



THE CONNECTION 2013 ANNUAL REPORT

We believe in second chances

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|---|-----------------------|---|---------------------------|
| 1 | Board of Directors | 5 | The Kätchen Coley Society |
| 2 | The Year in Review | 6 | The Connection Fund |
| 3 | Programs and Services | 7 | Financials |
| 4 | Stories of Courage | 8 | 2013 Supporters |

We believe in second chances

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OUR MISSION:

BUILDING SAFE, HEALTHY, CARING COMMUNITIES AND
INSPIRING PEOPLE TO REACH THEIR FULL POTENTIAL
AS PRODUCTIVE AND VALUED CITIZENS.

DEAR FRIENDS,

Kätchen Coley and Nan Flanner founded The Connection more than 40 years ago to give second chances in life to men struggling with substance use issues. In 2013, The Connection still offers these second chances to men, women and families who are struggling with the effects of substance use, mental illness, homelessness and community justice issues. Over the years, tens of thousands of people in Connecticut have transformed their lives with the help of The Connection and its nearly 600 professional staff members. Today, with many individuals facing stressful life challenges, our services are needed more than ever. What we do not only rebuilds the health and wellness of our clients and strengthens our communities, it also save taxpayer dollars by providing less costly alternatives to care.

The Connection began 2013 with a new logo and tagline: Community-based Services, Advocacy and Research for Connecticut. Though our mission remains the same, the new message speaks to our evolving work in offering new community-based treatment models; engagement with multiple constituencies who advocate on behalf of our clients; and, through The Connection's Institute for Innovative Practice®, research to ensure that we are well informed in our practices.

2013 was also a year of new beginnings for many of those in our care. During the year, The Connection was awarded the ASIST (Advanced Supervision and Intervention Support Team) grant by the Court Support Services Division to help ex-offenders diagnosed with mental illness in New Haven, as well as an expansion of the REACH (Re-Entry Assisted Community Housing) program in southeast Connecticut, supportive housing and case management services for individuals leaving prison. We welcomed and engaged client families and friends at our Family Nights and Circle of Support gatherings where they learned more about how they could assist their loved ones who struggle with life issues. We also opened The Connection Lodge, a rooming house facility in New Haven for adult men who are being served at our Counseling Centers. These are just some of the examples of the expanded integration of our many programs to better serve our clients. Our goal is to ensure the best treatment and most positive outcomes for our clients and the communities we serve.

Sadly, The Connection co-founder, Kätchen Coley, passed away in August 2013. But her passion and indomitable spirit touched all who knew her. Kätchen's legacy lives on at The Connection through The Kätchen Coley Society, a fund for new beginnings established to pay tribute to the work in which she passionately believed. Kätchen's vision will continue to inspire us.

We invite you to join us in our commitment to offer hope and second chances to our many neighbors who have faced life-altering difficulties. Please take the opportunity to read the stories of courage about Amanda, José, and Brandon—three great examples of individuals who have benefited from The Connection's services and have truly transformed their lives.

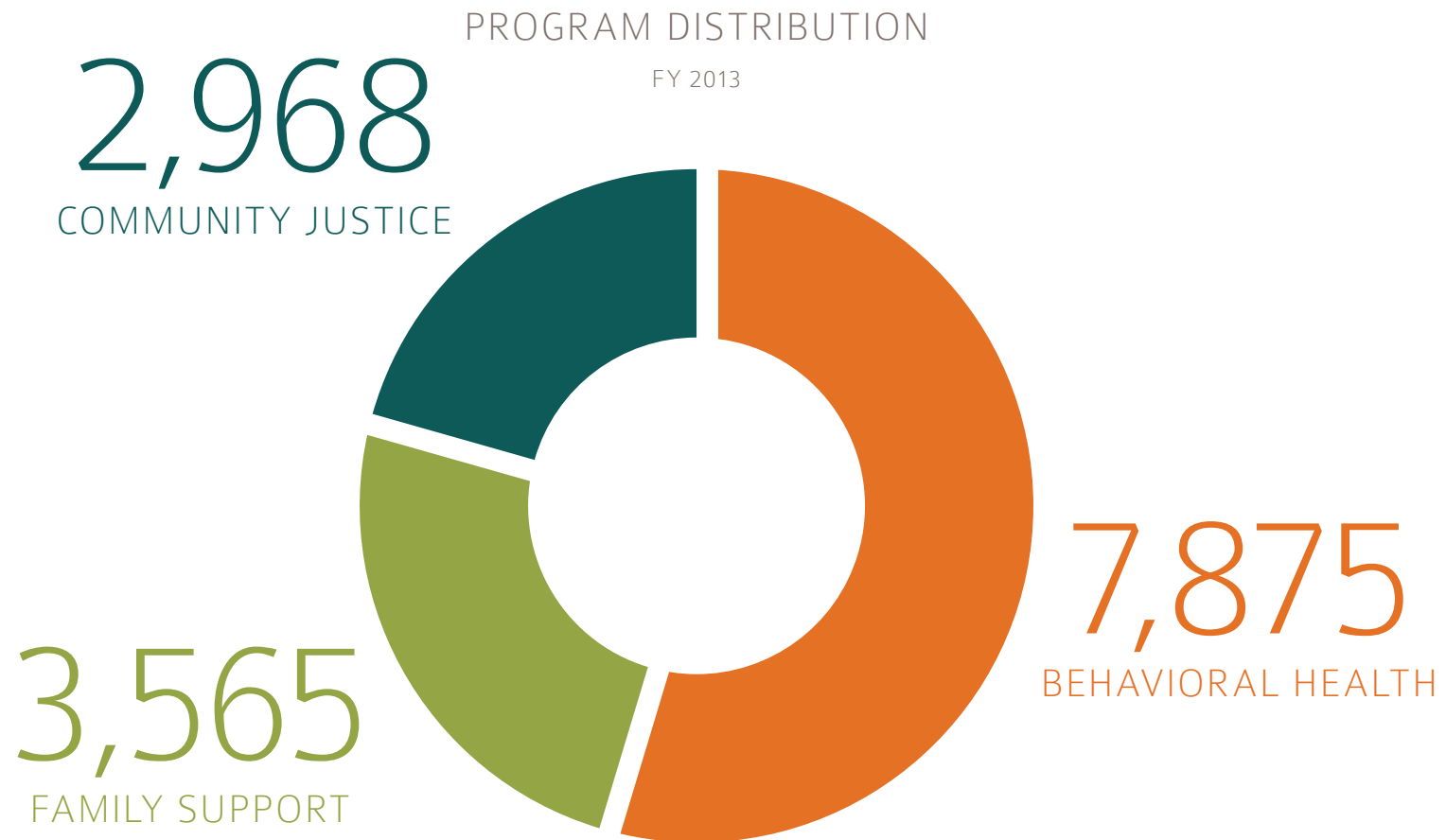
Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

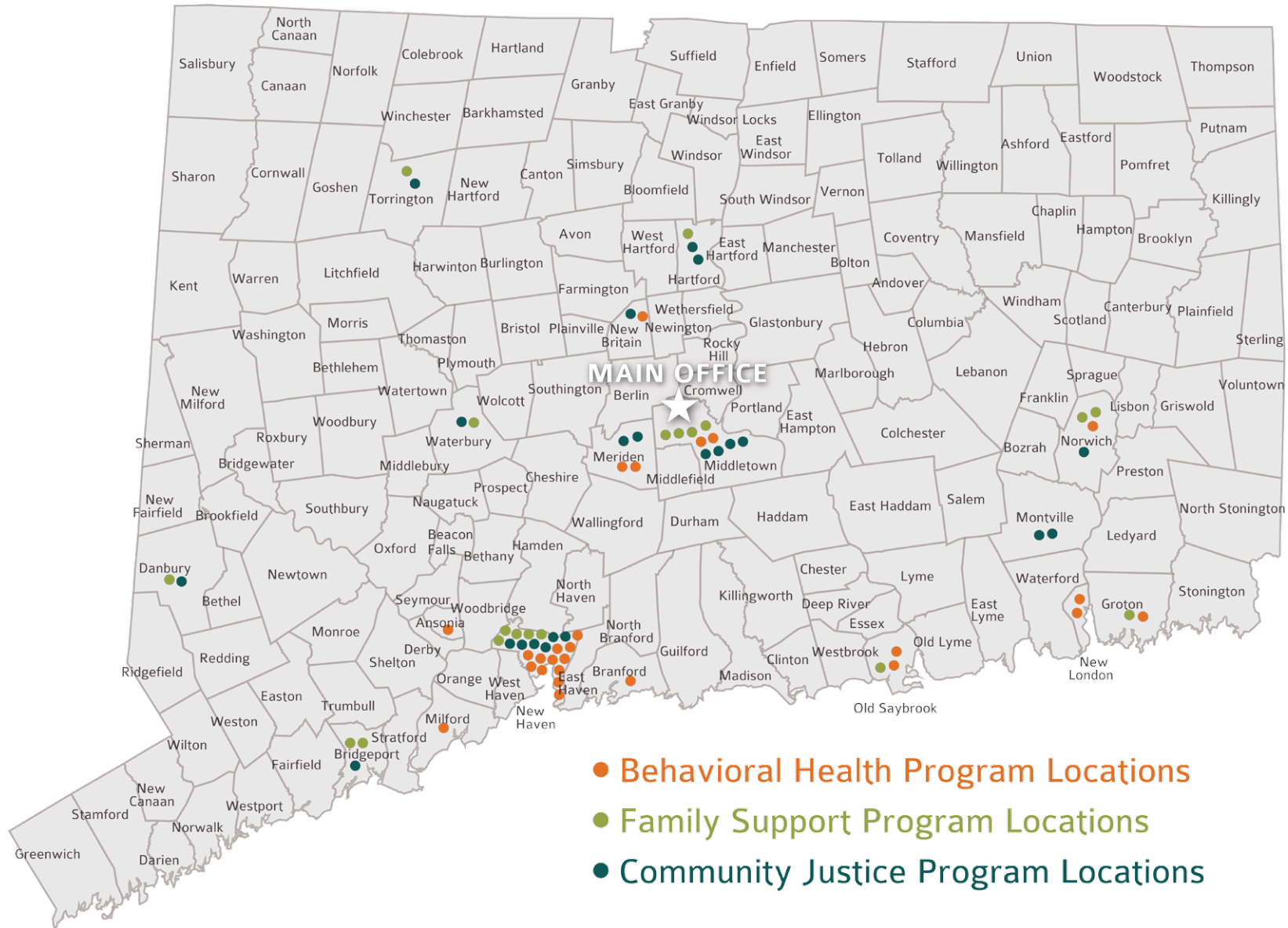
John LaRosa
CHAIR, THE CONNECTION, INC.
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Stephen Angle, Ph.D.
CHAIR, THE CONNECTION FUND, INC.
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

During the past year, The Connection's staff helped more than **14,000 individuals** throughout Connecticut struggling with the effects of substance use, mental illness, homelessness, and community justice issues. Through The Connection's Institute for Innovative Practice®, we are connecting research with practice to better serve our clients, raise awareness of societal issues, and promote sound public policy. The Connection helps many of our neighbors rebuild their lives: people like Amanda, José and Brandon.



WHERE WE SERVE: **CONNECTING WITH YOU ACROSS CONNECTICUT**





Amanda

Twenty-four-year-old Amanda C., a client in the Supportive Housing for Families® (SHF®) program, will always remember December 2013 as a month for celebration. During that period, Amanda completed the coursework needed to graduate from Western Connecticut State University with a bachelor's degree in paralegal studies and successfully graduated from the SHF® program. She plans to march with her class in May and hopes one day to attend law school.

Three years ago Amanda's prospects were very different. She had just given birth to a baby girl and was facing eviction. Because her family lived in another state, she had few local supports. But she reached out for help and expressed a willingness to work with any service provider in order to do what was best for herself and her daughter. She was referred to the SHF® program in December 2010 and began working with case manager Sandra Lopes.

"From the very beginning, she was always very pleasant and happy to see me," Lopes says. "Amanda has always been very motivated to succeed for herself and her daughter. Throughout the past three years, she's worked full time, was a full-time student, and maintained a meticulous home. Amanda is an extraordinary example of what Supportive Housing for Families® can accomplish."



José

José Omega grew up in Bridgeport, living with his grandparents, both of whom worked two jobs, supported him, and provided a positive, stable, and guiding influence in his life. After he graduated from

high school, José knew he needed to find a job. But he made a bad choice. “I started hanging out with wrong people—and started selling drugs,” he says. Eventually he started using.

In 2003, he was caught and given a 12-year sentence. He was released on parole after serving two-and-a-half years of his sentence.

“I became a hard worker in prison,” he says. “I worked in the kitchen for almost two years straight. I did a lot of serving—serving and dishwashing.”

That hard-work ethic, instilled by his grandparents and honed in prison, has served him well. He entered a prison-release program, and through a temporary agency found a job at a precision tooling company, where he stayed for more than three years. When he decided it was time to move on, they gave him a wonderful recommendation. José soon found a new job, quickly took a second, and he and his wife bought a home where they settled into a comfortable lifestyle.

But he began drinking too much...

In 2012, while José was still on parole, he got into an argument with his wife. He had been drinking. The heat of the argument frightened his wife, and she called the police. Because drinking is a violation of his parole, José was rearrested and sentenced to five months at the Hartford Correctional Center.

“During those five months I had plenty of time to think, and I decided, ‘I’m going to pick myself up again, but this time without drinking.’”

He was released to The Connection’s REACH program in New Britain and completed the program in less than four months. He has been clean and sober for nearly two years and is in the process of reconciliation with his wife. Because his work record had been so strong, he was able to go back to the two jobs he’d held before his arrest.

*Coming to The Connection helped.
I became an AA member in the program
and I’m still a member today. My goal
is to continue my life sober and
substance abuse free.*



Brandon

Brandon McMahon is a published poet, a singer-songwriter, and an entrepreneur with a website that sells his music and books, along with T-shirts, posters, and mugs emblazoned

with his own inspirational words about the meaning of life and death.

He was one of the first residents of The Connection's Park Street Inn, entering the program in 2005, when he was just 21, and graduating one year later. He is, possibly, Park Street Inn's most successful graduate. Brandon is now 29 years old and, in addition to his music, writing, and entrepreneurial efforts, is working full-time as a peer recovery counselor at a local mental health and addiction services agency.

Brandon has struggled with mental illness and addiction since he was a teenager and spent several years in juvenile and adult psychiatric institutions. When his mother, who struggled with mental illness and addictions died, his father sank into alcoholism and lost custody of Brandon two years later. Brandon, who was then 13, moved in with relatives and soon began using drugs. By 16 he was living on the streets or at the local homeless shelter. But he was bright and resourceful. While attending a residential school, he took the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test), did well, and enrolled at Bryant University in Rhode Island.

But Brandon's addictions took hold at Bryant and he found it difficult to concentrate. He dropped out after two years and spent another two years in psychiatric institutions and group homes, including the Park Street Inn (PSI).

When I first got to PSI, I was afraid I would end up back in the hospital,” he says. “I was afraid they would kick me out because I kept using drugs. But they kept giving me second chances because they believed in me and it ended up working well.

He also reconnected with family. “They were really glad I was off drugs and that I had my own apartment. They all came to celebrate when I published my first book of poetry,” he says.

Brandon began working as a peer specialist in 2010. He utilizes the skills acquired from years of writing and computer graphics to do a newsletter for his employer.

Brandon’s plans for the future include going back to school. He is thinking about becoming a veterinary technician or a Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor. And he wants to keep doing and promoting his art.



KÄTCHEN COLEY, CO-FOUNDER OF THE CONNECTION,
WAS A SOCIAL SERVICES PIONEER AND A TRUE
BELIEVER IN SECOND CHANCES FOR THOSE WHOSE LIVES
WERE NEGATIVELY IMPACTED BY POOR CHOICES
AND CIRCUMSTANCES.

Kätchen passed away after a short illness on August 19, 2013. The Kätchen Coley Society was created as a tribute to Kätchen's extraordinary vision and values in establishing The Connection in 1972 and for her more than 40 years of service on The Connection's Board of Directors. Kätchen (and her family) were delighted that The Society will serve as an enduring compass for the organization. Gifts to The Society honor her and further the work in which she passionately believed.

In the short term, gifts to the Kätchen Coley Society will be utilized for Connection client and family events, for special programmatic needs, and for The Connection/environmental improvement initiatives. In the long term, specific projects will be developed to help those The Connection serves that are not funded by our traditional revenue sources. These projects will seek all types and sizes of gifts, including annual, major outright, and planned gifts, such as bequests.

The Society will stand as a permanent tribute to Kätchen's values in founding the agency. It will be a powerful platform—utilizing the stories of client rehabilitation and redemption—from which to encourage others to support The Connection's mission.

For additional information about The Kätchen Coley Society, please contact
Beth Connor at 860 343.5500 x2125 (bconnor@theconnectioninc.org)
or Phil Rockwell at 860 343.5500 x1101 (prockwell@theconnectioninc.org).

TO MAKE A GIFT TO THE SOCIETY, PLEASE SEND A CHECK
MADE PAYABLE TO *THE CONNECTION FUND* AND MAIL TO:

THE CONNECTION FUND
C/O THE KÄTCHEN COLEY SOCIETY
100 ROSCOMMON DRIVE, SUITE 203
MIDDLETOWN, CT 06457

SINCE ITS CREATION IN 1989, THE CONNECTION FUND HAS DEVELOPED NUMEROUS EXAMPLES OF INNOVATIVE HOUSING AND ALLOWED THE CONNECTION TO OWN A RANGE OF FACILITIES, PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT.



The Fund strives to create safe, accessible, and attractive housing opportunities for those in our care. The Connection Fund staff partner with other Connecticut developers, owners, and non-profit agencies to provide affordable housing and innovative community development solutions while increasing the supply of supportive housing units. The Connection Fund has been recognized by the prestigious Maxwell Award of Excellence from the Fannie Mae Foundation and the Partnership to End Long Term Homelessness for its role in improving the quality of life for our neighbors while supporting statewide efforts to end homelessness.

EXAMPLES OF PROPERTIES OWNED BY THE CONNECTION FUND INCLUDE:

Beers Street, New Haven
Connection House, Middletown
Dwight House, New Haven
Groton PILOTS, Groton
Middlesex PILOTS, Middletown
Hallie House, Middletown
Howe Street, New Haven
Jefferson Commons, New London
Legion Woods, New Haven
Liberty Commons, Middletown
Mother's Retreat, Groton
Multi-Family Property Development, Statewide
Park Street Inn, New Haven
Park Street Residence, New Haven
Pendleton House, New Haven
Whalley Avenue, New Haven

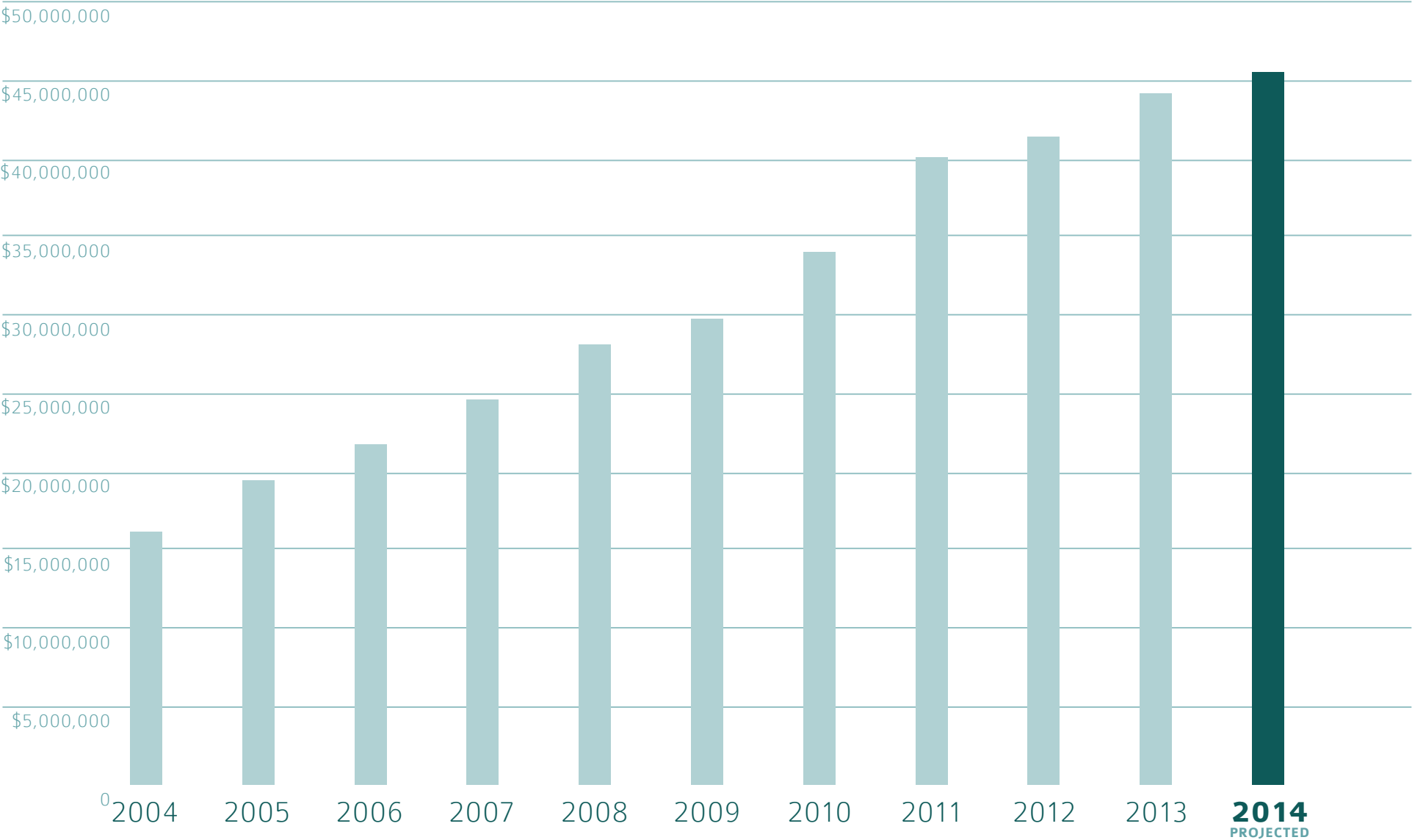
EXAMPLES OF PROPERTIES DEVELOPED BY THE CONNECTION FUND AND SOLD TO INDIVIDUAL HOME OWNERS:

Groton Home Ownership Program, Groton
Meriden Home Ownership Program, Meriden
Military Road, Middletown



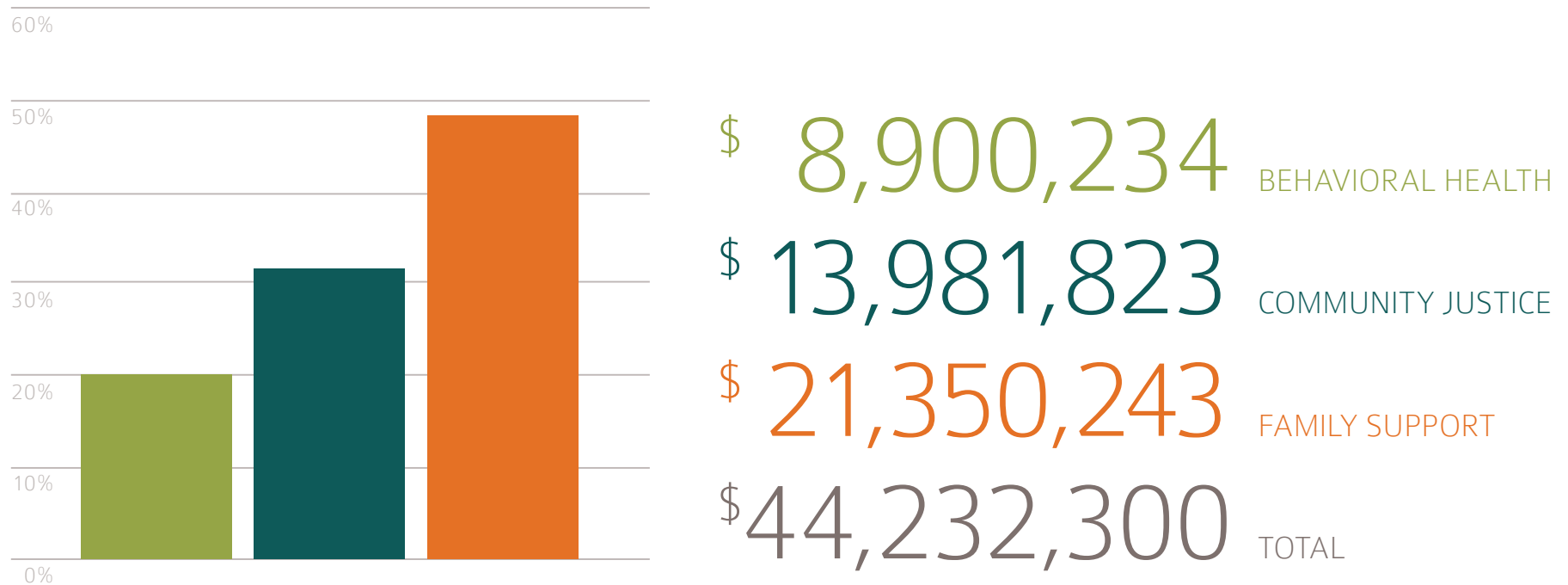
THE CONNECTION, INC. ANNUAL SUPPORT

FY 2004 TO FY 2014



TOTAL GRANT EXPENDITURES BY SERVICE AREA

FY 2013

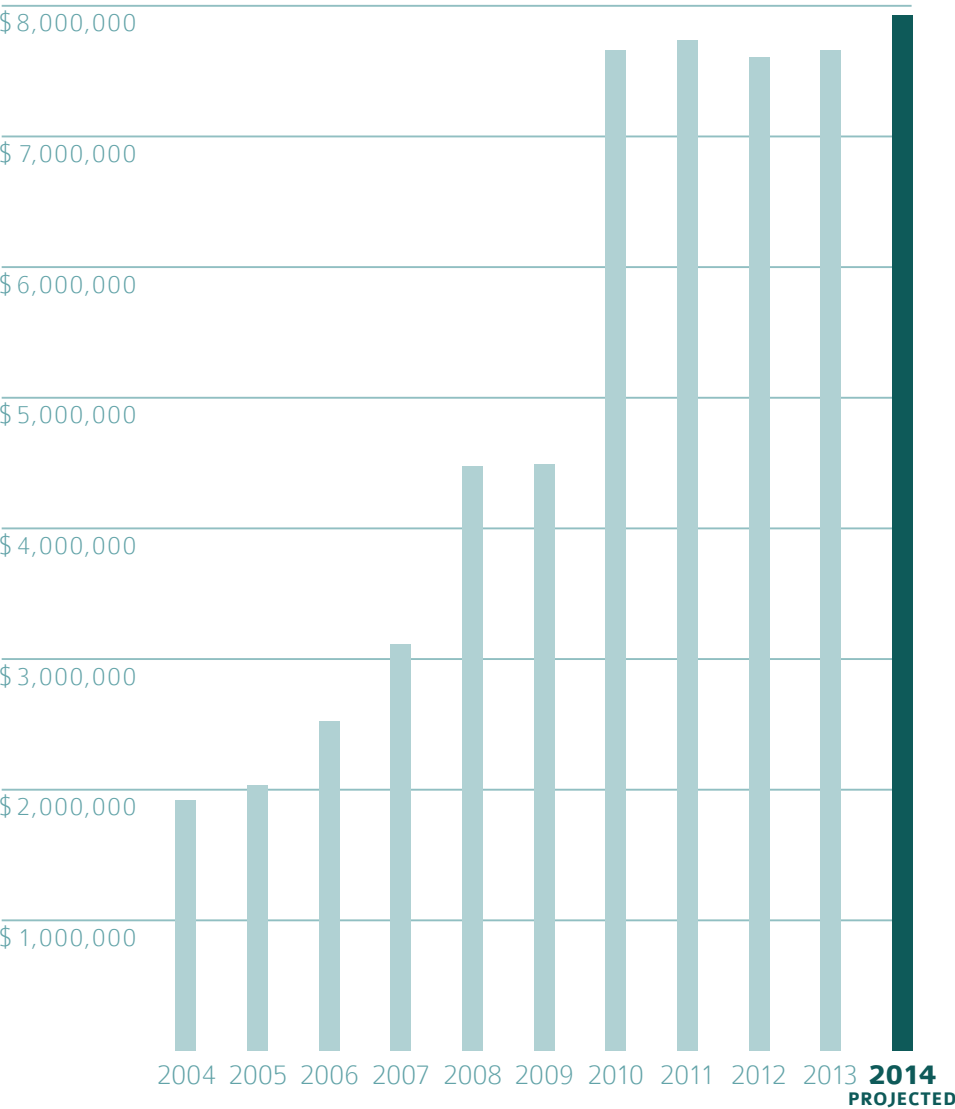


HOW WE USE THE DOLLARS



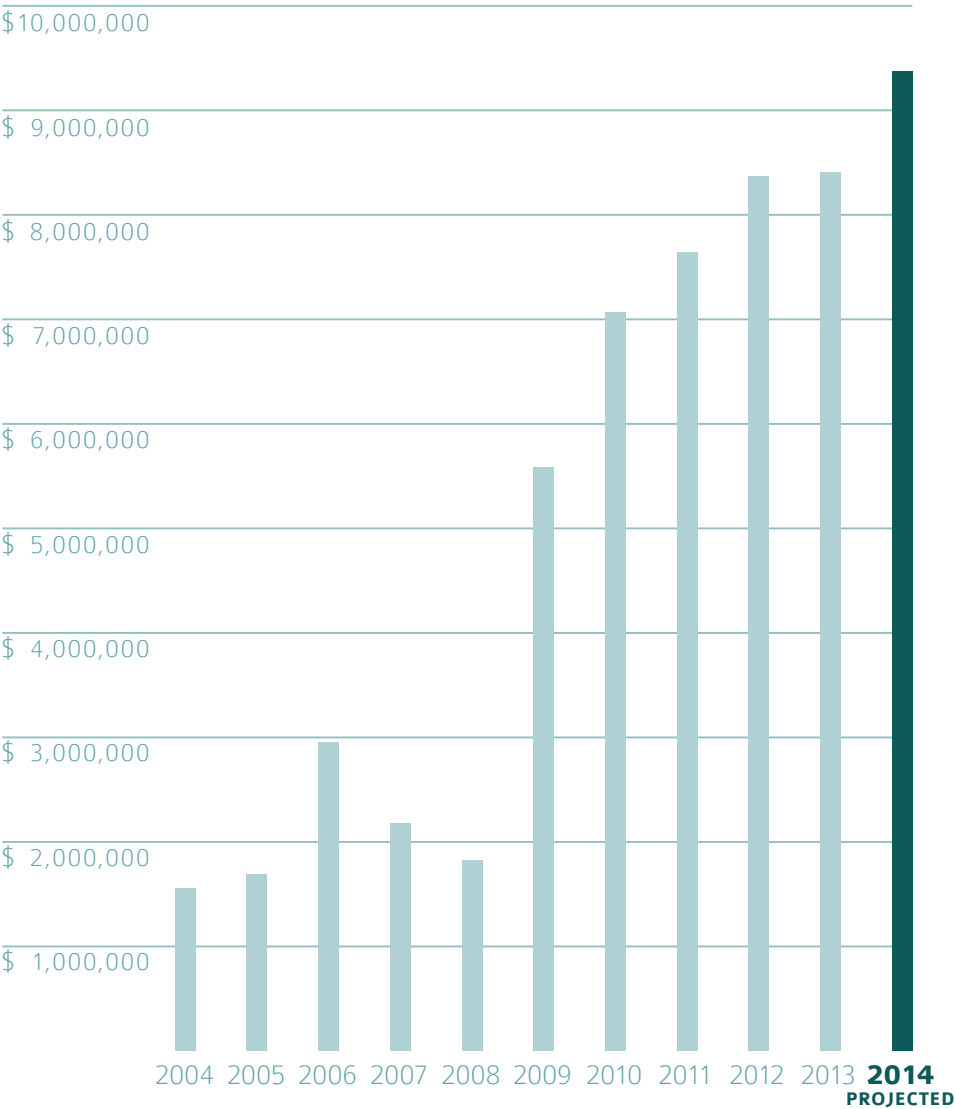
THE CONNECTION FUND, INC. NET ASSETS

FY 2004 TO FY 2014



THE CONNECTION FUND, INC. ANNUAL EXPENDITURES

2013–2014 DATA BASED UPON AGENCY BUDGET, FY 2004 TO FY 2014



THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING CARING INDIVIDUALS,
COMPANIES AND ORGANIZATIONS WHO SUPPORTED
THE CONNECTION'S MISSION BY MAKING A CONTRIBUTION
TO OUR AGENCY IN FISCAL YEAR 2013*.

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