



# ANNUAL REPORT

2019-2020



# FY 2019-2020 Highlights

- The Women's Center of Jacksonville (WCJ) shifted to remote work for all staff as COVID-19 became a reality. Dedicated donors stepped forward to help with everything from masks to grants that helped with our technology needs for remote platforms. **Extraordinary support!**
- It was very important that during the coronavirus crisis we were still able to provide our services and support survivors of sexual assault and rape 24 hours a day so we successfully applied for and received the resources needed to keep our staff intact during the pandemic, including the Payroll Protection Plan and CARES Act funding. This required the pooled time and expertise of our finance department, our local bank and the City of Jacksonville. This allowed our services to continue uninterrupted.
- Always a priority at the WCJ, we became more committed than ever to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The wave of protests against systemic racism, oppression and violence against people of color prompted us to initiate safe spaces for difficult conversations, listening and learning. This effort continues and has become part of on-going employee convenings.
- The WCJ played an active role in creating new legislation to establish Elder Abuse Fatality Review Teams in each Judicial Circuit. Florida Statute 415.1103 is a huge win for elders in Florida and could not have happened without strong partnerships with the judicial system, legislators, law enforcement and other nonprofit agencies committed to ending elder abuse.
- *THRIVE! 100/25* was our first-ever virtual fundraising event. Audrey Moran chaired a host committee of our community's finest influencers, celebrating the 100th anniversary of women winning the right to vote, and the 25th anniversary of the Women's Center of Jacksonville.
- We began implementation of a five-year strategic plan, emphasizing three areas of focus: Cultivating High-Impact Philanthropy, Creating Thriving Conditions for the Organization, and Organizational Financial Health.
- WCJ staff returned to the offices in October of 2020, working hybrid schedules so we are able to accommodate Clients needing to be seen in person.
- At the end of 2020, the Florida Council Against Sexual Violence recertified the WCJ as the only certified rape recovery program for Duval, Nassau, and Baker Counties.



“I am very thankful for being able to find help here. I know that I’m far from being healed but I am a completely different person from when I first came.”

—Sexual assault survivor, Age 32



## OUR MISSION:

The Women's Center of Jacksonville improves the lives of women through advocacy, support and education and provides rape recovery services for individuals of all genders in Duval, Baker and Nassau Counties.



## To Our Stakeholders:

The historical nature of the COVID-19 pandemic will never be forgotten, and while we all may have experienced different challenges in this global crisis, one thing became crystal clear — that even after 25 years, the services of the Women's Center of Jacksonville remain so critical.

One of the greatest lessons learned in 2020 is that together we are stronger. Humans beings are not meant to function independently of one another and when working together we are better. Our services of advocacy, support and education rely on the support of our donors and partners and require our Board of Directors, staff and volunteers to work together so we can be here 24-hours a day for victims of sexual violence and women in need of our resources.

It was essential that our S.A.F.E. Center remained open with our advocates responding quickly

and compassionately to victims, and that we were able to continue supporting the community with mental health counseling. But equally as important, was our ability to continue answering the phones, and educating the community about resources during a time when they needed us the most. This past year also required us to adapt quickly to new ways of working, so solving technical challenges and putting social distancing measures in place was needed to keep services available to our community.

We are proud of our collective response this past year in supporting our NE Florida community. None of the valuable services we provide can be done in isolation and as we look ahead, knowing the challenges will continue, we also know that **together we are stronger, together we are better.**



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kellie Ann Kelleher Smith".

Kellie Ann Kelleher Smith  
Board President



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Teresa G. Miles".

Teresa G. Miles  
Executive Director



“I did not think I would make it, and now here I am. Thank you for helping me through the worst time of my life.”

—Sexual assault survivor  
Age 20

## Advocacy

When someone who has been raped or sexually assaulted arrives at the J. Wayne and Delores Barr Weaver Sexual Assault Forensic Exam Center (S.A.F.E.), they need to know, right away, that they are safe and that someone is in their corner.

That’s why just about everything that happens at S.A.F.E is completely up to them. We start the process of helping them take that control back. From deciding how quickly we conduct the exam and gather any evidence, to whether or not to talk to law enforcement, they make the decisions—and we support them. Every step of the way.

Through the WCJ’s ongoing counseling services and additional support provided by the Rape Recovery Team’s Victim Advocates, we often become the lifeline survivors need to overcome their crisis:

- 24-hour hotline answered by an advocate who can offer crisis intervention, information and referrals at 904.721.7273 (RAPE)
- 24-hour response to survivors who want a forensic examination
- Information to assist survivors in understanding their rights and options
- Advocacy and accompaniment for medical appointments and criminal justice proceedings
- Information and referral for community resources
- Advocate-facilitated peer support groups.

The S.A.F.E. Center serves clients of all genders. The WCJ does not charge for the services it provides. Much of that cost is funded through the State of Florida and the City of Jacksonville, with private and corporate donations making up the crucial balance.

## Support

Even under the best of circumstances, life can be challenging at times. So, it’s no surprise that the WCJ saw an uptick in mental health counseling clients this past year. It was very difficult time for many people—and for women, in particular.

Many clients lost their jobs and didn’t know how they were going to feed their children or pay the rent. Others had to quit their jobs because they had no other options for childcare, as daycare and after-school programs were shut down. The stress, anxiety, depression—and grief—was overwhelming at times for many, many clients.

With a big assist from technology, the WCJ counselors didn’t miss a beat and continued to see existing and new clients remotely. But after a few months it became obvious that telehealth counseling was less than ideal for some clients with only a phone to use for their sessions and Wi-Fi access also posed other challenges for some.

With that in mind, several therapists returned to the office in October to see these clients in person once again. CDC guidelines were strictly enforced, with social distancing and masks required among other safety precautions.

The number of counseling clients continues to rise, and plans are in place to expand the mental health counseling department to support those needing Individual and/or group therapy sessions.

# Education

The WCJ's adult education/literacy program is tailored to the unique needs of women. Classes in reading, math and GED preparation help clients minimize or eliminate education as a barrier to success—whatever they want that to look like. Classes are offered at several different times throughout the week to accommodate different work and childcare schedules.

The Bosom Buddies: Breast Cancer Support Group has been meeting and helping those impacted by breast cancer since the early days of our organization. Helping each other, learning from each

other and learning about cutting edge of cancer research from others, has made this one of the most valuable resources we offer clients.

Bosom Buddies has continued to be supported by staff through the harrowing experience of COVID-19 and met virtually during lockdown—group members needed one another more than ever. Cancer waits for no one and even though COVID-19 threatened us all, the already-compromised immune systems of those members still receiving treatment made their illness even more ominous than it had been.

“Although it may seem exaggerated, the life I live now is better than the life I lived before coming to the Women’s Center.”

—Counseling client  
Age 54



## Thrive! 100/25

Thanks to generous, engaged sponsors and other supporters, THRIVE 100/25 was the WCJ's most financially successful event ever, with all funds raised going to support the S.A.F.E. Center. That was mirrored by the attendance; more than 500 people logged on to watch and learn about the history of the organization, as well as to discover things about the Suffrage Movement they never knew before.

In June, the decision was made to move forward with the event, but to do it virtually. THRIVE! 100/25, celebrated WCJ's 25th Anniversary, and the centennial of the 19th Amendment, when women won the right to vote.

With Audrey Moran leading a Host Committee of superstars—and serving as the Emcee for the event itself—THRIVE! couldn't have been more successful.

If you didn't see the event, it can still be watched on [YouTube](https://tinyurl.com/Thrive20) at <https://tinyurl.com/Thrive20>





# BY THE NUMBERS

## Community Service Impact

### Prevention Training:



**2,202**

Individuals received **Sexual Assault Prevention Training**



Mental Health: **1,724**

**Mental Health Counseling** sessions were delivered

Forensic Exams: **288**

Sexual Assault **Forensic Exams Conducted**



Advocacy: **621**

Sexual Assault **Survivors** received **Advocacy Services**



### Hotline:



**4,031**

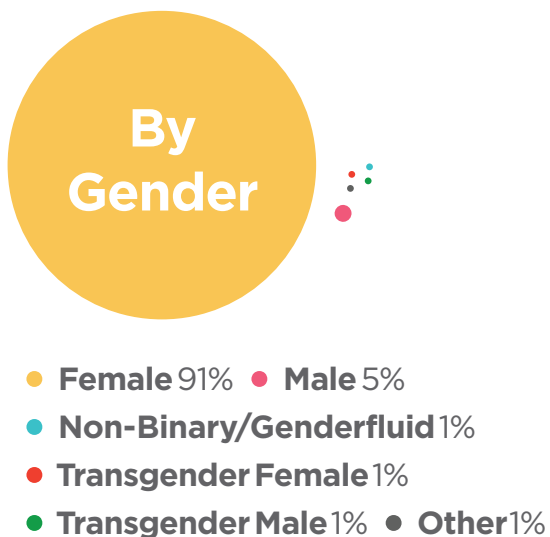
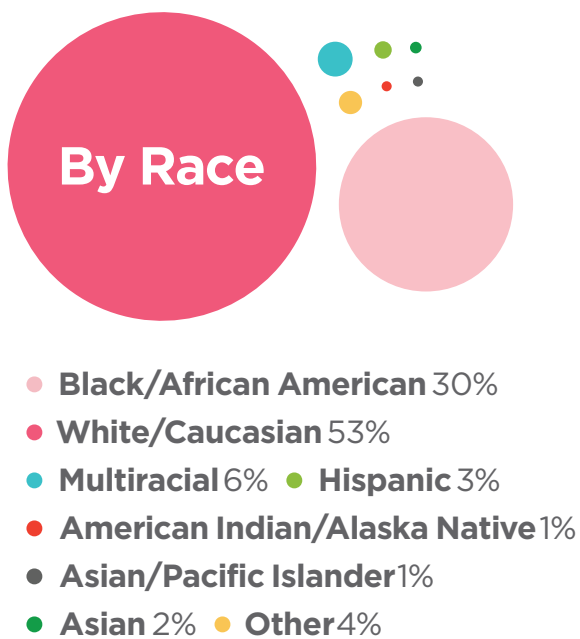
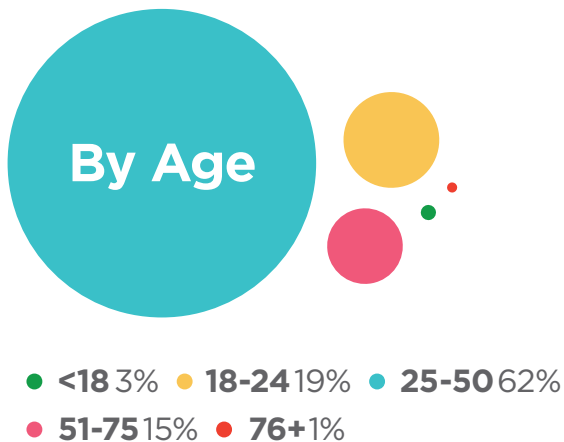
Inbound calls to the **Rape Crisis Hotline**

### Community Education:

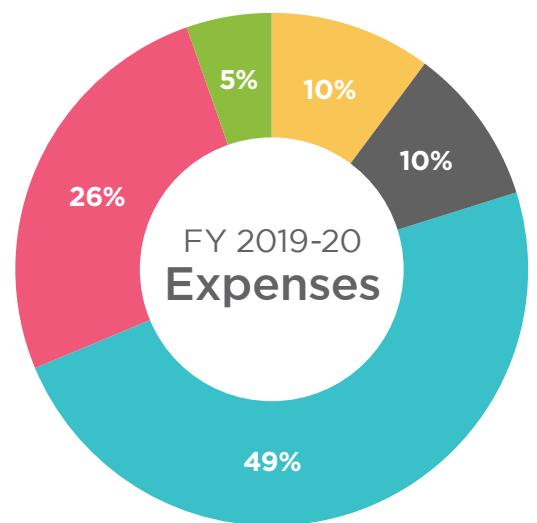
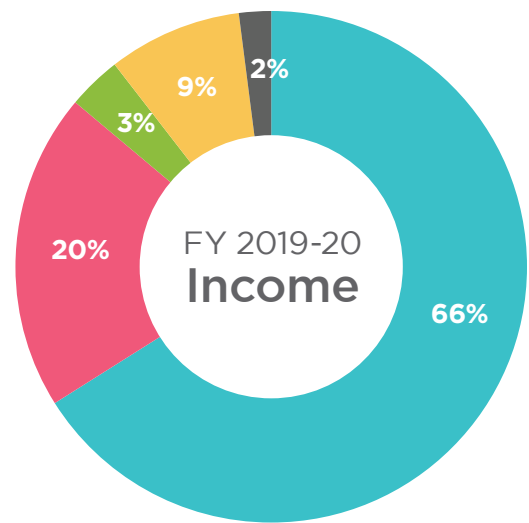


**157** Support provided to **Breast Cancer Survivors** & those in need of **Literacy Support**

# Clients Served



# Financial Snapshot



# Our Corporate Sponsors

**Delores Barr Weaver Fund** *Legacy*  
established 2012



## Board of Directors

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