



# ANNUAL REPORT 2020

WOMEN'S SHELTER AND SUPPORT CENTER



**SAVING LIVES**  
**RESTORING HOPE**  
**CHANGING FUTURES**



Women's Shelter and Support Center  
PO Box 457, Rochester, MN 55903

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# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

The year 2020 was quite tumultuous, not only at the Women's Shelter and Support Center, but globally. Although we were faced with the unpredictable nature of the Covid-19 pandemic, we made it our priority to ensure services were delivered without interruption. While learning to adapt to our "new normal", we learned that Stay at Home orders often created even more unsafe situations for many victims and survivors. Victims and survivors became further isolated from their loved ones and support systems, and we observed a decrease in the number of individuals seeking services, but a distinct increase in the severity and intensity of abuse.

To help protect clients and staff from the Covid-19 virus, we adjusted and modified our physical space, programs, and sheltering options. In person meetings and support groups were replaced with video conferences and Zoom meetings. In-house sheltering capacity was reduced, and off-site locations were used for safe sheltering. New processes around meal distribution and food delivery were implemented. Physical space was modified to support social distancing requirements.

Moving forward, we will continue to adapt as we strive to meet the unique needs of the times. Focus areas include training on Trauma-Informed Care, enhancing services to underserved populations, and fostering community partnerships to ensure victims and survivors receive confidential, autonomous, nonjudgmental services.



Most importantly, we learned just how vital, and lifesaving domestic violence programming is. We know now, more than ever, that programs like the Women's Shelter and Support Center are a lifeline for so many, and we are grateful to all who join us in our mission.

Respectfully,

*Artyce Thomas*

**Executive Director**

Women's Shelter and Support Center



# MISSION AND LEADERSHIP

**Mission:** It is our mission to provide temporary shelter and services to abused women, individuals and families while transforming our communities through education and leadership for social change.

**Vision:** For women, individuals and families to have the freedom and dignity to live safely in our communities.

## 2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Gail Sauter**

President (August 2019 - )

**Kelly Classic**

Immediate Past President  
(August 2019 - March 2020)

**Cathy Stroebel**

Vice President (September 2019 - )

**Bill Oertli**

Treasurer (August 2019 - )

**Karen MacLaughlin**

Secretary (September 2019 - )

**Richard Bennett**

**Vickie Ernste**

**Mara Kubisch**

**Caitlin Matera**

**Sue Palen**

**Gerald Weinrich**

**Robyn Wood**



## WSSC LEADERSHIP STAFF

**Artyce Thomas**

Executive Director

**Kara Hoel-Kleese**

Director of Housing

**Barb Schramm**

Director of Development

**Jodi Skurdahl**

Director of Shelter Services

**Jeannie Thompson**

Director of Youth Programming  
and Community Outreach



# PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

## Crisis Intervention & Advocacy

### ***Emergency services & support to victims of domestic violence.***

**815** Individuals (**77** children / **738** adults) received services from our trained staff located in Dodge, Fillmore, and Olmsted counties, such as:

- Crisis intervention
- Advocacy and support
- Safety planning
- Court Advocacy
- Shelter and housing
- Transportation, meals, personal care needs, household items, etc.
- Ongoing and follow-up support
- Resource referrals: legal, financial, housing, childcare, employment, education, etc.



## Shelter & Housing

### ***Emergency & long-term housing to meet unique safety needs and remove barriers.***

**125** Individuals (**103** adults / **22** children) received emergency shelter  
**33** days is average stay for shelter resident.

**9** Permanent rental units.

**19** Households (**20** adults / **31** children) served in supportive housing.

**6** Households moved from supportive housing into self-identified safe housing.

**33** Households received financial assistance to obtain or maintain stable housing.

**177** Individuals received assistance with relocation.

Additionally, we are one of the few shelters that allows pets, removing the barrier of leaving beloved pets behind where they could be hurt or killed.



# PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

## Children and Youth

***Support and education to reduce the impact of domestic violence for children.***

**172** Children participated in **46** activities, such as:

- arts and crafts
- music
- field trips
- holiday parties, etc.

**42** Youth received educational and supportive programming through support groups and activities.

**180** Students attended youth focused community education presentations on topics such as:

- healthy relationships
- teen dating violence
- consent, etc.



## Community Outreach and Volunteer

***Raising awareness of services and the impact of domestic violence on community.***

**1,950** Individuals attended **28** community education sessions covering agency services and domestic violence related topics.

**1,486** Individuals received education through our **6** available support groups, covering topics such as self esteem, power and control, ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences), anger management, healthy relationships, and domestic violence awareness.

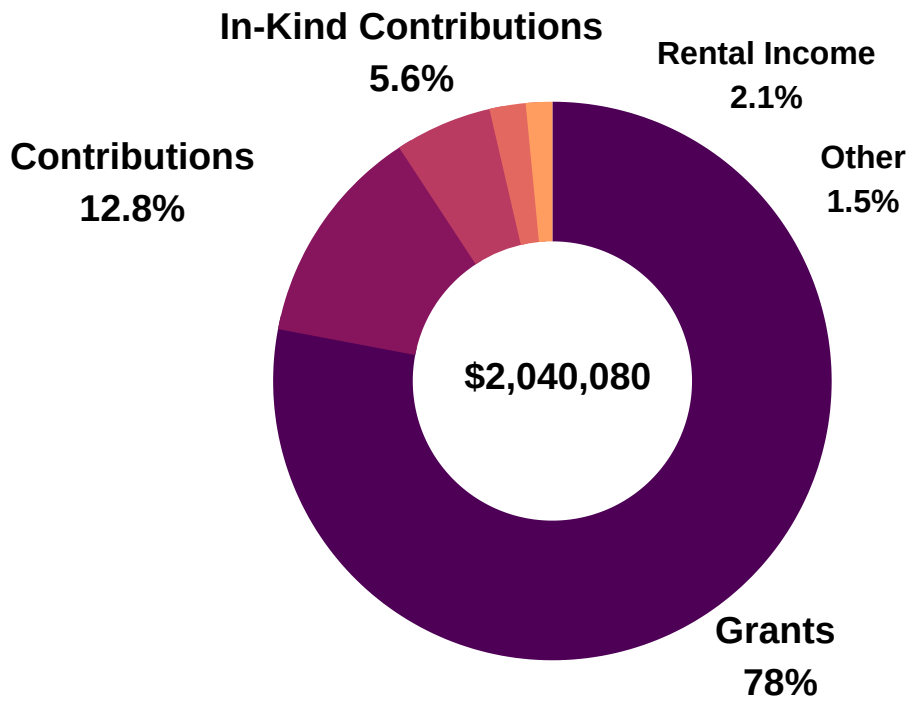
**20** Volunteers provided **1,681** hours of service through the foster grandparent program, childcare, support groups, data entry, graphic design, maintenance, gardening, presentations, community booths, and organizing material donations.

**237** Individuals attended **31** educational "Women's Shelter Experience" presentations to learn about services.



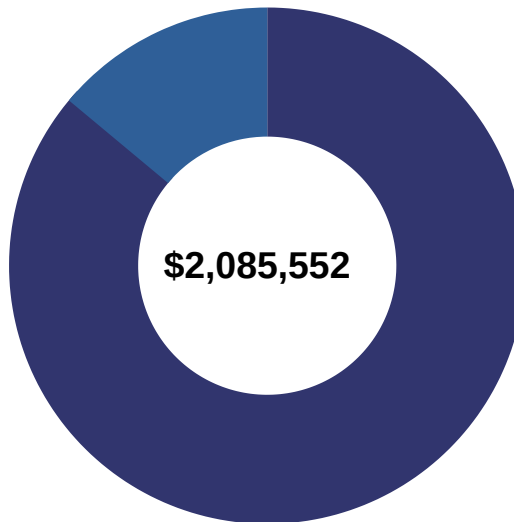
# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

## Revenue



## Expenses

Administration  
13.9%



"This place has been more than a safe haven. It has provided a multitude of opportunities to pave the way emotionally, mentally, physically, for our family to move forward with our lives."

- CLIENT STATEMENT FROM EXIT SURVEY

Data reflects 2019 Audit

Program Activities  
86.1%



# THANK YOU

We wish to extend a special thank you to our generous donors who make this critical work possible.

## Giving Society Donors

Multi-Year Giving Society Members  
Shelter Stewards Monthly Giving Members  
Planned and Donor Advised Fund Giving Members

## Contributors

Volunteers  
Financial Donors  
Donors of Goods and Services

## Community Groups and Businesses (≥\$5,000)

Mayo High School GOFA  
Luxury Bath Remodeling and customers  
IBM Employee Charitable Contributions

## Grantors (≥\$5,000)

Minnesota Dept. of Human Services  
Minnesota Dept. of Public Safety  
Office of Violence Against Women  
US Dept. of Justice  
US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development  
United Way of Olmsted County  
Mayo Clinic

## Tributes (≥\$1,000)

### In memory of:

Camilla Berry  
Dave Bishop  
Rae Ann Vigen  
Keona Foote and Miyona Miller

### In Honor of:

Leah Hickman  
Dr. John L.D. Atkinson

## Transforming Lives 2020 Sponsors

### Platinum:

Minnwest Bank  
Bremer Bank

### Gold:

Knutson Construction  
Olmsted Medical Center  
Think Mutual Bank  
Willow Creek Working Women's Golf League

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

**Volunteer**

**Donate**

**Request a presentation for your group**

**Speak out against injustices**

**To make a donation:**

**Online:** <https://www.womens-shelter.org/waystogive>

**Mail:** WSSC, PO Box 457, Rochester, MN, 55903

**Phone:** 507-292-6743



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