



Commitment & Community

Dedicated employees,
volunteers, partners,
individuals and families

2023

\$44.7M

annual revenue

667

employees and growing

41

community residences

174

people receiving residential services

140

people attending attending three Day programs

129

people receiving transportation services

Venture Community Services

provides support to individuals facing diverse challenges through a compassionate and dedicated workforce using innovative practices that encourage independence, empowerment, and opportunity.



Message from the President



The recently completed year marked my 10th anniversary at Venture Community Services, a period of time that has flown by at almost blinding speed. Many things have changed at the agency in those ten years. We've created a new brand, purchased multiple homes, built new programs, added several

hundred employees, and fostered relationships and partnerships that benefit the people we support and the professionals who provide that support. The need for our services has grown considerably over the years, but what hasn't changed is Venture's commitment to what we do and to the families and individuals who need us. This is what continues to guide us as we head into a new year.

Commitment is a word we use often at Venture. In spite of the world constantly changing around us, we maintain an unwavering commitment to helping others, particularly those who have been marginalized in the world and too often left behind. We are wholly committed to working with our partners to ensure that the safety net upon which so many in Massachusetts rely is intact. This safety net is constantly threatened by a social crisis created by too many years of society undervaluing our talented workforce. We are committed to giving a voice to those who haven't had one, be it people living with disabilities and mental health needs or professionals who need to work multiple jobs because they choose to care for others.

Venture is also committed to being a vibrant part of our community. You will see in this report how the agency strives to not just embrace our community, but how we also work to build it up. Our community events reach people of all ages and provide an opportunity for them to experience and enjoy things that may otherwise not be available to them. We are invested in understanding our community and working to meet the needs of those who are underserved or not able to access services at all. The agency is in the truest sense a community-based provider and this will always be true no matter how we grow and change.

We are ever mindful here that the word "Community" is very purposefully part of the name of this agency. Venture itself is a community of dedicated employees, volunteers, partners, individuals and families. From our always supportive and committed Board of Directors to new interns, everyone is welcome and accepted at Venture Community Services. This too is something that will never change.

Mike

Mike Hyland
President & CEO



Q&A with the Clinical Team:

Committed to Success

Venture delivers comprehensive ABA services, along with tailored individual and group therapies to individuals with disabilities residing in our homes or participating in community-based day programs. These clinical supports are led by a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker (LICSW) and Licensed Applied Behavior Analysts (LABA). Our LABAs also hold certification as Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA).



My name is Ashley Perry. I am a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA). I have 14 years of experience in this field with a specific focus on clinical services for the past 7 years.



My name is Candice Diaz-Hunter, I am a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) and I have worked in the Human Services field over the past 11 years.

What is your clinical approach to working with people with disabilities?

Ashley: As a clinician, building a strong team rapport is key to a more well-rounded intervention. I tend to take a more collaborative approach when working with people with disabilities. We work as a team, closely coordinating with individuals, direct care staff, families, nursing, as well as other external relevant parties. This approach leads to a positive working environment where the individuals and staff feel motivated, valued, and are more likely to collaborate which then leads to the overall success of the placement.

Can you discuss any improvements or innovations that were implemented within the clinical team this year, leading to positive outcomes?

Candice: The agency wide implementation of Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) and taking a person-centered approach has helped shape the mindset of our workforce. Staff are asking questions on ways to improve their approach or how they can assist the individuals we support in achieving a greater sense of independence. Staff are continuously working on community integration from

vacations and outings to something as simple as enrolling individuals into a day program.

In what ways did your team collaborate with other departments to achieve common goals, and can you share a success story?

Ashley: We work closely with nursing and the training department to minimize risk for the individuals we serve. We take on high-risk cases that many other agencies may not have the capacity to support. We have also recently been implementing interdisciplinary team meetings to foster more collaboration on complex cases. This way we can all share our ideas and work together to solve any issues or concerns our programs or individuals are facing. I like this because then we can troubleshoot ideas on the spot and it helps with communication between all of the programs and team members.

Success Story: *An individual transitioned into our services with head-to-toe supportive equipment due to severe self-injurious behavior. During this time, it was recommended he be a 3:1 ratio for staffing support. Through ongoing training and a supportive environment, he was reduced to a 2:1 staffing ratio, was able to remove all supportive body equipment, and successfully decreased*

and discontinued the use of multiple medications. This remains a work in progress but I am proud of how the team was able to take on such a challenging case by working with this individual to give him a better quality of life.

Were there any challenges or obstacles your team faced during the year, and how did you overcome them to achieve success?

Ashley: Staff shortages and turnover can be challenging when trying to implement long-term behavioral change. Building rapport, continuous training, and ongoing support are helpful to keep staff up to speed on person-specific behavior plans.

Candice: An ongoing challenge our team faces is with the consistent staff implementation of behavior plans and interventions. Behavior change usually takes time and effort from all members of the team, especially the efforts of Direct Support staff as they are the ones working with individuals on a day to day basis. In order to overcome this challenge, our team must work diligently with day program and residential staff through the use of Behavioral Skills Training (BST) which involves four major components: clear instructions, modeling, rehearsal, and feedback. Using BST allows Direct Support staff to role play scenarios, ask questions, and truly see the thought process behind our interventions we are working to implement and the behavior change we are hoping to achieve.

What lies ahead or is anticipated for clinical work in the future?

Ashley: I anticipate that we will continue to receive more high-risk behavioral referrals (specifically with the new turning 22s) with a focus on Mental Health and Autism Services. In this post-pandemic era, there has been an increase in mental health issues and I think this will impact our clinical services. Also, as technology advances I think we'll see a shift and increase toward electronic medical records in behavioral health along with other billable services. In the future, our team will need to expand if we want to continue to grow and adapt our services to support the new behavioral health trends.

Candice: In the field of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) there are always ways to grow and expand. I am hoping in the future to broaden the scope of our services from adult services to include providing in-home services to individuals who are on the verge of turning 22. If we can work with individuals prior to their 22nd birthday, we can better prepare them and their families for their transition into adult services.

2023 Growth & Highlights

19

internal promotions

266

donors (in kind/sponsors)

100

people attended kids' community events

40%

% of growth ASD program

4.9

years of average employee tenure

Community Outreach:

Connecting with our Community



Throughout this year, our focus has been on revitalizing our Community Outreach Programs and reestablishing connections within the communities we serve. The primary goal of this initiative is to provide free social and recreational opportunities to children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Since 2018 we have been offering free adaptive yoga in Uxbridge for children ages 12-22 every Thursday. These yoga classes led by Lisa Irvine from Brave Yoga for All, present an adaptive approach to yoga. Adaptive yoga is a unique, low pressure, and customized program that is accessible to participants of all abilities. It has been shown to benefit overall well-being, daily function, balance, and more!

As part of our ongoing commitment to our communities and families in need, Venture continues to host Sensory Friendly events throughout the year. Most take part in in our Uxbridge location and are designed for kids with autism or intellectual disabilities. In the spring we offered a short program hosted by Animal Adventures. During this event, children were able to learn about and touch animals such as a snake, armadillo, owl, chinchilla, alligator and more, all in a welcoming environment.

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“My favorite part of teaching at Venture is the opportunity to teach our students ways to improve their flexibility, strength, endurance, coordination, and coping strategies using yoga and mindfulness in an adapted way to meet their needs. I have a few students that have been with me since the beginning and I have seen so many gains in their self-esteem and self-advocacy.”

— Lisa Irvine





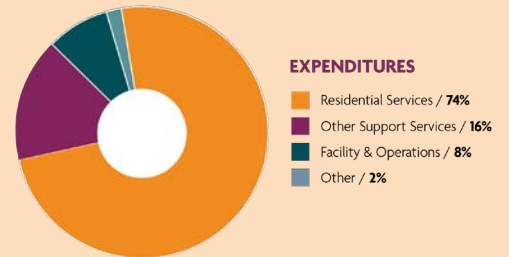
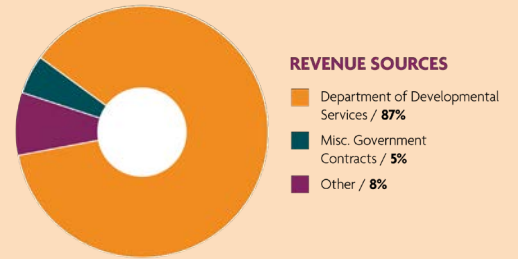
Our Annual Sensory Friendly Halloween event also had another great turnout. More than 30 participants came to practice trick-or-treating, play in our sensory bins, and listen to a Halloween story read by the Uxbridge Public Library librarian. These events not only provide a safe and supportive space for kids but also create opportunities for making friends and building connection within the community for parents.

This year we introduced a new program, an Adult Adaptive Hip Hop Class held in our Sturbridge location. This class was taught by Bridget from Shining Stars Dance Studio, located in Spencer, MA. The class was a fun upbeat way for those who attended to move and groove in an inclusive environment. The classes started off with slow stretching and progressed into learning a short hip hop routine. We look forward to hosting this class again in the future! We also had a first in our series of annual dances for adults with disabilities at the end of January.

Our vision for the future involves continuing to expand these events for children and adults. We believe that free community events offer an inclusive environment without financial barriers.

If you have suggestions for additional free social and recreational opportunities that could benefit our communities, please feel free to reach out to Kelsey Mondor, Director of Community Engagement, via email at kmondor@venturecs.org or by telephone 774-922-1135.

Statement of Activity



Venture Community Services is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that provides support to individuals facing diverse challenges through a compassionate and dedicated workforce using innovative practices that encourage independence, empowerment, and opportunity. Federal Tax Identification 04-2593315

Agency Leadership

Mike Hyland

President & Chief Executive Officer

Dorothy Cote

Executive Vice President & Chief Financial Officer

Pam Sampson

Chief Program Officer

Tiffany Breau

Vice President of Property Management

Kerrie Mason

Vice President Advancement & Marketing

Kevin Hughes

Vice President of Clinical Services

Damien Pittola

Vice President of Human Resources, IT, & Professional Development

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Donna Peters, President

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Patricia Lamoureux, Treasurer

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Thank you for your continued support

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Advanced Auto Performance	Erika Honeyman	Linda & Marty Spector	Sarah Irons
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Al Brousseau Flooring	Far Shot USA	Linda Harrington	Savers Bank
Allie Richards	Floor Source	Lindsay Green	Saw Dust Coffee House
Amy and Matt Jette	Gary and Kerrie Mason	Lisa Irvine	School Yahd
Ann and Phil Victor	Gaudet Landscaping	Lisa Nemiroff	Schott North America
Barbara Richter	Giguere Gymnastics	Load Controls	Scott Merrill
Bark Box	Glen Schneider	Lori Morrill	Sean & Melissa Cottrell
Bay State Brewery & Tap Room	Guaranty Glass	Lorie Martiska	Shaw's Community Bag Program
Beacon Distributors	Hardwick Winery	LUK Inc.	Showcase Cinemas
Beth Barto	Hartford Yard Goats	Lynn Leach	Shylynn Forget
Black Bear Coatings & Concrete	Haven Massage & Yoga	Mark and Theresa Minnucci	Six Flags New England
Bonnie Howard	Homebridge Financial Services	Marti Hobbes	Sonny and Louisa Nasse
Boston Bruins	Howard Carr	Marty & Christina Mullen	Springfield Museums
Boston Crawling	Howe Lumber	Mary Bellezza	Steadfast Fence
Boston Duck Tours	Hy-Line Cruises	Massachusetts Bay Lines	Stephenson & Brook
Boston Red Sox	Interior Resources	Micayla Kennan	Steven and Troy Smith
Breanna Lamoureaux	Ivania Bleakney	Michael Klimowicz	Stop & Shop Community Bag Program
Bridget Costa	Jaime Neerayah	Mike and Tammy Hyland	Storyland
Brockton Rox	James and Marcia Buss	Mystic Seaport Museum	Sue O'Connor
Brookfield Orchards	Janet Warpula	Naomi and Jay Kunkel	Susan Markowitz
Bruce Leger	Jason Malo	Network for Good	Table 3 Restaurant Group
Brush It Off	JD LeBlanc Electric	Night Shift Brewing	Tammy Barnes
BT's Smokehouse	Jean Allain	OFS Optics	Ted Houghton
Cape Air	Jeff and Renee Lowe	Ogletree Deakins Law Firm	The Barkwood Inn
Cardi's Furniture	Jennifer Duffy	Owen Parker	The Best Book Group
Caren and Andy Nemtzow	John's Auto Service	Paige Billings	The House Of The Seven Gables
Carol and Glen Denker	Kathleen Facticeau	Pam Sampson	Tim Pollard-Waldron
Carol O'Day	Kathryn McNamara	Pamela and Lionel Billings	TJ and Tiffany Breau
Central Rock Gym	Kathy Mondor	Pat Cole	TMG Carpentry
Charles River Canoe & Kayak	Katie Hughes	Patricia Marrin	Toni-Ann Feeney
CK Smith Superior	Kelly Paine	Patrick & Lisa Tucker	Total Wine
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Common Ground Cider Works	Ken Bates	Paylocity	TreeTop Adventures
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Donna Anderson	Kim Mondor	Publick House Historic Inn	
Dorothy Cote	Klems	Quality Van Sales	
Ecotarium	Kristina Haynes	Rachel Beaudry	
	Kyle Lamica	Redemption Rock Brewing	

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