



THE CONNECTION

Unlocking Recovery

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

50 YEARS OF UNLOCKING RECOVERY IN CONNECTICUT

A Message from

Lisa DeMatteis-Lepore,

Our President & CEO

In 2022 The Connection celebrated a remarkable 50 years of service to Connecticut residents. Since 1972, the agency has provided solutions for the complex needs our clients face — housing issues, addiction to drugs and alcohol, mental health challenges, and the difficulty of returning to the community after incarceration.

Our founders — **Kätchen Coley** and **Nancy Flanner** — believed in the need for a continuum of services coupled with the stability of safe housing to strengthen our communities. Even back in the early 1970s, these women knew that long term recovery requires on-going, multi-faceted supports. A safe space to call home is the KEY to recovery and success for us all. **Building safe and caring communities in Connecticut** is The Connection's primary goal.

50 YEARS OF UNLOCKING RECOVERY IN CONNECTICUT

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Our President & CEO

Today, **The Connection fills many gaps in public and private service offerings** by providing emergency shelter, residential and outpatient services, supportive and permanent housing, case management, behavioral health, and family support services to thousands of Connecticut individuals and families each year. Over the last 50 years, we have seen countless individualized success stories and are proud of our ability to assist some of the most vulnerable populations with opportunities to live a happy, well-deserved life. **We believe that everyone deserves a second chance** and have assisted our clients in breaking generational cycles of abuse and neglect to successfully UNLOCK their futures.

Our staff, past and present, work tirelessly, unconditionally, and are totally committed to The Connection's vital mission in Connecticut. I am proud to be part of such a dedicated group of caring professionals!

In celebration,

Lisa DeMatteis-Lepore

President and CEO

PARTNERING FOR SUCCESS

Dear Friends,

It is our privilege to serve as the Chairs of The Connection's Boards of Directors. The Boards are committed to effective governance to ensure that The Connection continues to carry out its vital mission of **building safe, healthy, caring communities and inspiring people to reach their full potential as productive and valued citizens**. In celebration of this 50th Anniversary year, we pay homage to the countless numbers of selfless individuals who have provided for and worked with those less fortunate, in need of assistance in rebuilding their lives. The Connection couldn't have survived and thrived without the many supporters from its state and federal agency partners, local municipalities, nonprofit partnership allies, supportive community members, staff, and board members. As they say, it takes a village.

Thank you all!

Despite these powerful associations, we continue to increase our reliance on community resources to expand our work and serve our mission. Please consider partnering and supporting The Connection by joining our team as a staff member, volunteer, or donor. The mission of The Connection is as critical and relevant today as it was 50 years ago.

PARTNERING FOR SUCCESS

Dear Friends,

We have worked collaboratively with The Connection's exceptional team. Its senior leadership and staff members are second to none. They are enormously talented, hard-working, and caring professionals. On behalf of its appreciative Boards of Directors we'd like to thank all who have contributed to The Connection's successful efforts towards unlocking recovery in Connecticut since 1972.

Sincerely,

Karen Buckley
Chair, The Connection, Inc.

Stephen Angle, Ph.D.
Chair, The Connection Fund, Inc.

1.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
& EXECUTIVE TEAM

2.

50 YEARS OF
UNLOCKING RECOVERY

3.

PROGRAMS, SERVICES,
& ORGANIZATIONS

4.

2022 SPECIAL EVENTS

5.

2022 SUPPORTERS





Board of Directors & Executive Team



The Connection, Inc.

Board of Directors

Karen Buckley
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Addo, Esq.
Vice Chair

John Ivimey
Treasurer

Christine Cappiello
Secretary

Raymond Bovich

Beverley Henry

John LaRosa

Daryl McGraw

Eileen O'Neil

The Connection Fund, Inc.

Board of Directors

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Robert Cohn, Esq.
Vice Chair

Gary Wallace
Treasurer

Elizabeth Bobrick
Secretary

Lawrence Davis

Joann Zamparo



Our Executive Team

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Chief Financial Officer

Beth Connor, MBA
Chief Business Development Officer

Kathy Savino, Psy.D
Chief Operating Officer

Jessica Smith, LMFT
Deputy Chief of Business Development

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Medical Director

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Vice President of Community Justice Programs

Alison Friar, LMFT
Vice President of Family Support Services

Susan Phillips, JD, Ph.D
Vice President of Quality, Information, and Risk



50 Years of Unlocking Recovery

1970s



During the 1970s, human services in Connecticut underwent significant changes and improvements. This period marked the beginning of a push towards deinstitutionalization, which saw a shift away from institutional care for people with disabilities, mental illnesses, and other conditions, and towards community-based services. The 1970s also saw the development of new programs to address issues such as substance abuse, homelessness, and domestic violence.



These programs aimed to provide more holistic, individualized support to people in need, and reflected a growing recognition of the importance of addressing the root causes of social problems. Overall, the 1970s were a time of significant progress in the field of human services in Connecticut as the state worked to develop more responsive and effective programs to support its residents.

The Connection was part of this forward progress when it was officially incorporated on February 28, 1972. Later that same year, The Connection House opened its doors with a \$36,372 grant from the Connecticut Planning Committee on Criminal Administration. Our founders, Kätchen Coley and Nancy Flanner, believed in the need for a continuum of services coupled with the stability of safe housing to strengthen our communities. Three more programs focused on substance abuse recovery and mental healthcare opened over the course of the decade.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT:

Connection House

Today, Connection House is part of the North End community of Middletown. It is a residential work release program that provides educational and addiction services to adult males with substance use issues who are preparing to exit the criminal justice system.

The three main purposes of the program are to maintain healthy recovery, secure employment, and become productive citizens.

1980s



In the 1980s, human services in Connecticut faced significant challenges as the state and the country experienced a major economic downturn. Funding for social programs was reduced, and many organizations were forced to scale back their services or close their doors altogether. The state government continued to focus on deinstitutionalization and the development of community-based services.

The 1980s also saw significant successes in the field of human services in Connecticut, such as the establishment of the Department of Children and Families to provide more comprehensive support for children and families in need.



STEPHANIE DONOVAN

Program Director, The Center for the Treatment of Problem Sexual Behavior

The Connection opened eight programs around the state over the course of the 1980s. Seven of these programs had a community justice focus, part of the state's implementation of new programs aimed at reducing recidivism and addressing the underlying causes of criminal behavior. For example, the Connecticut Parole Board began to prioritize the use of community-based supervision and treatment programs for nonviolent offenders rather than relying solely on incarceration. The Center for the Treatment of Problem Sexual Behavior (CTPSB) was one such program. Today, CTPSB has one of the lowest recidivism rates in the country.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT:

Cochegan House

Cochegan House is a residential work release program providing adult males under the supervision of DOC individualized treatment services, job preparation, and substance and mental health education to facilitate their successful re-entry into their communities. For part of the pandemic, Cochegan House was used as a facility for DOC residents to recover from COVID with access to nursing care. In line with our history of innovating to fill gaps in service, the quick action of the Community Justice team to temporarily repurpose this program provided keys to recovery from COVID.

“I am writing to express our sincere appreciation to The Connection for making Cochegan House available during the COVID-19 Pandemic. It was a lifeline to house residents who tested positive for the Coronavirus. We applaud your efforts and support!”

*Executive Committee
Community Justice Division, The Alliance*



1990s



During the 1990s, social services in Connecticut underwent significant changes and reforms. The state government increased funding for social welfare programs, such as Medicaid and food assistance, and implemented policies aimed at reducing poverty and providing support for families in need.

The Connection opened innovative programs designed to support the whole family. The agency opened its first substance abuse treatment programs designed for mothers caring for children while in treatment during this decade. There were no gender responsive substance abuse treatment programs like it in the state when Hallie House first opened its doors to welcome moms and their babies in a home-like environment. Supportive Housing for Families, now one of the largest programs at the agency, was opened in 1995.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT:

Supportive Housing for Families

Supportive Housing for Families is a partnership with the Department of Children and Families that provides intensive case management, vocational supports, and temporary housing subsidies to families that are homeless or at risk of homelessness to support the achievement of family reunification and/or prevent the removal of children from their families.

In the last decade alone (FY12–FY22), The Connection has served 3,420 families and 13,748 children through this program. 90% of the families referred to the program with the goal of keeping their families intact were successful. The Connection also developed the infrastructure and expertise to administer a network of providers implementing the program around the state. The partner providers account for 36% of the program's capacity as reported above.



Patricia

Supportive Housing for Families program

2000s



Human services in Connecticut during the early 2000s were a crucial aspect of the state's social and economic landscape. Connecticut's human services sector was characterized by a strong commitment to community-based care, with an emphasis on providing access to quality healthcare, education, and housing services. Additionally, the state's human services agencies were focused on promoting social and economic equity, with an emphasis on reducing poverty, homelessness, and food insecurity.





The Connection mirrored this focus by opening programs focused on providing housing after incarceration such as Sierra Center, which opened in 2001, and the Re-Entry Assisted Community Housing (REACH) program, which opened in 2004. The REACH program has served more than 3,200 people since its inception.

The state emphasis on ending homelessness also manifested as an expansion of supportive housing programs at The Connection. The agency opened what is now the Ross and Ondusky Centers for Supportive Housing in 2006. In 2008, West Village opened its doors, to provide housing, case management, and recovery-oriented rehabilitation services to 40 individuals who are homeless or at risk for becoming homeless, and who have a diagnosis of mental illness, substance abuse or co-occurring disorders.

Remembering ALSO-Cornerstone

The agency capped off the first decade of the Millennium by finalizing the merger with ALSO-Cornerstone. ALSO-Cornerstone was committed to helping vulnerable individuals and families in the New Haven area overcome homelessness and poverty by providing the resources and support needed to achieve stability and self-sufficiency.

The merger between the two organizations resulted in the agency's continued growth in the areas of behavioral health, supportive housing, and community justice in New Haven and beyond.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT:

West Village

West Village provides individualized support services and life skill-building for adults with histories of chronic homelessness and mental health and/or substance use disorders. The program goal is to help people maintain their housing and improve their day-to-day functioning. Not all residents at West Village receive services from The Connection, but our program staff is an important part of the community. Other residents are able to access assistance from our staff for a variety of tasks including resume assistance, job searches, and connections to community services. Our staff is working hard to rebuild community within programs like West Village after the isolation of COVID. The common spaces at West Village have recently been updated and they look beautiful!

“What we are trying to do post COVID is get the tenants involved in community meetings in the building, participate in activities, have conversation over coffee just to inquire about what their needs are at this point in their lives.”

Deborah DeJarnette, Program Director West Village, Ross and Ondusky Centers

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT:

West Village



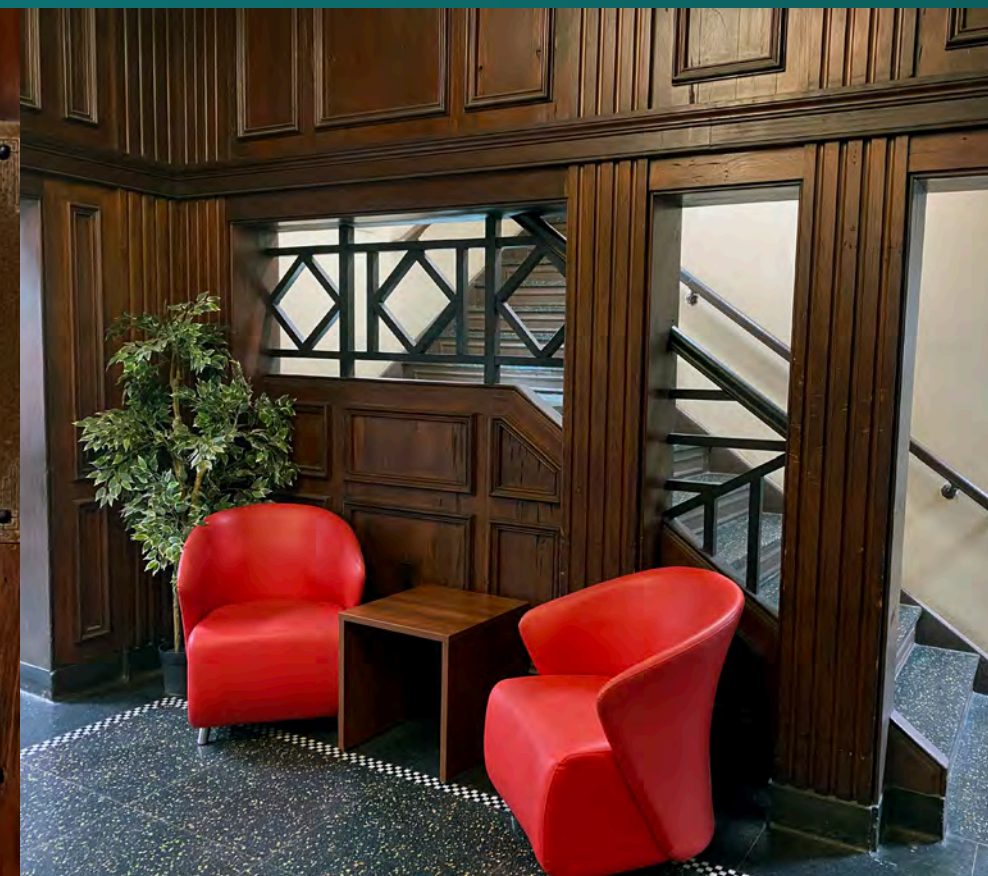
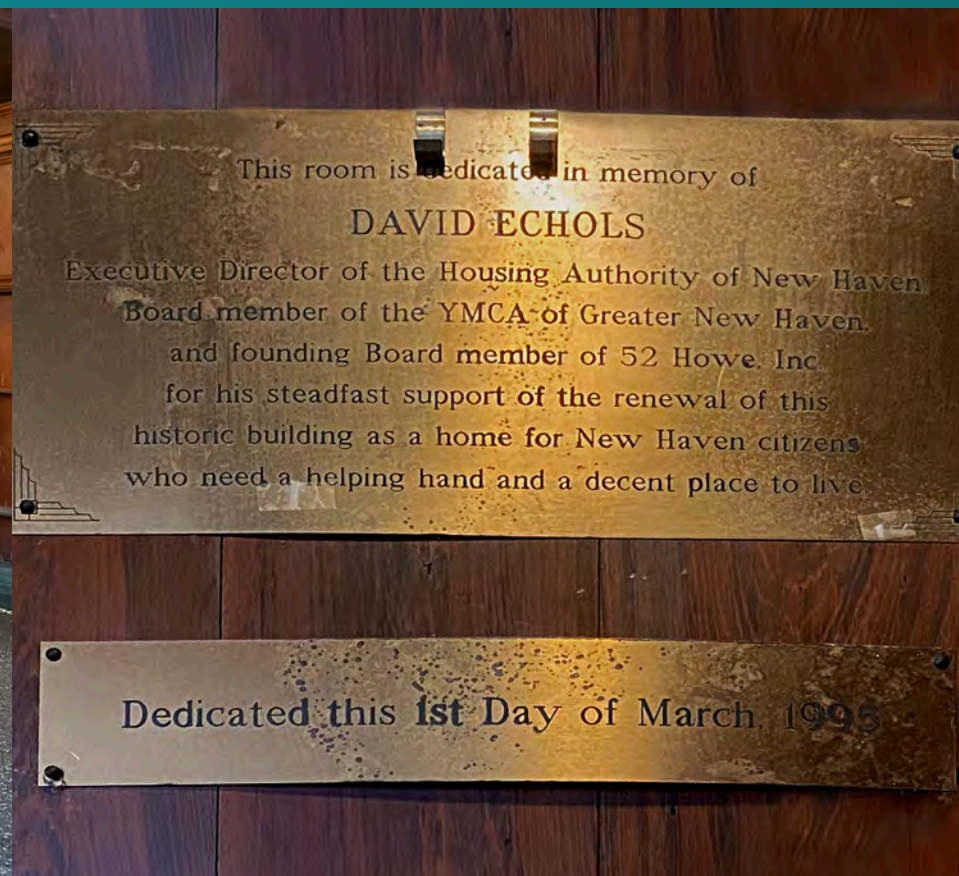
PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT:

West Village



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT:

West Village



2010s–Today



Between 2010 and 2022, Connecticut implemented various policies and initiatives aimed at reducing poverty, increasing access to healthcare, and improving behavioral health outcomes. Programs around the state for mental health and addiction services received increased attention and funding.

The state also prioritized addressing the opioid epidemic through measures such as increasing access to naloxone, expanding treatment options, and implementing prescription monitoring programs. Despite these efforts, however, Connecticut still faces significant challenges related to poverty, homelessness, and healthcare access. Human services organizations like The Connection continue to work towards improving the well-being of all residents.





The Connection has continued to respond in innovative ways to solve these complex challenges around our state by opening programs to address the needs of our most vulnerable citizens including programming specifically designed to address homelessness in young adults aged 18–24, who require specialized care when they find themselves homeless or in unstable housing situations. These programs include the Start Program for Young Adults, Rapid Rehousing for Emerging Adults program, Meriden Middlesex, Wallingford Young Adult Crisis, and Former Foster Care Youth Services. This menu of programming provides a wide variety of support tailored to young adults including case management, financial assistance, life skills education and short term supportive housing. The agency also opened several supportive housing programs such as Saint Mary Place and Jefferson Commons.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT:

Saint Mary Place

The program, which opened in 2021, is an adaptive reuse development of a former New London school. The building includes set aside units for formerly homeless people along with residents of the community who pay market value for their apartments. Program staff provide individualized support services and life skill-building for adults with histories of chronic homelessness and mental health and/or substance use disorders. The program goal is to help people maintain their housing and improve their day-to-day functioning.

Saint Mary Place received a generous gift of complete furnishings for one of the new set aside units from the Bob's Discount Furniture Charitable Foundation. This included living room furniture, a dining set, and a bed and dresser for the one bedroom unit. We were delighted to be able to provide such a wonderful space for a new resident to enjoy.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT:

Saint Mary Place



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Saint Mary Place



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Saint Mary Place



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Saint Mary Place



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT:

Saint Mary Place



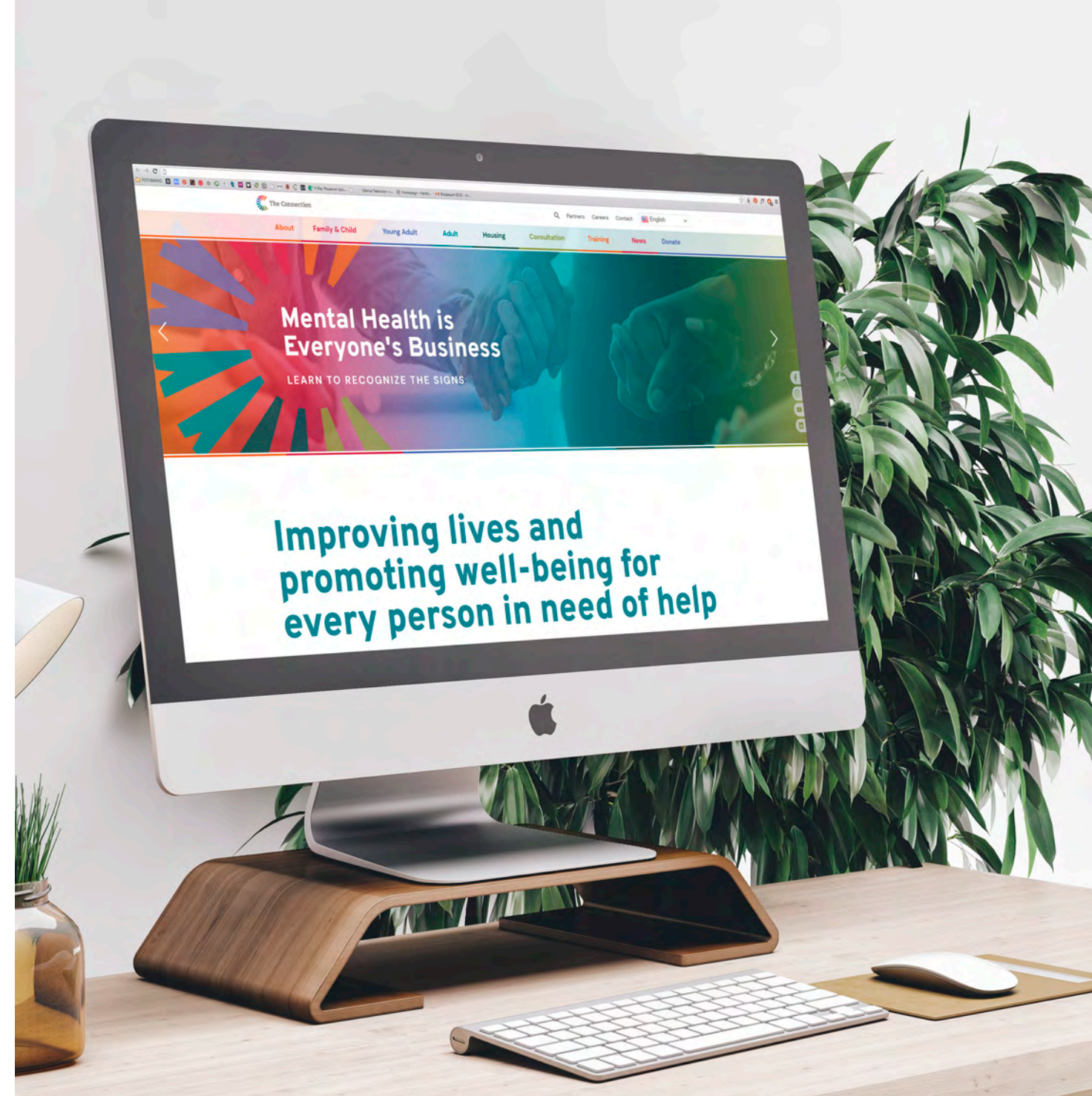


Programs, Services, & Organizations

Total Unique Count of Clients Across Agency:

7,711

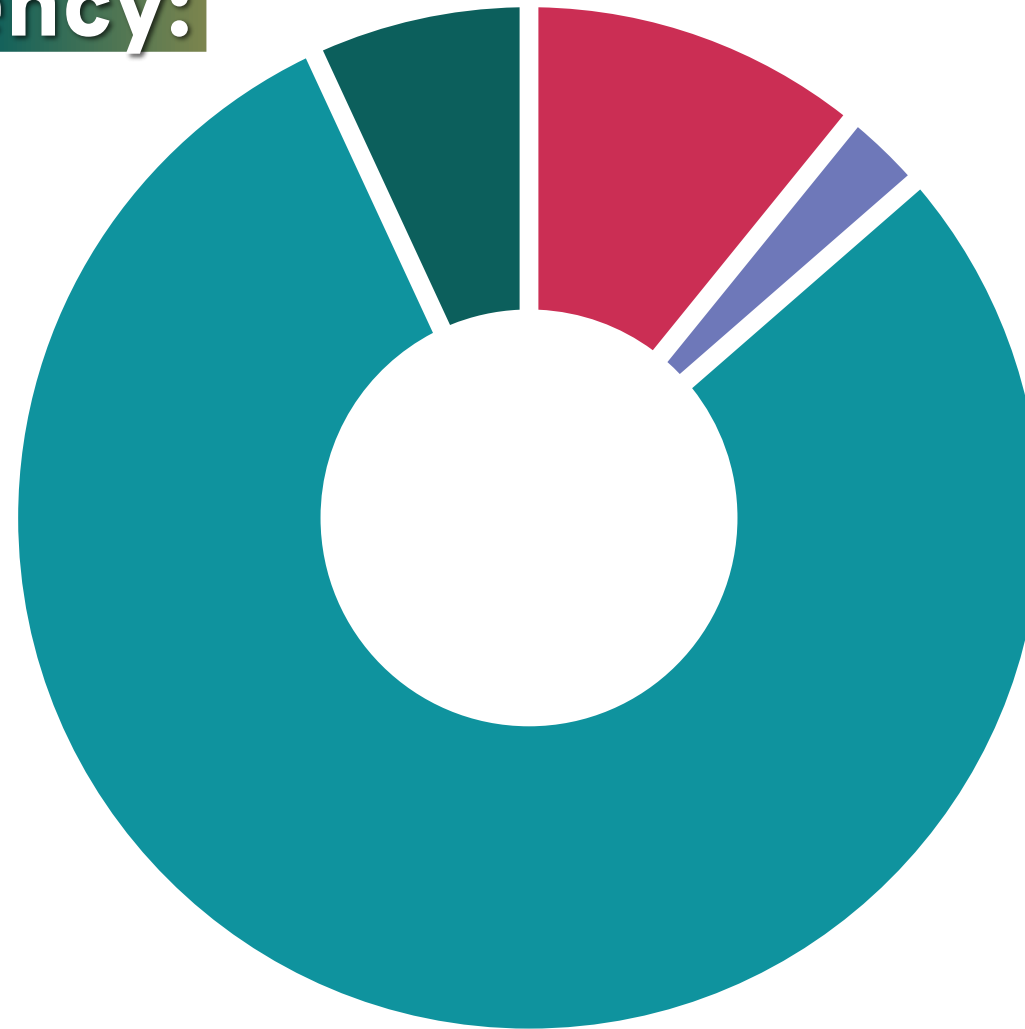
The Connection launched a **new version of its website** in 2022, featuring a new structure to communicate its various programs and services in a more consumer friendly and accessible manner. The financials and census data for FY2022 are presented in alignment with the new categories.



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7,711

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FAMILY & CHILD:
836

YOUNG ADULT:
212

ADULT:
6,130

HOUSING:
533



Total Unique Organizations Served by The Institute for Innovative Practice:

240

The Institute for Innovative Practice is a social enterprise that is part of The Connection. A social enterprise aims to address social problems or improve communities through their operations. It is like a regular business in that it provides goods or services, but it also has a social goal. The Connection's Institute provides **professional development**, **training**, and **consultation** opportunities to individuals and teams in all types of businesses and organizations. The goal of The Institute aligns with The Connection's mission to inspire people to reach their full potential. The Institute is generating its own income that is invested back into The Connection's programs.



Total Unique Individual
Participants Served
by The Institute
for Innovative Practice:

1,311

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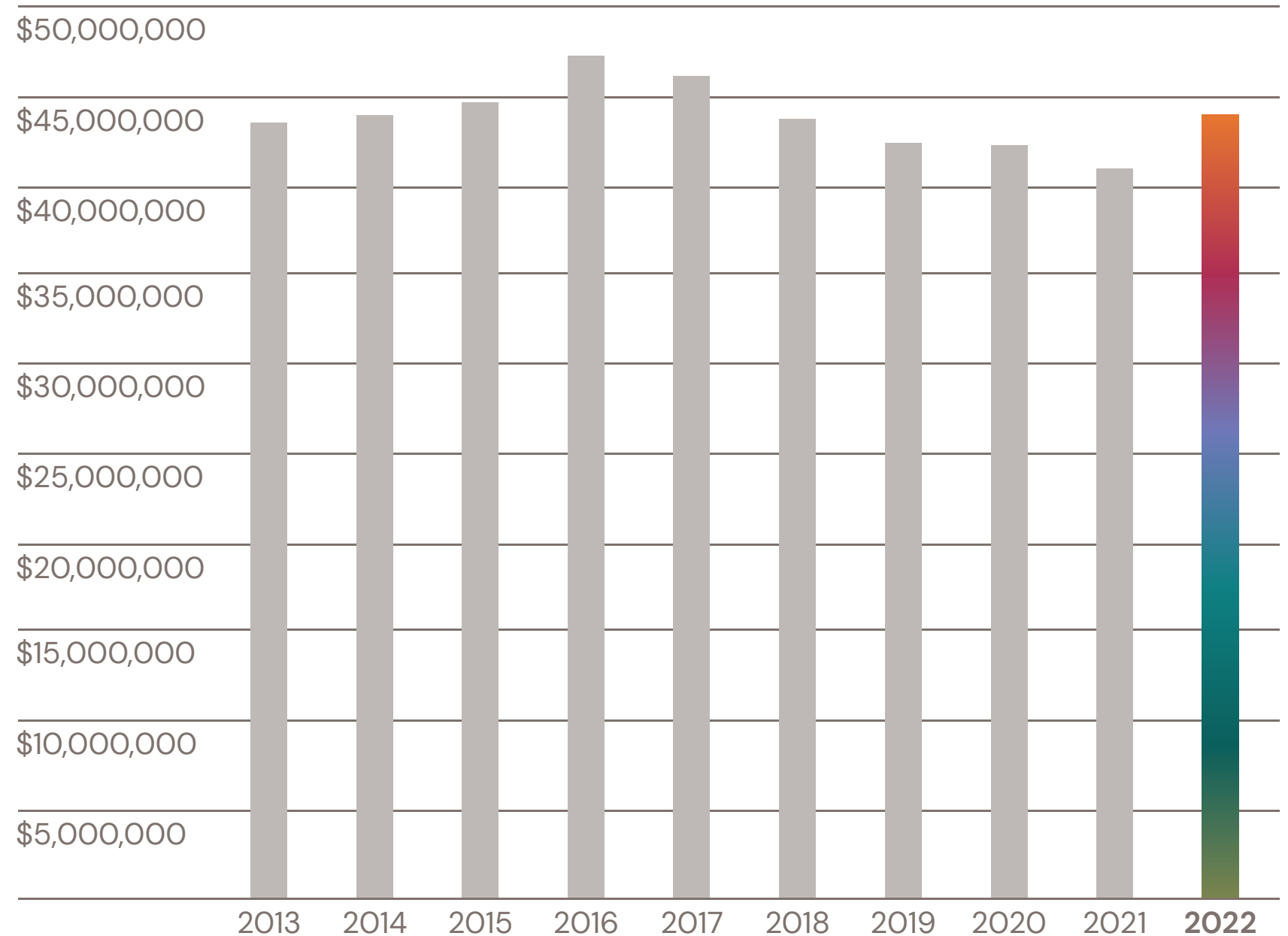
The Connection, Inc.

Annual Support

*2022 Data Based Upon
Agency Budget,
FY 2013 to FY 2022*

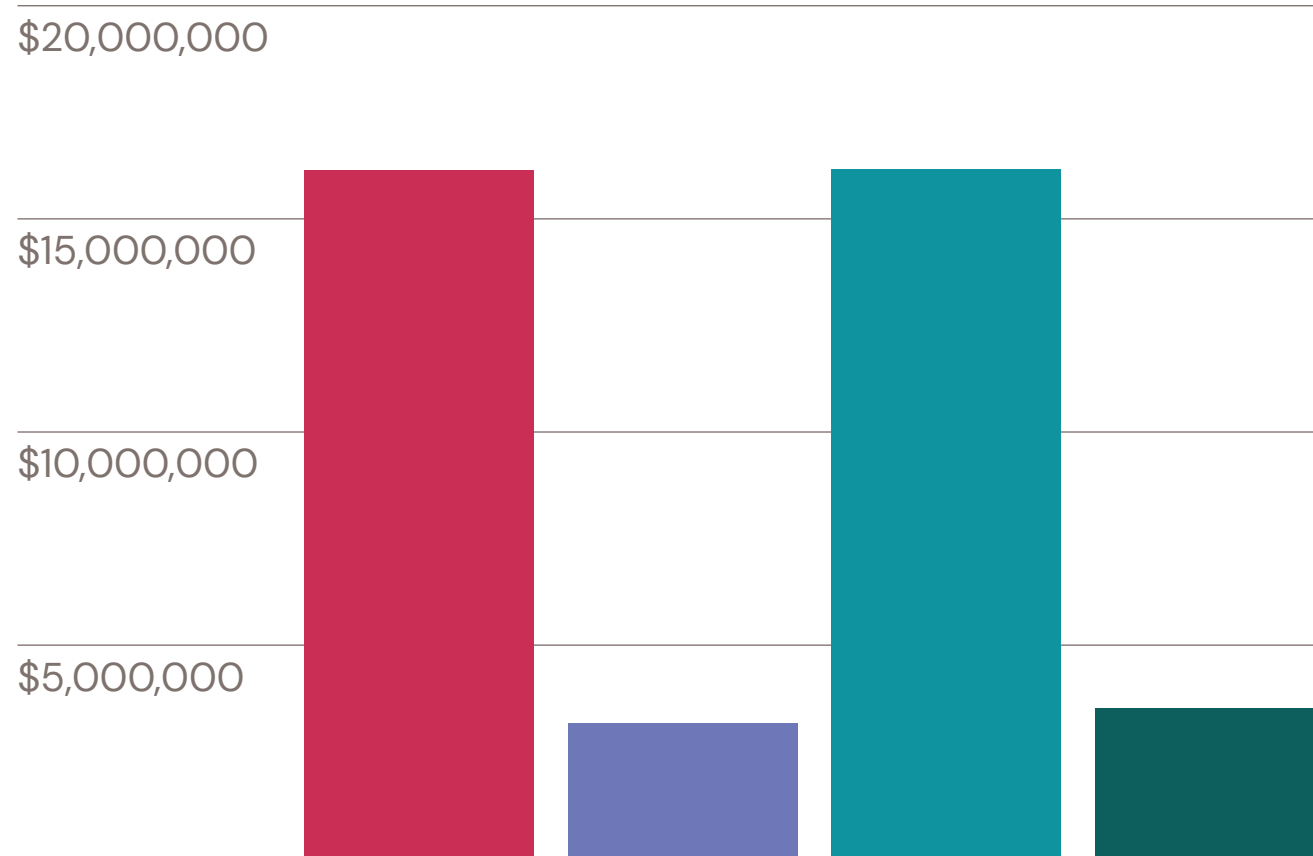
*The FY2022 audited
financials are not available
at the time of this publication.*

*This report will be updated
when the audit is complete.*



The Connection, Inc.

2022 Financials by Category



FAMILY & CHILD SERVICES \$ 16,134,236

YOUNG ADULT \$ 3,176,916

ADULT \$ 21,149,835

HOUSING \$ 3,504,487

TOTAL \$ 43,965,474

The Connection

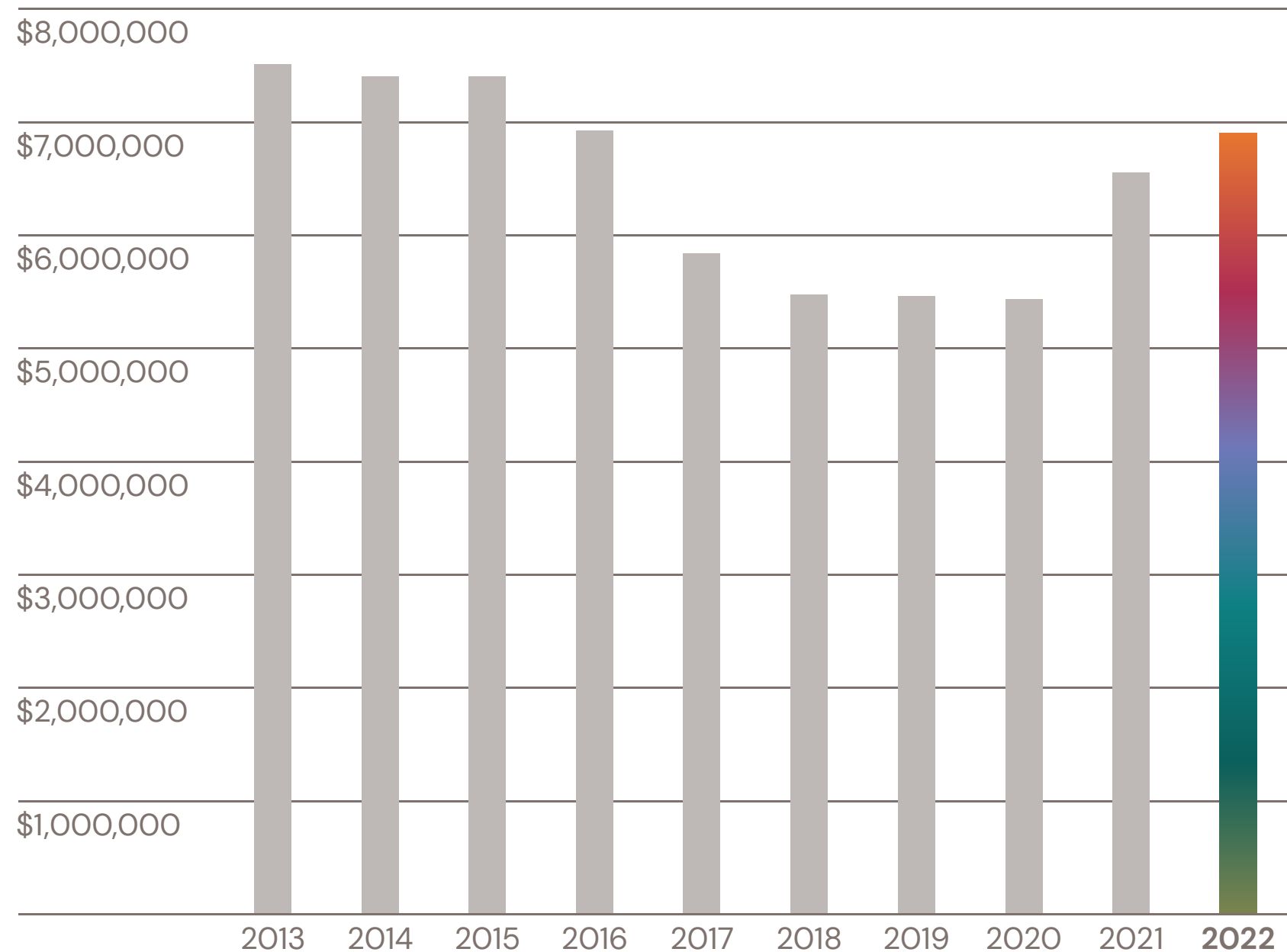
Fund, Inc.

Net Assets

FY 2013 to FY 2022

*The FY2022 audited
financials are not available
at the time of this publication.*

*This report will be updated
when the audit is complete.*





2022

Special Events

Ride for Recovery

The Connection hosted the Ride for Recovery, a scenic Connecticut route beginning at the **Hartford Harley-Davidson**, winding through Glastonbury, East Hampton, and ending in Middletown in **May of 2022**.



Ride for Recovery


While recovery often means recovery from substance abuse, that is not always the case. The wide variety of programs at The Connection help people recover from the trauma of experiencing difficult circumstances like homelessness, family separation, incarceration, and mental illness.







Community Links Golf Tournament



We appreciate our generous sponsors, participants, and donors who contributed to The Connection's 5th Annual **Community Links Golf Tournament**.

Our guests enjoyed golfing and socializing at the beautiful Great River Golf Club in Milford, CT, and having a chance to learn more about the vital work that The Connection does for the Connecticut community.







50th Anniversary Event




Staff, community partners, and former clients all came together to celebrate The Connection's **50 Year Anniversary** at the beautiful Wadsworth Mansion in September of 2022. The event was hosted by **Natasha Lubczenko** from WTNH and the evening included a very special pair of speakers.

Velada Chaires was a resident at Hallie House when her daughter A'Kala was born. Velada and A'Kala shared their story and A'Kala read a poem from her recently published book, "Diary Of...".

CEO Lisa DeMatteis-Lepore also recognized the work of two of The Connection's outstanding Board Members. These two individuals have dedicated many years to The Connection achieving its mission.



50th Anniversary Event



John LaRosa joined The Connection, Inc. Board of Directors in 1976—46 years ago! Before his retirement in 2003, John served as the Youth Service Bureau Director for the city of Middletown where he created opportunities for the city's youth. John was also an adjunct professor at Middlesex Community College. John is a past Chair of the Board and has been a guiding light overseeing the growth and development of the agency. John, thank you for years of support, direction, and encouragement.

Stephen Angle has served on The Connection Fund, Inc. Board of Directors for 20 years. Currently, he is Chair of the Board. Steve is the Director for the Mansfield Freeman Center for East Asian Studies at Wesleyan, where he has taught since 1994. Stephen has had several books published and has spoken extensively on Chinese philosophy, comparative philosophy, human rights, and ethics. Steve is and has been an invaluable asset to The Connection. Steve, thank you for your unwavering support and guidance over these many years.







2022

Supporters



Thank you to our
generous donors
who supported
The Connection's
work during the
period of 7/1/2021
through 6/30/2022.

Gloster B. Aaron, Jr.
and Katherine Allocco

Karen Ablondi

Stephen Abshire

Joe Acquarulo

TJ and Taylor Aitken

Drew Andrews

Elizabeth Angle

Stephen Angle
and Debra Guss

Antiques &
Home Furnishings

Anonymous

Artisan Restaurant

Assured Partners

Avangrid

Jeffrey Baran

Robb Barnum

Ben & Jerry's, CT

Harry Black

Elizabeth Bobrick and
Andrew Szegedy-Maszak

John Boccalatte and
Michele Salonia

John Brennan

Michael Brett

Stephan Brodeur

Larry Brogan

Karen-Marie Buckley

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Capitol Hill Group

Capitol View Apartments

Christine Cappiello

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CFA Society, Hartford

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Middletown

City of Middletown

City Missionary
Association of New Haven

Jennifer Collingwood

Comcast

Community Foundation
for Greater New Haven

Community Foundation
of Middlesex County

Community Foundation
of Middlesex County
Mountain Laurel Fund

Connecticut Court
Support Services Division

Connecticut Department
of Children and Families

Connecticut Department
of Correction

Connecticut Department
of Mental Health and
Addiction Services

Connecticut Department
of Social Services

Connecticut
Lighting Center

Conning

Beth Connor

Timothy Connor

Michael Criscuolo

CT Waverunners

Dawn's Pizzazz Charity
Fund

Allison DeBlasio

Defenders Motorcycle Club

Iris DeFilippo

Delamar

Lisa DeMatteis-Lepore

Tony DePrata

Terri DiPietro

Coleen Duffy

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Felicity Eles
Enfield Builders, Inc.
Donald Ensero
Eversource Energy
Farrell, Geenty, Sheeley,
Boccalatte & Guarino
GN Construction
Grady Faulkner
First Congregational
Church, Portland
Cicily Ford
Chris Fredericks
Freedom Mortgage
Catherine Freeman
Morgan Glasebrook
Goody's Hardware
Scott Gordon Oliver
Aaron Grade

Francine Grandmaison
Chris Greaney
Great River Golf Club
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Sadie Gross
Susan Halpin
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Hartford Yard Goats
Harvard Pilgrim
Healthcare
Marcy Hollendar
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Andrew LaRocque
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Erik Lecco
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Middlefield
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Middlesex United Way
Middletown Elks
Lodge #771
Middletown Police Union
Michael Miller
Robert Montstream

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Mutual of America
Betty Naylor
NFP
Gina O'Connell
Gordon Oliver
Orthopedic Associates
of Middletown
Otis
Paycom
People's United
Insurance Agency
Mark Perrotti
Joe Petronella
Lisa Piker
Powerhouse Motorsports
Priam Vineyards
Quest Diagnostics
Reid and Riege, P.C.

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Church
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Shoreline Recovery

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Stephen Smith
South Dakota Buffalo
Motorcycle Club
Staff Management
Association of Southern
New England
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Church, Fairfield
Jim Stark
Patricia A. Stephenson
Gordon
Suburban Commercial
Rick Taff
The Connecticut
Women's Consortium
The Lily House
The Pfizer Foundation

Town Fair Tire Foundation
Town of Cromwell
Town of Durham
Town of East Haddam
Town of Essex
Town of Killingworth
Town of Middlefield
Town of Portland
Town of Westbrook
Trio Properties
Trumpf Inc.
Anna Trusky
UIL Holdings Corp
United Methodist
Church of Clinton
United States
Department of Health
and Human Services

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United States Department
of Housing and Urban
Development

United States Department
of Justice Federal Bureau
of Prisons

United States Department
of Substance Abuse and
Mental Health Services
Administration

United Way Emergency
Food & Shelter Program

United Way of Greater
New Haven

United Way of Middlesex
County

Jeff Velleca

Taras Vorona

Michael Varone

Mone Washington

Wesleyan Food
Rescue Group

Steve Westerberg

Whalley Computer
Associates

WHCN-The Whale

Whittlesey

Joy Wildman

Linda & Charlie Worden

Workers' Compensation
Trust

Nicholas Yanouzas

Joann Zamparo

Zion Baptist Church



TheConnectionInc.org