

2021: A Remarkable Response to the Pandemic

Notes from Board President, Duncan McRae, MD:

Samaritan Counseling Center has been under siege from Corona Virus since March 2020. But, dare I say it, here in February of 2022, as the Omicron variant recedes, the Center, and the world, may be emerging from under the cloud of the pandemic. A return to normalcy may be within sight. Over the past two years, the Center has moved back and forth in its approach to clients, virtual vs. in person, depending on the surge status of the virus. As the tide of the pandemic has slowly ebbed in the past few weeks, the Center is seeing more face-to-face counseling, using the virtual approach as necessary. If fortune continues to smile, perhaps this downturn in cases will finally be the end of the pandemic, and the Center can begin to focus on more than only its survival.

Because of the stress and the anxiety that inevitably accompany a widespread societal crisis like our pandemic, the demand for mental health care over the past two years has grown tremendously. Client visits to the Center jumped from 10,905 in 2020 to 11,995 in 2021. Despite being pushed by ever-increasing workloads, the clinicians, within this pandemic environment, have never ceased in their diligence to meet the needs of their clients.

The downside to being busy is that, as the backlog of new clients grows, the wait time for new appointments can grow to a level deemed unacceptable. Twice over the past year the Center's services have been overwhelmed with new client inquiries pushing wait times to several weeks for new appointments. To alleviate the problem of prolonged wait times, the Center has had to have a moratorium on taking new clients, once in July of 2021 and once in December of 2021, each for a two week hiatus, giving counselors a chance to catch up on their workload and allowing wait time for new appointments to decrease. Clients who needed urgent attention were directed to providers outside the Center.

Happily, the Omicron surge appears to be on the downslope here in early February 2022. We pray that this decrease in the Omicron surge heralds an end to the pandemic. With the sun coming out, the Center is now trying to shift its focus from survival to growth and improvement. To those ends, on the administrative side, within the last few months, it has reorganized its office management and streamlined billing and collecting. On the clinical side, it has hired new clinicians to help handle the growing demand for more mental health professionals. To expand its outreach to the community and provide mental health services closer to home, it has recently partnered with The Beacon Center, a newly created community project associated with the Metropolitan Methodist Church.

The Samaritan Center, from its faith-based foundation, continues its mission to serve the mental health needs of the River Region. Be confident that, in its quest to help all who need counseling, the Center is resolved to fulfill its mission.

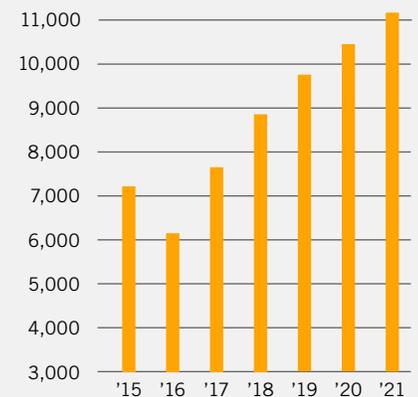
> Samaritan Center counselors generated **\$1,257,437** in fees (\$1,020,304 in 2020) while conducting **11,995** counseling hours (10,905 in 2020). For the 5th year in a row these are new records for the Center.

> New client intakes decreased slightly to 1,302 in 2021 compared to 1,315 in 2020 due to suspending accepting new clients in July and December in order to manage the increasing demand for services. Most of the Center's new clients come from current client referrals.

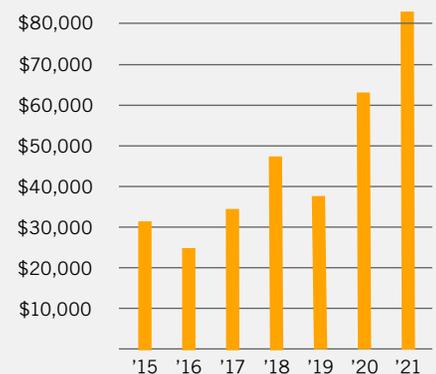
COUNSELING FEES



COUNSELING HOURS



JEREMIAH 29:11 CLIENT ASSISTANCE



2021 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW:

Fundraising Event Income

\$103,750

Jeremiah 29:11 Contributions

\$85,845

Other Contributions

\$91,054

Counseling Fees

\$1,257,437

Total Income

\$1,452,286

Total Expenses

\$1,427,331

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> 88.1% of Center expenses were covered by counseling fees versus 78.76% in 2020.

> The Center ended 2021 with an operating surplus of **\$25,492** on revenues of **\$1,452,286**.

> In 2021, **\$64,530** in counseling services were provided to un- and under-insured clients in **1,690** sessions compared to 2020 figures of \$63,956 through 1,675 counseling hours. There was a surge in demand in 2020 which continued in 2021, again due to the on-going pandemic and the increased stress on our community. The Center's **Jeremiah 29:11** Fund is used to subsidize this care. Generous contributions and grants from many individuals, corporate foundations and congregations allowed the Center meet the need for subsidized care.

> Due to the pandemic, the Center pivoted from its usual River Region Ethics in Business Awards Program and instead held **"A Celebration of Ethics in Action."** This celebration honored community "heroes" who helped our community through the pandemic. Heroes were honored in the categories of healthcare, government, business, non-profits, faith-based, and education. The Center enjoyed another successful year, netting over **\$87,000**.

> The 13th Annual Ethics luncheon is scheduled for Thursday, October 13th at the Alabama Activity Center beginning at 5:30 pm. Sponsorships are available. Call Christy Holding at 334-262-7787 ext. 202 or go to www.riverregionethics.com for more information.

> The Year-End-Giving campaign resulted in **\$42,286** down from \$47,733 in 2020.... **Thanks, Y'all!!!**

> The Brighter Futures MGM task force is produced a video educating parents on **Minority Mental Health Awareness**. Under the theme **"Little Things Matter,"** this video joins others--"Raising Children in the Age of Social Media," "Suicide Awareness," and "Bullying"--as resources to parents in the community. The videos may be viewed at: www.brighterfuturesmgm.com Share it from your Facebook account at: <https://www.facebook.com/myserquest/videos/445200742781396/>

> The Center was re-accredited for 4 years by the Solihten (formerly Samaritan) Institute.

> The Center achieved HIPAA Certification.

WHAT'S NEW WITH THE STAFF?

> Center counseling staff numbers 18, which includes a psychologist, Licensed Professional Counselors, Marital and Family Licensed Counselors, three Associate Licensed Counselor and one intern.

> Clinicians continue to offer additional late afternoon, evening and weekend appointments to meet the needs of the community.

> Clinicians were provided with laptop computers in order to conduct video-therapy through a HIPAA secure environment.

WHAT'S NEW WITH THE CENTER'S BOARD?

> Duncan McRae, MD, continues the position of President of the Board for 2022.

> Other 2022 officers are Pete Cobb, Vice President; Elizabeth DuBard, Secretary; Steve Rutledge, Treasurer; and Jessica Taylor, Immediate Past President.

> Caroline Kaiser Smith retired from the Board at the end of 2021 after many years of dedicated service. Thanks, Caroline.

> New members on the 2022 Board are Sherice Brown and Bill Davis.

> The Center continues to place a high priority on diversity on its Board and clinical staff to support the diversity of the community.

WHAT'S UP IN 2022?

> The Center will have two focused fundraising campaigns: Jeremiah 29:11 Fund to support subsidized care and the annual Year-End-Giving campaign.

> The Center will expand its use of social media to communicate messages of Center activities and mental health information.

> A Clergy Outreach and Education initiative will launch in mid-2022.

> The Center will place counselors at Metropolitan United Methodist Church in West Montgomery to expand the service area of the Center.



Professional counseling and care
for the mind, body and spirit.

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