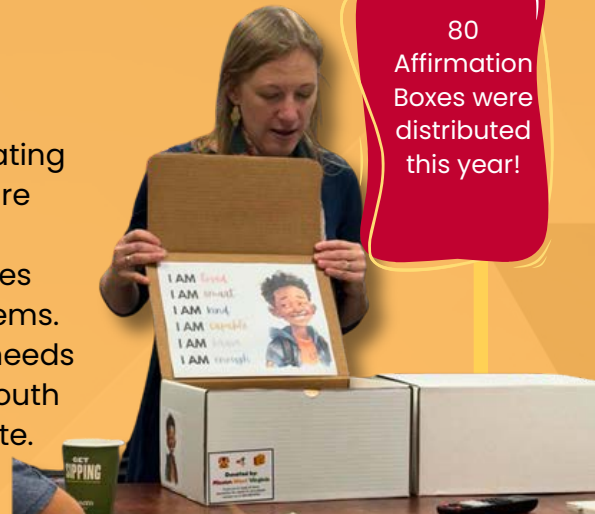
Our Kinship Navigators served 25% more families, totaling **902** FAMILIES.



FRAMEWORKS HIGHLIGHTS

AFFIRMATION BOXES

In celebration of Juneteenth this year, Mission West Virginia proudly introduced an innovative initiative centered on validating racial identity for Black and biracial youth within the foster care system. The project, aptly named "Affirmation Boxes," is a thoughtful endeavor involving carefully curated care packages containing hair and skin care products and other essential items. These packages are designed to not only address practical needs but, more importantly, to affirm a positive racial identity for youth who are minorities in both the foster care system and our state.



80
Affirmation
Boxes were
distributed
this year!

L to R: Dr. Cynthia A. Persily/Cabinet Secretary WV DoHS, Jay Holdren/Special Guest, William S. Thompson/US Attorney, Kylee Hassan/MWV



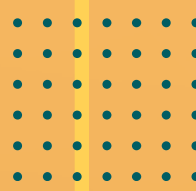
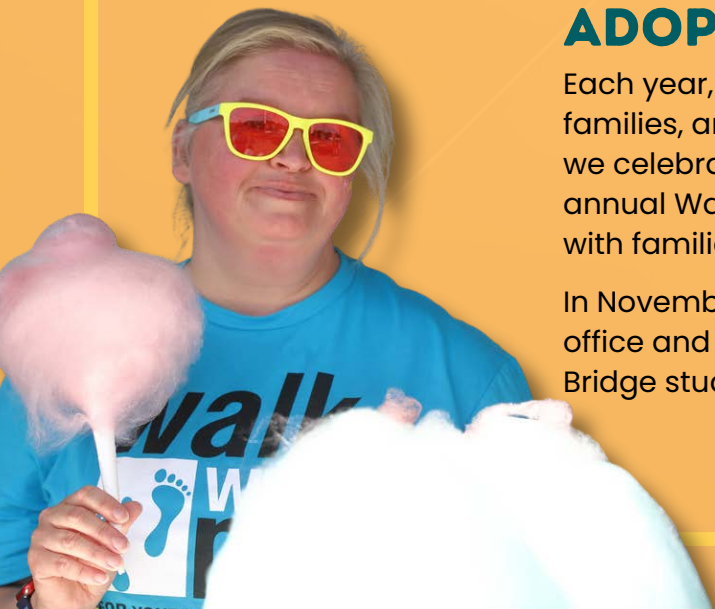
"I have aunts, uncles, nieces, and nephews that we visit all the time. We like to all vacation at the beach together. I am so lucky to have such a big family. I feel so loved by my family, and I hope other children have the same loving home as I do. I am so thankful for my family." – Jay Holdren



NATIONAL FOSTER CARE AND ADOPTION MONTH

Each year, we take time to celebrate foster and adoptive families, and the wonderful children they care for. This year, we celebrated with over 300 supporters of foster care at the annual Walk With Me. This event is a fun-filled day to connect with families and friends who have fostered.

In November, Mission WV joined forces from the US Attorney's office and heard from US Attorney William Thompson and Bridge student Jay Holdren.



THINK

Mission West Virginia takes pride in its largest program, THINK, which empowers teenagers to make positive life choices. Rooted in evidence-based practices, our program is designed to equip students with essential life skills, education, and personalized coaching to navigate the complex social and emotional pressures inherent in adolescence.

The THINK program goes beyond traditional education, addressing the holistic development of teenagers. We focus on cultivating crucial life skills that enable teens to build healthy relationships, make informed choices for their future, and prevent pregnancies. By providing comprehensive support, we aim to guide adolescents through the challenges of their formative years, fostering resilience, self-confidence, and a sense of responsibility.

OUR REACH:

The THINK program serves more than 14,000 youth each year with evidence-based curricula.

Since 2001, Mission West Virginia has served over 130,000 youth!

BIG NEWS IN 2023!

The THINK program secured a substantial five-year grant from the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Population Affairs. This grant, totaling \$1,972,000 annually, aims to provide middle and high school youth with crucial life skills training for informed decision-making. The grant cycle spans from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2028, marking a significant endorsement of the program's impact and a commitment to youth empowerment. Throughout the span of this project, Mission WV is set to reach 55,000 students with our programming!

On top of that huge announcement, the THINK program secured another grant through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Family and Youth Services Bureau. This grant, Sexual Risk Avoidance Education, is another multiyear project that will serve 1,500 youth in our state!



THINK HIGHLIGHTS

CURRICULUM TRAINING

Mission WV's THINK Staff and our partners recently underwent training on the innovative middle school curriculum, Positive Potential. Covering 6th to 8th grade, this curriculum goes beyond traditional topics, addressing positive youth development alongside essential subjects like bullying prevention, cyber safety, healthy relationships, the impact of pornography, and career exploration. The new curriculum emphasizes hands-on activities, ensuring a dynamic and engaging approach to meet diverse learning styles.

Jill Gwilt,
THINK Program
Director speaks in
a panel
discussion at the
OPA Grantee
Meeting



Scene from The Waiting Room
Left to Right: Malia Saar, Willow Peyton, and Gabi Breinig

MOVIE PREMIERE

The Waiting Room

Mission WV is committed to providing evidence-based education for middle and high school students and fully recognizes that garnering the attention of our young students can be a challenge in today's high-tech world. When faced with an outdated video that deterred students, we took matters into our own hands to make a new short film. This film, led by the talented actress and MWV Educator Anna Beaty, set out a statewide casting call enlisted WV teen actors.

The final film, The Waiting Rooms, red-carpet debut exemplified Mission WV's core value: the unwavering belief that we should never settle for anything less than excellence when it comes to children's lives. The video will now be shown for years to come in classrooms as part of our educational instruction.

THE BRIDGE

This highly effective program positions Mentors within public high schools as a champion for students in foster care, kinship care, or experiencing homelessness, guiding them toward academic success. Together, each student and their dedicated full-time mentor work toward personalized goals, centering on attendance, behavior, and grades. These mentors work toward educational advocacy, dropout prevention, family engagement, and strategic post-secondary education planning. The Bridge program is a beacon of hope, fostering inspiration and transformation in the lives of these exceptional students.

Service area: Boone, Kanawha, Clay, Wood, and Putnam County High Schools

The Bridge team holds the belief that one student dropping out of school is one too many, which is why we are proud to report that to date, a student has not entered the Bridge program without graduating high school – which is a 0% dropout rate!

THE RESULTS

This year, **217** students were served in the program.

It took **5,159** One-On-One meetings with these students and **511** contacts with families to achieve the following:

- **70%** decrease in absences
- **67%** of students in the Bridge had an increase in their overall GPA
- **89%** decrease in suspensions
- **100%** of students advanced to the next grade level
- **100%** of students have successfully graduated high school with a post-secondary plan in place for their future for the 8th consecutive year.



BRIDGE HIGHLIGHTS

DMV TRIP

You don't hear this often, but we couldn't wait to take a trip to the DMV. This is because, for our students in The Bridge program, the opportunity to go to the DMV means much more than we often think of as a chore. The ultimate goal for every student in The Bridge is to graduate with a post-secondary plan in place. We realize that there are practical things our students need to make that goal achievable.

Our Bridge Mentors, along with Clay County High School counseling staff, went to Vital Statistics to purchase copies of birth certificates and then loaded **23 Junior and Senior students onto a bus where they traveled to the DMV** in Flatwoods. Once there, students had the opportunity to take their learners permit test and get official ID's which they can use to achieve their future plans.



GRADUATION

Recently, we spent time celebrating our 54 graduates from The Bridge, and we would be remiss not to highlight their post-secondary plans -- 99% moving forward with a plan. The goal of The Bridge is a big one: to successfully complete high school with a plan in place for their future. We understand the magnitude of this goal, knowing the odds -- those statistics that place our students in a box that is hard to get out of. This year's seniors are leaving high school with a plan in place, which includes:

- **74% are attending college in the fall,**
- **22% have jobs lined up and are entering the workforce,**
- **1% of students are going into the Military.**





MORE HIGHLIGHTS

GLAM GALA 2023

Volunteer Week and the Glam Gala aligned on the calendar this past year. This event was the perfect testament to the sheer power of volunteers. Five core ladies and a few behind the scenes coordinated a Gala to benefit children and families Mission WV serves. This small crew planned and threw a party that sold out in advance and maximized charitable contributions. Their why is simple... **the funds raised provide Mission WV the capability to do more. To extend our reach greater and respond to needs when we see them. They will not settle, nor will we, the status quo as acceptable for the children we serve.**

SUMMER BASH

Mission WV held a fun and free summer activity for local area teens and families, providing prizes, educational opportunities, dancing and swimming! Over 200 children and families spent the evening learning more, while having a great time!

HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

Our annual Holiday Open House brought in nearly 200 community members to learn more about programs and take part in our fierce door decorating competition.



Christmas Open House



GLAM Gala Check Presentation



Summer Bash



MAKING DONATIONS COUNT

YEAR-ROUND DONATIONS ENABLED US TO FULFILL VARIOUS NEEDS BEYOND GRANT FUNDS, FOR EXAMPLE ---

- Over 300 children sponsored for Christmas, ensuring that every child received personalized gifts, fulfilling their wishes.
- Provided 40+ beds and bedding, offering a comfortable and often overlooked necessity for children in need, ensuring a restful night's sleep.
- Distributed \$30,000 in grants across 17 schools for kinship families.
- Facilitated access to formal attire and special occasions like prom.
- Supported for extracurriculars for youth who want to be part of teams and school community such as baseball equipment, softball cleats, wrestling shoes, National Honor Society memberships, and more.
- Organized school field trips to promote higher education.
- Hosted graduation celebrations for high school graduates.
- Assisted with practical needs like transportation and ID's.
- Offered emergency wardrobes and hygiene products for crisis situations.
- Paid for summer camp experiences for several kids to gain respite from traumatic past environments.
- Assisted with applying for college scholarships, totaling hundreds of thousands in awards received! And helped with smaller expenses like applications, welding class, testing fees, parking, dorm supplies, housing deposits, easing the path for our students to move into adulthood.
- Celebrated graduation with difficult expenses like caps and gowns, class yearbooks, etc.
- Assisted in practical aspects like providing gas and food gift cards for a grandmother attending her grandchild's medical appointments after a car accident. Or gave bus passes and bicycles for kids to get to and from work.
- Purchased senior pictures for our students celebrating this important milestone. A childhood disrupted and multiple moves sometimes leaves children without childhood memories captured on film.
- And lots more, thanks to YOU ALL!

“Being a parent and doing this job it's hard sometimes because my kid has everything he needs, and you have these kids who have so many needs they can't even think about their wants.”

- Mandi Bridge Mentor ”

THE BEST ENDING TO OUR YEAR

What a spectacular way to end the year!

Mission WV is thrilled to announce the receipt of an extraordinary contribution of \$250,000 from the esteemed Good Samaritan Mission Services. The generous donors behind this impactful contribution are none other than Mr. Paul Jack Meador, a native West Virginian, along with his spouse and friends. Their unwavering commitment to philanthropy is evident through their continuous support over the past three years, amounting to donations of over \$350,000.

The decision to rally behind Mission West Virginia stems from a shared vision—believing that children can achieve greatness and prosperity when provided with the essential resources. Mr. Meador's dedication to keeping West Virginia's youth within the state, offering them a chance at a brighter future, serves as a beacon of inspiration to us all. Mr. Meador attributes his strong loyalty to his southern WV school, acknowledging its pivotal role in shaping his early years. Thanks to the education and support he received, he went on to achieve remarkable milestones that empowered him to give back throughout his lifetime.

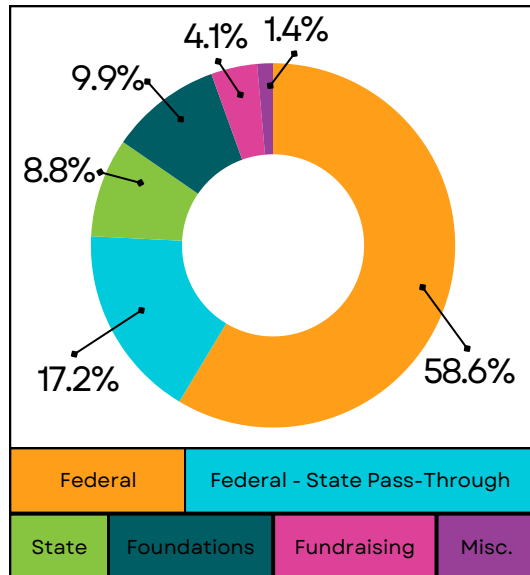
In a recent meeting with Mission West Virginia, the Good Samaritans were thoroughly briefed on the organization's needs and ongoing initiatives. Subsequently, they presented a generous check totaling \$250,000. *"We are deeply grateful to the Good Samaritan Foundation, especially to Mr. Meador and his friends, for their steadfast support and recognition of the work we do to fill in those service gaps for children and families in our state,"* expressed Kelly Thompson, Executive Director. *"Their decision to stand by us again exemplifies their commitment to fostering positive change within our community and improving the outcomes for kids in foster or kinship care."*

THANK YOU FOR MAKING OUR YEAR-END SPECTACULAR!



FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The following figures reflect Mission WV's expenses, including program implementation and administrative support costs. We keep our administrative costs low so funds can be directed to programming and those who need it most.



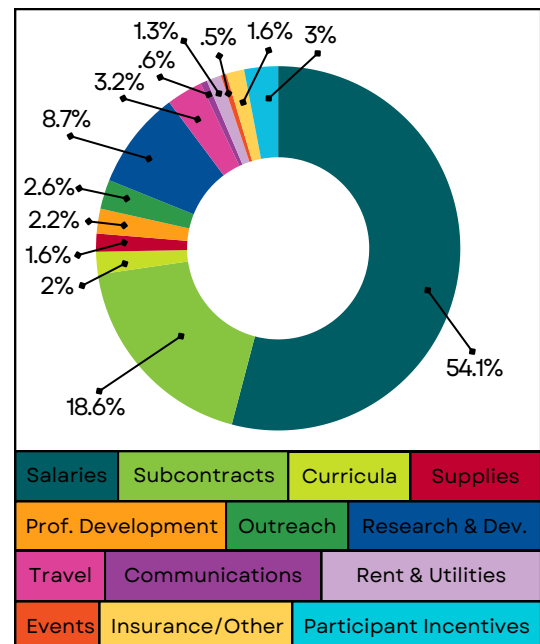
SUPPORT AND REVENUE

Federal	\$2,078,622
Federal - State Pass-Through	\$611,448
State	\$311,653
Foundations	\$352,315
Fundraising	\$144,471
Misc.	\$49,983
TOTAL	\$3,548,492

EXPENDITURES

Salaries	\$1,864,039
Subcontracts	\$639,986
Curricula	\$67,288
Supplies	\$56,715
Professional Development	\$75,960
Outreach	\$89,613
Research & Development	\$300,004
Travel	\$108,893
Communications	\$21,260
Rent & Utilities	\$43,413
Community Events	\$16,729
Insurance & Other	\$55,369
Participant Incentives	\$103,878

TOTAL **\$3,443,147**



A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO....

GOVERNMENTAL GRANTS

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Family and Youth Services Bureau
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Population Affairs
WV Bureau of Public Health: Office of Maternal, Child & Family Health
WV Bureau of Senior Services
WV Department of Education: WV Schools of Diversion and Transition
WV Department of Education: Division of Federal Programs and Support
WV Department of Human Services, Bureau of Social Services

CORPORATE/COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

AEP Foundation	Encova	Prim Law, PLLC
Alpha Xi Delta Fraternity-WV Wesleyan	First Baptist Church, Hurricane	Putnam County Bank
Amazon Smile Donations	Good Samaritan Mission Service	River Ridge Church
American Baptist Women's Ministry	Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation	Target CyberGrants
Angel Wings Committee	Hager Consulting	Toyota Corporation
Bernard McDonough Foundation	Kroger	Tristate Roofing - Contribution
CC Dickinson	Landcore Builders, Corp and Staff	TTEC Foundation
Christian Alliance for Orphans	Michael H. Wehrle Gift Fund	Unified Card Communications LLC
Cold Spot Angel Wings	Milan Puskar Foundation	WV American Water
Core Industrial Group LLC	Network For Good	WV Cash Sale, LLC
Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption	Papa John's Foundation	

INDIVIDUALS

Alexandra Fields	Hager Family	Lori Woodrum	Tracy Bess
Allison Jones	Jennifer Goddard	Pack Family	And all our donors of goods and services!
Carrie Kincaid	Kevin Highlander	Scott Davidson	
Danyel Allen	LaHoma Summers	Stephanie Davis	
Gerald Titus	Laura Martin	Tad Tomblin	
Grace Brumfield	Lisa Statler	Thomas Rogers	

EVENT SPONSORS

Alford Foundation and Crawl Space	First Choice Bookkeeping	Putnam County CVB
Anytime Fitness	Hill Dental	River Ridge Church - Foster WV
Associates in Psychology & Therapy	HR Block, Hurricane	Robert Noone Law
Astorg Auto	Huntington National Bank	Sleep Inn
Black Cat Beauty	Jacquelyn Stout Biddle	Spriggs Distributing
Category Five Jiu Jitsu	Kroger	United Bank
Chase Bank	Mountain state Beverage	WV Lottery
City National Bank	Pies and Pints, Charleston	WV Paving
Creative Kitchens	Putnam County Bank	And all Vendor donations!

SPECIAL THANKS

Media, for coverage
MOMS on a Mission (Jess, Meredith, Michelle, Kristy & Jada)
Mr. Jack (Patty Meador)
Thank you to all the private donors of luggage, bags, hygiene products, school supplies, etc.
RMS Pro Finishes/Paint Supplies
Glam Gala Vendors and Attendees
Rainelle Medical Center
CASEWV
AMTC and Associates

Christmas Gift Sponsors: Mountain View, Assured Partners, Service Wire, Putnam County Bank, Tagliente Family, Stacy Holstein, Michelle Biggs, Zelideth Rivas, Adrienne Mays Kingson, Stephanie Belford, Michelle LaMaster, Mike Addair, Baker Tilly, Michael Scarbro, Hoff Family, Chad & Kelly Arthur, Taylor Romaca Youth Group, April Simpson, Brooke Harless, Jeremy Crites, Matthew Riggs, Katrina Troutman, Chris Mays, Bonni Roach, LeeAnne Rheinlander, ACEC of WV, Sears Monument, and Angie Lilly.





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Bethany Kinder
West Virginia Geographic
Communications Manager

Michelle LaMaster
Retired from 2nd Full Term!

*Right now
you have the
power to say, "I will
not let their story
end like this."*

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