Annual Report 2022

* The 45th Year Celebration *



SHELTER, HELP, HOPE

SHELTER, HELP, HOPE

Maybe the logo could simply

Maybe the branch of a willow.

Maybe the branch of a willow.

Dear Friends, Neighbors, and Colleagues,

The Willow turns 45 this year!

What an amazing time to be a part of this work, in this community, at this agency. We are the result of 45 years of incredibly hard work by hundreds of advocates, donors, and community partners. It's humbling. Our relationship with survivors has evolved significantly since 1976, but we deeply remember our roots. The work of the women's movement, civil rights, and grassroots advocacy have all been threaded throughout The Willow's day-to-day activities and continue to contribute to our core values and identity.

Today, we are a staff of 33 diverse individuals who make up a powerful team. The Willow has weathered many storms in its history, and today we face no shortage of challenges. Changing hearts and minds about the sensitive topics of domestic violence and human trafficking is a task that continues to be Herculean. Providing practical and meaningful services during the pandemic was heartbreakingly difficult. Still, we are proud of the flexibility and resilience of our work. Our staff and community's dedication to survivors' needs drives these intense efforts in our service area.

What started as a grassroots collective of women who served women in a sort of "underground railroad" system of safe housing for victims of interpersonal violence is now a multi-million dollar agency that provides much more than just shelter. Today, we have two shelters, nine transitional houses, multiple prevention programs, work programs, independent housing supports, community education initiatives, and community advocacy - all provided through a trauma-informed and equity-focused lens.

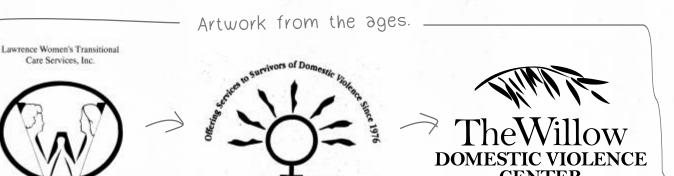
Our work is far from complete. The Willow has big dreams and the drive to achieve them. We hope to impact local and state governments that will strengthen support for survivors of domestic violence. We hope to educate leaders about the complexities of interpersonal violence, coercive control, and the still-pervasive mythology that surrounds victims. "Why don't they just leave?" is still primary in many folks' minds. We know that leaving is complicated, sometimes impossible, and often dangerous. We hope to continue to work against systems that support violence against marginalized people and those without loud voices or representation. We are proud to serve people of all backgrounds, genders, and identities. Our doors are open to everyone who needs our help. Hope is still the order of every day.

This work is full of triumph and pain. Daily, I see survivors who are miraculous in their strength, and I see their devastating circumstances. I am proud of the work of our current staff, and I admire the work of all those who came before us to make this possible. We are making progress, and we love the spirit with which our community shows up to support us and those who need our services.

Yours in safety and gratitude,

Megan Stuke
Executive Director
The Willow Domestic Violence Center





Financials for 2022

Income

Federal and State Grants: \$1,471,197.93

Local and Foundation Grants: \$201,719.64

Contributions and Fundraising: \$390,783.54

Other: \$12,823.90

Total Income: \$2,076,525.01

Expenses

 Staff:
 \$1,526,505.00

 Fundraising Events:
 \$24,995.67

 General Operating:
 \$383,304.39

 Total Expenses
 \$1,934,805.06



SHELTER, HELP, HOPE,

Board of Directors

Jacqlene Nance-Mengler, Board President, US Citizenship & Immigration Services
Beth O'Neill, Board Vice President, Washburn University
Christy Blanchard, Board Secretary, Blanchard Psychological Services
Angela Motsinger, Board Treasurer, Motsinger Tax & Accounting
John Connolly, University of Kansas
Sierra Two Bulls, Haskell Indian Nations University
Lua K. Yuille, University of Kansas
Meghan Heriford, Ladybird Diner
Julie Kelley, Westminster Presbyterian Church
Amy Fleisher, Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Kansas
Keith Jones, University of Kansas

- *** 4,222 calls to our 24-hour helpline
- *** 243 safety planning sessions
- *** 3,444 nights of safe rest in our emergency shelters
- *** 2,106 nights of safe shelter in transitional housing
- *** 715 clients, 54 children
- *** 866 children's services, including art classes, advocacy, and support groups
- *** 163 protection orders filed
- *** 113 presentations and trainings given to over 4,800 members of the community

House a 'shelter for battered women Staff tries 'to open up all the alternatives' 15 YAM PELICIAN 15 YAM PELICIAN 16 YAM PELICIAN 17 YAM PELICIAN 18 YAM



* * * From humble beginnings (the 1970s):

Lawrence Women's Transitional Care Services, Inc., a corporation not for profit under the laws of the State of Kansas filed its Articles of Incorporation with the state on February 4, 1977.

According to the organization's bylaws, WTCS's purpose was "to provide services, by women, for women relating to both economic and psychological needs as women confront personal crisis."

WTCS sought to accomplish this purpose by the following methods:

- A. Acquire, operate, manage, and maintain a transitional shelter house for women, with or without dependent children, in Lawrence, Kansas.
- **B.** Create an environment in which women may learn to trust one another and to cope with change in their lives positively and constructively.
- **C.** Educate the community about the Corporation's services and the need for those services and cooperate fully with judicial, legal, law enforcement, medical, and social service agencies for the achievement of the purposes of the Corporation.

THE WILLOW VISION

Our Mission Statement

The Willow Domestic Violence Center builds safer communities through shelter, support, and services to survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking in Douglas, Franklin, and Jefferson counties.

Our Values

Equity - The Willow promotes equity in our services and community by supporting the needs of a diverse population while being inclusive to people of all identities.

Community - The Willow is committed to healthy partnerships, prevention work, outreach, collaboration, and education.

Advocacy - The Willow is committed to confidential, trauma-informed, low-barrier, and individualized advocacy.

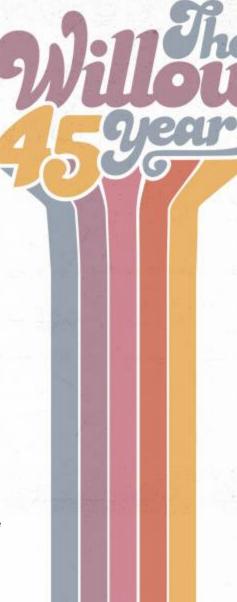
Empowerment - The Willow works to empower survivors through peer support and respect while honoring the dignity of those we serve.

Support - The Willow supports survivors' and advocates' well-being via self-care, education, innovation, and research-based practices.

Practices

Trauma-Informed Care - The Willow practices trauma-informed care, viewing survivors not as problems to be solved but as the experts of their own lives. We believe that accepting survivors where they are and building relationships and agreements, rather than rules and plans, helps heal the damage done by trauma. By focusing on what adaptive behaviors have accomplished, we can help survivors through a crisis.

Commitment to Diversity - The Willow seeks to break cycles of violence in our community, whether inside a family or systemic. The Willow regularly educates both staff and board on cultural humility and competence. The agency maintains a Survivor Access program to ensure that we continue to break down barriers marginalized communities face in accessing our services and works to create safe spaces for those who have faced racism, discrimination, and systemic oppression.



WILLOW TIMELINE

February 4, 1977 - Articles of Incorporation for the Women's Transitional Care Services (WTCS) are founded. The organization is run by The Collective, made up of volunteers (primarily community members, KU students, and wives of KU faculty.

August 1978 - First shelter home (1317 Kentucky Street) established. It is the first shelter home of its kind in Kansas.

1980 - Crisis in financing due to homophobic attacks by the Pro-Family Alliance, who openly call out the organization as a 'den of lesbianism' and demand they do not receive funding. These attacks create substantial financial setbacks.

1982 - WTCS moves into its second (and larger) shelter home on Ohio, between 9th and 10th streets.

1983 - The organization begins an Advisory Board to help guide future funding.

1984 - A "Conflict Resolution Committee" is formed to handle conflicts that arise in the 'emotionally charged

Shelter offers security to abused women

environment of working at WTCS.

March 6, 1984 - Discussion regarding homophobia, racism, and classism in the shelter home.

December 4, 1984 - The agency creates the Anti-Discrimination Policy and Action Statement.

Mid 1980's - Male advocates (volunteers) are allowed to serve in the children's program but have to get permission to step foot on shelter grounds each time they visit.

1986 - "Committee to do Outreach into Communities of Color" was formed. This is in response to a disproportionate number of racial and ethnic marginalized survivors served vs. population in service areas.

Early 1990's - Participation in the Collective starts to dwindle. Many veteran members have left. Rural county services have become more formalized. There is a focus on LGBT abuse - trans women allowed into shelter home.

1995 - Shelter hits a milestone of providing about 5,500 nights of safe rest (one person staying for one day).

1996 - The Women's Transitional Care Center celebrates its 20th anniversary.

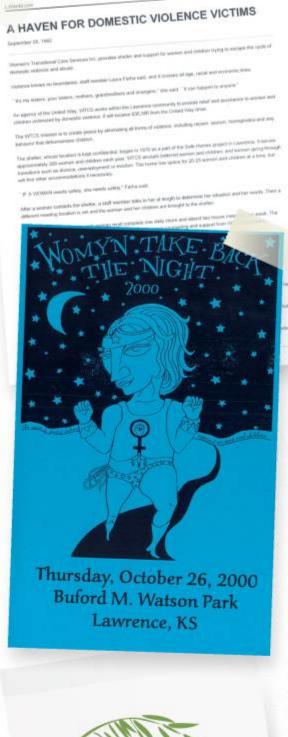
1998 - Board of Directors formalized (consisting of many remaining Collective members). The current shelter property was purchased. Higher operating costs and a nearly total turnover of shelter staff make the financial situation precarious.

1999 - WTCS transitions to a more traditional nonprofit organization with a formalized Board of Directors and hired the first Executive Director. The Advisory Board and Board of Directors are combined, and the Coordinating Collective is abolished. This creates a significant loss of radical identity and was nearly fatal to the agency.

2005 - First recorded Lawrence Domestic Violence Awareness Month proclaimed by the City Commission, signed by then-Mayor Boog Highberger.

2006 - Women Opening Doors for Women hosts the Wow Run, raising funds for WTCS.

2008 - Court Advocacy program is established.





2009 - Jefferson County program is established.

2010 - WTCS renamed The Willow Domestic Violence Center.

2011 - Executive Director Sarah Terwelp resigns. Joan Schultz is hired as the new Executive Director. Agency produces "Real Men Wear Heels" Red Shoe calendar.

2012 - Community Advocacy Program begins.

2013 - Charter teams and Agency Committees established to meet underserved groups' needs. Willow begins Phoenix Project, an outreach project combining art and survivor stories.

2015/2016 - Male-identifying survivors are welcomed into shelter.

2017 - Executive Director Joan Schultz retires. Megan Stuke becomes Interim Executive Director. Willow hosts the first Mic Drop Lip Sync Competition.

2018 - Megan Stuke becomes Executive Director. Willow launches the PPI program to celebrate partnerships with other nonprofits in the community.

2019 - Transitional Housing Program Launched. Willow holds the Growing Forward capital campaign for the second shelter. The first year of Willow Garden Party. Willow presents #ArtHeals in partnership with the Lawrence Arts Center, celebrating the healing power of art.

2020 - The second shelter is purchased. COVID forces severely reduced capacity in shelters. Willow looks to whatever means possible to help survivors get safe shelter, including working with property owners, using hotels, and even purchasing bus tickets to get survivors to safe places with friends and family.

2021 - Foster Support program launched. Willow acquires Phoenix House, a three-bedroom house for folks aging out of foster care.

2022 - The Willow celebrates its 45th anniversary.
Garden Party returns to a live event. Willow launches the Bijoux gala in October.



Remarks from 45th Anniversary exhibit...

The Willow was the first dedicated domestic violence shelter in the state and one of the earliest nationwide, primarily due to the influence of the University and local activists in the community. Local businesses such as Spinster Books and Webbery, Sister Kettle restaurant, and The Community Merchantile acted as hubs for women in the community. The School of Social Welfare at KU became an incubator for the movement, drawing ideas from other actions across the country and manifesting them here.

Women's Transitional Care Services was run by Collective, eschewing the idea of a hierarchy. The Collective structure led to radical innovation, lifetime friendships, and inevitable internal conflict in those early days, which came when passion met practicalities.

It is fascinating that the difficulties facing WTCS in the early days are issues we still struggle with today. In the early days of the shelter, some members felt that women in the shelter should eat vegetarian, not be allowed to bring in junk food like hot dogs or burgers, and not drink coffee. Others countered this was re-enacting the same power and control survivors were trying to escape from.

At its core, this is a fundamental argument in group living - balancing the health and safety of survivors and staff against the risk of creating a contentious and rule-based environment. The Willow still balances this today. Our move towards trauma-informed care was an effort to address this issue by replacing rules with relationships and recognizing behaviors as adaptive rather than disruptive.

As the organization grew throughout the '80s and '90s, there was this constant balance between radical and mainstream ideologies. In 1999, when WTCS moved to a traditional nonprofit structure with an Executive Director and a Board of Directors, it was a dramatic shift that nearly ended the agency.

However, it allowed more ease of access to grant funding, which carried through as the organization moved shelter locations to a much larger shelter



(what we now call Shelter One) and began to expand services, adding court advocacy and access to rural services.

In 2010, under the Board leadership of Kathy Perkins, WTCS was renamed The Willow Domestic Violence Center, and the following year Joan Schultz became the new organizational Executive Director. In 2015, The Willow welcomed male-identifying survivors into the shelter. This was a time of organizational growth and change.

These changes continued under Executive Director Megan Stuke, with The Willow expanding further. In 2017, the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) advisory council were set up to guide the agency in shelter and staff policies and procedures.

The Willow began hosting events such as Mic Drop and Garden Party and launched the Partnership Progress Initiative, a series of presentations about innovative partnerships between nonprofits in our community.

The transitional housing program was launched, allowing one to two year leases at an affordable rent with case management to survivors looking to move to more permanent housing. The Foster Support program was begun to help youth aging out of foster care build a support network. And in 2020, at the beginning of COVID, The Willow acquired a second shelter to add twenty beds to the organization's capacity.

I asked each person I interviewed for the 45th anniversary something I'd encourage those of you who have worked with and supported the Willow to ponder - what impact did you have on the Willow, and what impact did The Willow have on you?

It's been fascinating getting these answers and unfolding this story. From a grassroots volunteer network of safe houses to a thirty-plus-person agency, The Willow has grown with, for, and because of our community. Thank you for reading, and I hope this gives you a sense of the agency and its 45 years.

One in three women, one in four men, and 30%-50% of trans and non-binary folks will experience domestic violence in their lifetime. DV is not a private or family matter but a public health crisis.

--Will Averill
Director of Communications



24-Hour Crisis Hotline

Our 24-hour hotline allows survivors to speak with trained advocates whenever they are in need. Hotline staff answer questions, provide safety planning, arrange shelter, and provide referrals to survivors.

Shelter

Our two emergency shelters typically allow 90-day stays for 28 survivors and their families. Survivors meet with advocates in shelter to pursue employment, financial, and educational goals.

Community Advocacy

Not all survivors need shelter. Some may need assistance with employment, housing, access to services, and help in the early stages of living away from their abuser. Our community advocacy team meets with survivors and helps plan, refer, and transport them to necessary appointments and meetings.

Court Advocacy

Navigating legal systems can be incredibly stressful, and for many survivors, court is the first time they will have to face their abusers since they initially left. The first 72 hours after leaving are the most dangerous, and protection orders can often help survivors. Our court advocates can assist with the filling out of those orders.

Outreach

Our outreach team provides:
Training / Resources to the
community and businesses /
Educational presentations for
schools and partner programs /
Information on The Willow and its
services.

Children's Services

The Willow has a full-time Children's Program Coordinator helping with various activities, wellness events, and support for survivors' children. Children's services provide education and enrichment opportunities, help staff connect with our kids in shelter, and start the healing process through programs and play.

Art Program

Art can be a powerful tool in healing and transformation. Our Art Program works with adult survivors and our kids in shelter to practice self-expression through drawing, painting, clay sculpture, and words. We highlight some of this art each year for Domestic Violence Awareness Month. These displays are potent reflections of survivors' trauma and the power of the healing process.

Transitional Housing Program

Leaving an abusive household is one of the most massive barriers survivors face. Our shelter helps those in immediate danger, but even 90 days is a short time to regroup, build financial resources, access assistance if needed, and get into a new home.

Our transitional housing programs offer survivors and their families one to two-year leases at an affordable rate in either Restoration House, our flagship apartment, or one of six single-family homes.

National statistics state that 80% of people in transitional housing programs move from that program to permanent housing. Although we are only in the early stages of the program, our numbers so far reflect this success rate.

Foster Support Program

Though some services exist, not all foster care kids choose to access them, and upon leaving foster care, many can feel left with no safety net. This vulnerable period can be difficult for youth aging out of foster care. They could end up homeless and vulnerable to traffickers or survival sex situations with abusive partners. We have created Phoenix House, a three bedroom apartment that houses youth aging out of foster care at an affordable rate for one to two years, with case management to help youth with education and employment opportunities.

Public Health Impacts

A 2019/2020 project by the KU SELF program through the KU Department of Engineering compiled data on emergency services costs to our community versus the Willow shelter costs.

Looking at the costs per person, \$1 of shelter services equaled about \$9 of emergency services for one individual. The more money spent on prevention and shelter services, the less we must rely on emergency services.

Nationally, domestic violence is estimated to cost \$8.3 billion annually and accounts for over 8 million days of paid work lost by survivors.

Domestic violence is not just a family issue but also a public health issue.

We hope this information will assist local officials and state lawmakers take a broader view of domestic violence and human trafficking issues.

With these numbers in mind, our communities should readily fund outreach, education, and prevention efforts for The Willow and for other agencies across the county.

For more information, check out willowdvcenter.org/public-health.



ORGANIZATIONS THAT DONATED TO THE WILLOW

Absolute Beauty, LLC

Allen Serenity Now Fund

Alpha Chi Omega Foundation

Alpha Kappa Lambda Fraternity

Appanoose Baptist Women

Berry Global

Blue Cross Blue Shield Of Kansas

Bruce E. Vaughn Charitable Fund

Charities Aid Foundation of America

Charles and Dee Blaser

Chris' Corner Quilt Shop

City of Overland Park

City Wine Market

Cloud Heating and Cooling

Commerce Bancshares Foundation

Dave and Gunda Hiebert Family Fund

Deja Brooks

Delta Dental

Dixie Jewel, LLC

Doug and Mary Glasnapp Family Charitable Fund

Douglas County Community Foundation

Dr. N. Daniel Ranjbar, DDS

Dunlap Family Foundation

Educational Testing Service

Facebook Donations

Fidelity Charitable

First Presbyterian Church

First Presbyterian Women

First United Methodist Women Oskaloosa

Francisco and Rachel Lemus Rev. Trust

Fraternal Order of Eagles Aerie No. 2700

Garmin International

Geisler-Merriman Charitable Fund

Grantville United Methodist Church

Greek Spirit Inc

Guitarama

Hallmark Cards

Hard Candy Quilts, LLC

Haskell Springer and Anne Fowler Fund

Henrys on 8th

J. William and Barbara Carswell Family Fund

Jefferson Partners

Jim Bost Plumbing

Josh and Amanda Davis Charitable Fund

Kansas Secured Title

Kaw Valley Quilters Guild

Kelly and Tanya Harrison Charitable Fund

Kent Dobbins OD and Jacob Letourneau OD PA

Kroger

KU Child Language Doctoral Program

KU Sigma Phi Zeta

Ladybird Diner

Lawrence Country Club

Lawrence Realtors Community Foundation

Leann R Johnson Fund

Linda Bailey Fund

Linda Howard Huchison Charitable Fund

Loucks Trust

Marks Jewelers

Martin Moore and Durand Reiber Charitable Fund

Mary and Wint Winter Jr. Charitable Family Fund

Mary Dillon and Jon Hafker Charitable Fund

Midwest Trust

Morgan Stanley Gift Fund

Nations Financial Group, Inc

Network for Good

Neuman Family Fund

Pledgeling Foundation

Raymond and Mary Lee Hummert Pass-Through

Fund

RE/MAX Excel

Richard S. and Susan M. Givens Family Fund

Richard W Lind Trust

River City Engineering

Robert Schwan - Anne Keischer Chariatable

Foundation

Rock Chalk Revue

Rosenbluth Family Charitable Foundation

RunSignup, Inc

Sabatini Family Fund

Soroptimist International

Stengel-Joy Family Fund

Stitch On

The Chiropractic Element, LLC

The Churchill Foundation

The Grainger Foundation

The Korean Presbyterian Church

The Merck Foundation

The Salon

Trader's Cache, LLC

Troy and Susan Cook Foundation

United Methodist Women of First United Methodist

Church

United Rentals

United Way of Greater Triangle

United Way of Metropolitan Chicago

Vermeer Great Plains

VFW Post 852 Ladies Auxiliary

Village Cooperative of Lawrence

Visiting Nurses Association

Warren McElwain Mortuary

Westminster Presbyterian Church

Wiseman Family Charitable Foundation



TheWillow DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CENTER

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