



HERITAGE
CHRISTIAN SERVICES

Radiating



Report to the Community 2021

*Be strong and courageous.
Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged,
for the Lord your God
will be with you wherever you go.*
— Joshua 1:9



Dear friends,

The last year we could never have imagined the bravery and courage required of the people we serve, our staff and our community of supporters.

Across the organization, daily acts of courage have been serving in the presence of an unpredictable virus, making difficult decisions between work and home commitments and speaking up for the equitable treatment of all people. No matter how Heritage Christian Services heroes show up, their courage shines across the community.

Heritage Christian Services continues to make equity and inclusion a top priority, as our mission inspires. We took courageous steps and calculated risks this year by significantly lifting our starting wage for OPWDD frontline professionals. Furthermore, our new senior vice president of people and culture is helping us ensure through

Courage Shines

changing times that our corporate culture remains strong and that we are a welcoming organization where all can find true belonging.

We are challenging complacency and launching new models of service. We're renovating and transitioning homes and programs so that people can age in place with dignity and through end-of-life.

Looking ahead, we will continue to focus on people and culture; recruitment; retention and recognition; and putting donor gifts to work in transformative ways.

Despite the changes and emergencies, one thing remains the same: our courage. No matter how uncertain the day is, we lean into our faith and support one another to find courage to advance, try something new and extend ourselves in ways that we haven't before.



Sincerely,

Marisa Geitner

Marisa Geitner
President & C.E.O.

Images: (Top) Marisa Geitner with Yeva Volftsun; (Right) Kalvon Morrison, Sarah Bojanowski, Carlos Baez, Keila Diaz, William Glenn, Susan Stockton and Brittany Watson.

2021: Succeeding with **Courage**

Protecting People from Covid-19

Courage runs deep at Heritage Christian Services, and that courage is reflected in our 2021 accomplishments. In the second year of the pandemic, we leveraged the building of our new infrastructure to increase protection for the people we support and our staff. Investing in technology, embracing the most important measures and managing mass data have informed strategies for meeting challenges swiftly and for maintaining supports amid significant disruption.

- ◆ Our Covid Employee Supports team continued their work through our 24/7 hotline. **Throughout the year, they answered more than 9,000 calls from our employees needing guidance** on symptoms, exposures, quarantines and clearance to work. They also conducted contact tracing to help supervisors stem additional exposures.



- ◆ In residential services, we assisted 362, or 91%, of the people we support who were eligible for Covid vaccines to receive them.
- ◆ We helped our staff to track their vaccination records for state incentive payments and proposed vaccine mandates.

- ◆ With partners – like URMC, CVS, Elmwood Health and Kenan Center Arena Lockport – we helped organize more than 20 Covid vaccination and booster clinics to welcome more than 500 people from HCS plus community members. Four clinics were hosted at the Pieters Family Life Center, our community health and wellness center in Henrietta.

Full Inclusion



Photo: (above center) Mary McCormick and Stuart Rudd

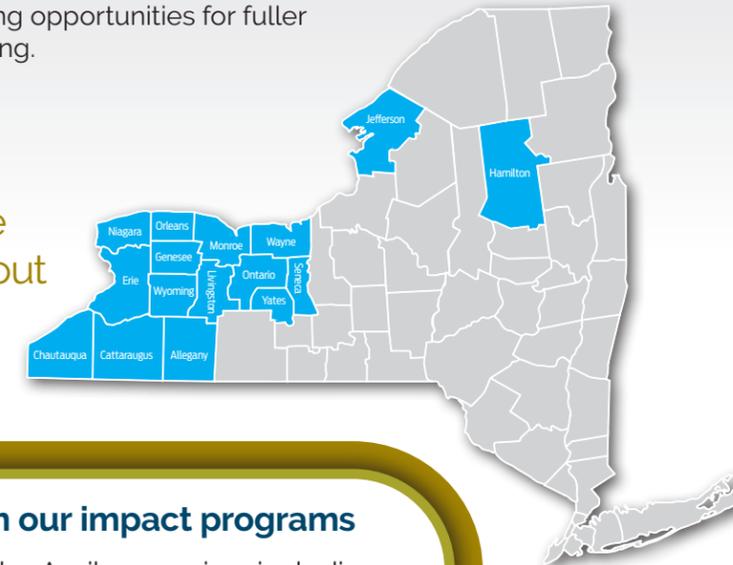
Courage to Reimagine

With a multitude of services, many people we partner with choose more than one of our supports through their lifetime.

Our continuum of care includes traditional and community-based services. The demand for community-based services grew in 2021, offering the most flexibility in decision-making, budgeting and staffing to the person.

While disabilities services are the hallmark of our founding, **the outgrowth of our community-based services expands our touchpoints exponentially.** Community-based services – within and beyond the auspices of OPWDD and DOH – offer life-enriching opportunities for fuller inclusion no matter the setting.

We support thousands of people in 16 counties throughout New York State



Just a few accomplishments from our impact programs

- Balcony Point** hosted more than 100 events since the April reopening, including wedding and corporate events.
- Eleversity** trained nearly 9,800 attendees through its Innovations contract, in addition to 17 contracted trainings for the Finger Lakes Performing Provider System and the New York Alliance – educating more than 200 care professionals in the region.
- Heritage Christian Stables** offered 1,469 lessons to 95 riders following its reopening and partnered with Compeer Rochester to launch a therapeutic horsemanship and riding program for veterans.
- The Pieters Family Life Center** welcomed over 350 people from the community across 1,717 health and wellness visits.



Sarah Bojanowski

Courage to Grow

Sarah Bojanowski is fondly known by those closest to her as the “Polish Princess,” an homage to her heritage and endeared family position. Growing up with three brothers, all of whom are very protective of her, Sarah naturally fell into the role.

But despite the moniker, Sarah’s attitude and bravery are more that of a trooper. She has taken the pandemic in stride, wearing a mask and receiving a vaccination for the added security that she and her parents decided was right for her.

“Even though she’s so tiny, she’s so big and mighty in her personality,” says Lydia Zielski, a direct support professional at the home on Dodge Road in Amherst. “She’s so great, she’s so sweet.”

Sarah’s mom agrees. “We tell Sarah she has a brave heart and we use that any time she needs something – she’s had a lot of medical challenges – anything more invasive,” says her mom, Nancy Bojanowski. “She knows what that means, she knows it may be uncomfortable but that it’s a good thing.”

The first 29 years of Sarah’s life, her parents were prepared to care for her in their home. But when the Dodge Road home opened, they chose to prepare for their own and their daughter’s future.

“Her whole process of what she’s going through in the group home, taking in a new environment, new people, new situations, sleeping somewhere different...every day I see her I tell her I am so proud of you for settling into your new home and making this a special place,” Nancy says.

She has adapted well to her new surroundings, her mom says. During day habilitation she helps collect and categorize teacher supply baskets and bags for a Buffalo nonprofit, “and she really enjoys that and the sense of accomplishment,” her mom says.

The home on Dodge Road was one of two homes that opened during the pandemic year of 2021. Heritage Christian Services continues to design and customize living options, whether they be neighborhood homes or other types of living arrangements.

Carlos Baez

Courage to Persist

Carlos Baez is known for his ability to inspire those around him. His enthusiasm and zest for life are contagious and he begins each new day with the knowledge that it is exactly that: Another day!

“Carlos inspires so many of his staff members at his home to just remember one thing: No matter what life throws at you just keep on going,” says Jimmy Goncalves, who was promoted to Residence Manager at the home on Five Mile Line Road in December. “There is always a light at the end of the tunnel.”

Carlos began his journey with Heritage Christian Services prior to the opening of his Penfield home on Jan. 1, 1988. He was its first resident and has now lived there the longest, says his sister, Ana Caraballo, proudly.

“Carlos has been there many, many years. I think since he was 18 or 19,” Caraballo says.

Caraballo says the staffers at Heritage Christian Services are more like family to her brother. “They’re always there for him. They fight for him and I couldn’t have a better place for him to be at,” she explains.

Baez has shown his courage in the face of adversity over and over through the years, his sister points out.

“Carlos has been through a lot. He’s been through many operations, so he has to be courageous,” Caraballo says. “A couple of times already the doctors have told us to go in (to say goodbye), that he is going to have five minutes and that will be it. But no, Carlos has kept on and on. It happened again last year; they said again he was going to go. Ten minutes, get all the family there, but Carlos, he’s not going until he’s ready. And he’s still there. Carlos has kept on.”

“He just keeps pushing,” adds Goncalves. “He’s given me motivation in my life to keep going.”

Heritage Christian Services supports infants and adults through age 91. For many like Carlos in residential services, we’ve designed the opportunity for people to stay in the place that is familiar, surrounded by those they know and love, without having to move when their medical needs change.



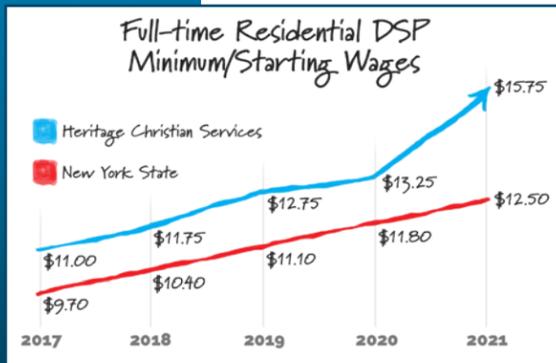
Courage at Work

The spirit radiating from Heritage Christian Services in 2021 was courageousness. Our staff of 3,200 compassionate professionals shone brightly and bravely amid unprecedented challenges. While the majority of our workforce offered direct support to others, we worked to increase our care and support of them.

IDEA In Action

In 2021, we increased our focus on Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access, pushing ourselves to be more welcoming and diverse. Specific to our workforce, we've been working to enrich the employee experience in our recruitment, advancing self-sufficiency and relying upon community collaboration and partnerships.

- ◆ We contracted cultural competency experts – brokered through our workforce training and education division, Eleversity – to advance a welcoming, diverse and inclusive work environment. We further updated policies and practices to:
 - add training for understanding unconscious bias
 - remove binary language and include more family models
 - increase supervisor training on allyship, privilege and cultural competencies
 - diversify our board of directors to better represent those we serve
 - host new activities such as Inclusion Cafés with monthly learning sessions
 - implement video interview technology with competency-based assessments to increase equity in our staff recruiting
- ◆ In May, we raised our starting wage to be 20 percent higher than New York State's minimum wage, affecting 1,650 employees. All OPWDD caring positions started at \$15 an hour with residential and respite starting at \$15.75 – all with options to earn more.
- ◆ HCS sponsored community learning events including Urban League of Rochester's Interrupt Racism; Action for a Better Community's Racism as a Public Health Crisis; Pathstone's The American Dream and the Devaluation of Black Homes; as well as Eleversity's Women of Color Summit; ColoRise; and Right Talent, Right Now conference.



Staff members: (Left to right) Keila Diaz, Jimmy Goncalves and Brittany Watson

Recognitions in 2021



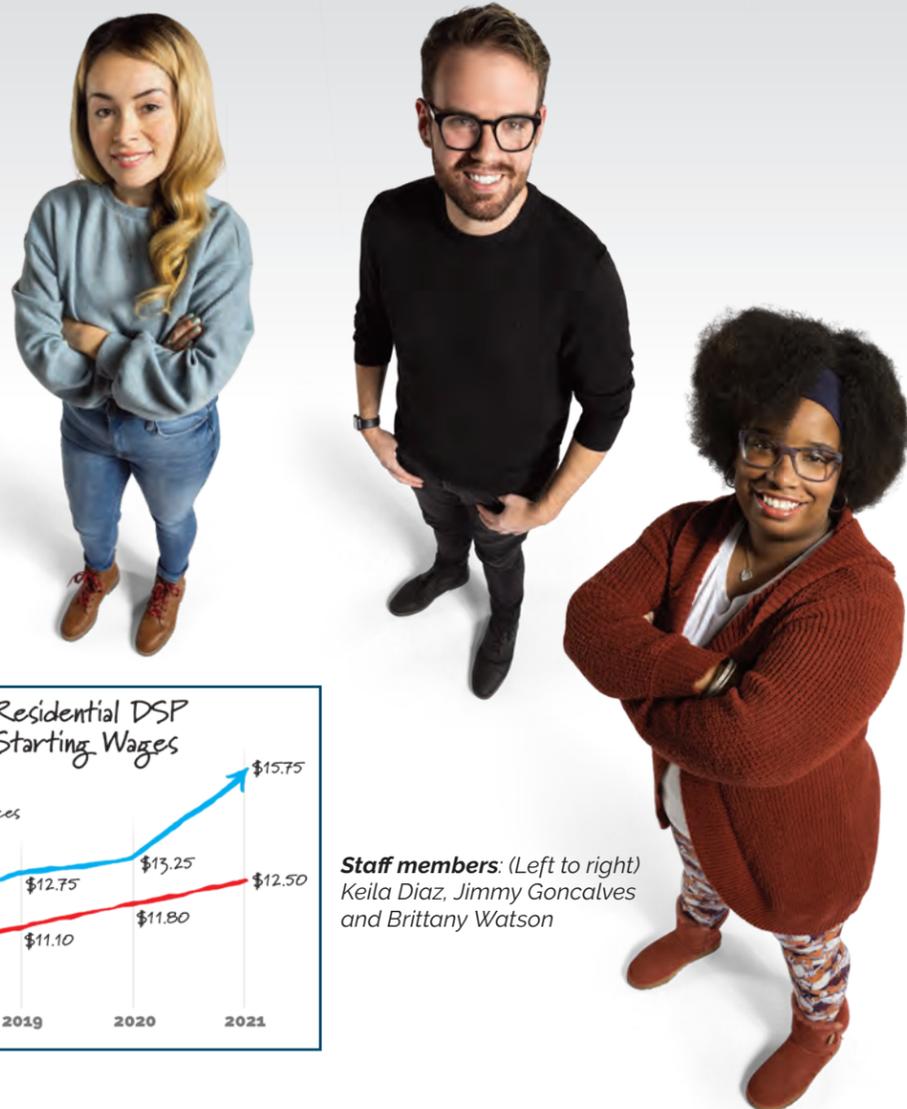
NYS OPWDD honored HCS with a **Compass distinction**



The Rochester-Monroe County Anti-Poverty Initiative named HCS a **Level Up Champion**



Buffalo Business First announced HCS earned an **IDEA award**



William Glenn

Courage to Rise

William Glenn has lived independently for more than two decades. While living on his own in and of itself is a brave act, standing up for himself when his living situation was less than adequate showed his true courage.

"At first it was alright, everything was good," William recalls. "And then it seems like for years everything was getting broken in my apartment."

The stairs were in a state of disrepair, the toilet was broke for years and the apartment had insects and rodents, he says. William continued to courageously approach his landlord for the necessary fixes, but to no avail. He even tried to get his story told in the media.

William advocated for a new care coordinator, who was able to connect him with Heritage Christian Services' Jessica Czaplicki and Brittany Watson. As Fiscal Intermediaries in his circle of support, they help William with his finances to build a network for self-reliance and well-being. Brittany, like other fiscal intermediaries, has expertise in navigating the complex system of budgets and services. Her skill and his drive led William to secure a new and better apartment.

"You walk in and you're watching where you place your feet on the steps because you're scared you're going to fall through," Jessica says of her first time meeting William at his old apartment. "And to see William being just so grateful, someone with such a pure heart living so, so horrible."

"I didn't believe that a lot of people were good. Until I saw people helping me. I pray a lot. So I was praying to get out of that house when my prayers came in," William says.

With his prayers answered, Williams says he is going to get busy "living."

"My courage comes from God, because if it wasn't for Him, you all wouldn't be in my life. You know, it's like He brought y'all in my life," he says.



"I've got this"



Susan with husband Carl Grayson

Susan Stockton

Courage to Inspire

Susan Stockton inspires others, particularly women, with her perseverance and ability to lift herself up. She is on a constant journey, using her voice to speak up for herself. She's embraced the saying, "I've got this!"

"She doesn't need to prove anything, the goals and dreams that she has always had in her life. She can accomplish them," says Julie Owen, HCS' director of customized support and community services.

"She's great at reaching out to people if she needs or wants support in a certain area, but otherwise, she just goes after what she wants."

In fact, Susan previously lived in an apartment with 24-hour staffing and eventually moved out on her own. Now she hires her own staff for support as needed. She has worked for more than a dozen years in customer service at Panera, and pursued the craft of jewelry-making and selling on the side. Along the way, Susan rekindled a friendship with Carl Grayson and the two were married in 2021.

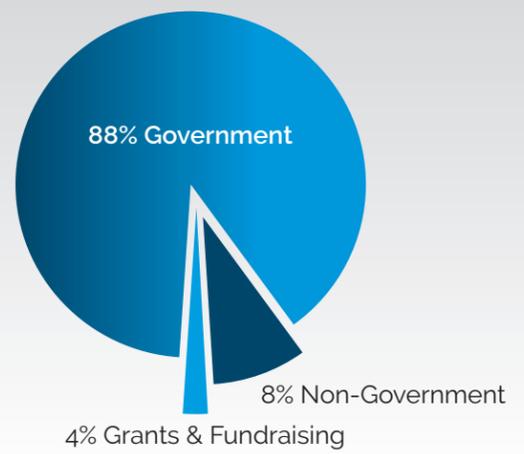
"Courage has to do with what's inside of you, and it just doesn't come automatically like that. If you want to chase your dream, go after what you want to be. My dream was to become a jewelry designer and basically start my own business and make it a career," Susan says. "Many times people would put me down and I just said I had enough with the negativity and the energy people were bringing to me. I had to fight for what I believe in. It all started with the staff who supported me and who asked, 'Well, what do you want?' And I said I wanted to start my own [jewelry] business. I was excited. And my parents thought: I'm very happy for her."

With the support of those around her, including her father, who is Susan's chief advocate, she is challenging her guardianship – to restore legal decision-making for herself – proving her courage once again.

Financial Report 2021

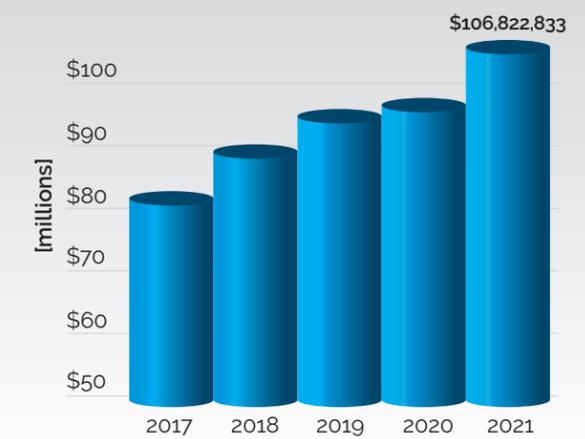
* Preliminary reports, based on unaudited data.

Revenue Sources



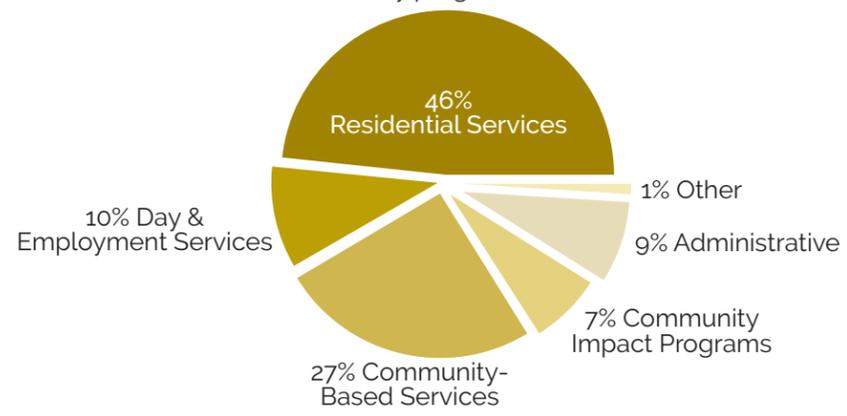
Revenue

(compared with previous years)



Expenses

(by program)



Our donors, volunteers and supporters are our beacons, and their benevolence inspires the deepest gratitude. In 2021, we celebrated more than \$3.2 million raised through donations. This support helps to sustain our quality sta ing and enables us to support others in achieving what really matters to them.

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- Anne Brett**, Executive Assistant to the President
- Chuck Collard**, VP of Western New York Operations
- Marisa Geitner**, President and C.E.O.
- Michelle Labossiere-Hall**, Associate VP of Customized Supports
- Donna Mostiller**, Senior VP of People and Culture
- Anna Mulcahy**, Senior VP of Finance
- Joanie Parker**, Associate VP of Education and Employment
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- Laura Ryan**, Business Analytics and Strategy, Advisor To The President
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Heritage Christian Services

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HERITAGE
CHRISTIAN SERVICES

At Heritage Christian Services, people come first.

Heritage Christian Services, established in 1984, strives to advance an inclusive and equitable community. Our more than 3,200 employees look beyond the traditional to provide services that ensure meaningful and diverse experiences. Based in western New York, with concentrations in the Rochester and Buffalo Niagara regions, we're innovating and expanding as the needs of our community grow. We offer people programs that promote housing options — and the support within them — along with programs that create relevant employment and day habilitation; establish high-quality child care; set the standard for statewide workforce education; ensure robust health and wellness; and embrace self-empowerment.

Our commitment to equity and justice

We believe that people are entitled to dignity, respect, equity and justice. We champion a society that removes barriers. We reject racism and discrimination of any kind. We protest systemic and political inequities that marginalize people, recognizing that there is a history of structural racism in the United States. We will continue to learn and change to achieve justice. We know that strength comes from unity.

A special thanks to our sponsors:



Corporate Office

275 Kenneth Drive, Suite 100
Rochester, NY 14623-4277
Phone: (585) 340-2000
Fax: (585) 340-2006

Regional Office

130 John Muir Dr., Suite 106
Amherst, NY 14228-1139
Phone: (716) 743-2020
Fax: (716) 743-1838

TDD: (800) 662-1220

HeritageChristianServices.org

