On behalf of Rockbridge Area Community Services and our Board of Directors we are pleased to be able to provide this Annual Report for you, our community, with sincere thanks. Your consistent, strong support makes it possible for us to do the hard work you expect of us. In this annual report you will see illustrations and examples of all the services we provide but we want to start by sharing with you our Vision Statement:

To help prevent and treat mental illness, developmental disabilities, substance use, and enhance the quality of life of individuals who experience these conditions.

To achieve our Vision, we developed a Strategic Plan that focuses on Four Core Areas:

- **Client Services:** What must RACS look like to our Customers if we are to become their trusted provider for the services we provide?
- **Financial:** What must we look like from a financial perspective if we are to be successful into the future?
- **Internal Business:** What internal business practices must we change if we are to be effective as an agency in service delivery to our clients and their families?
- **Public Relations:** What do we need to do to be a trusted provider of our services in our communities?

Throughout our Annual Report, we are excited to share how we have addressed these core areas and how our efforts are positioning us to continue to improve our services so that we can offer more effective treatment and care in a timely manner, while at the same time be effective and accountable to our various funding sources.

As you will see as you read our report, Rockbridge Area Community Services serves clients with a variety of disabilities and challenges. We welcome you to read this Annual Report and to follow up with us or any of our staff with any questions you may have. We welcome feedback from anyone in our community who has an interest in advocacy for the services we provide. We are proud of the work Rockbridge Area Community Services provides in the communities we serve and we look forward to sharing our progress again with you in 2019.

Sincerely,

John D. Young, LCSW, Executive Director

Sara Vasura, Board Chair

*Editor’s note: Since the close of the 2018 fiscal year, Irma Bailey has been named Acting Executive Director.*
Diversity Matters

RACS is committed to fostering a welcoming work environment while ensuring an inclusive, person-centered approach to care. RACS will not discriminate against any applicant or staff member based on race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, political affiliation, age, disability, gender, veteran status, or sexual orientation. Our statement of diversity:

Rockbridge Area Community Services embraces and promotes diversity. We seek to cultivate an atmosphere for all consumers and staff that encourages, values, respects, and appreciates individual differences. Our environment is grounded in the recognition of the responsibility of all members of this community to demonstrate civility and respect for others.

Rockbridge Area Community Services does not sanction any form of stigma, prejudice, discrimination, or exclusion. With this as our foundation, we seek to provide supports and services that enhance knowledge and incorporate an understanding of diversity so that everyone may flourish and thrive.
**Our Mission**

It is the mission of Rockbridge Area Community Services (RACS) to help prevent and treat mental illness, developmental disabilities, and substance use, and to enhance the quality of life of individuals who experience these conditions in the Cities of Buena Vista and Lexington and the Counties of Rockbridge and Bath, Virginia by providing individualized treatments, establishing and expanding programs and support systems, and promoting integration into the community.

Developed and governed by a Board of Directors representing each of the four localities served by our programming, RACS has grown along with the many communities it serves. Since 1982, RACS has been the primary resource for mental health, developmental disabilities, substance use, and prevention services in the Rockbridge Area. With offices and programs all over the Rockbridge Area and qualified, dedicated staff, we are available to meet the diverse needs of our communities.

**2018 Board of Directors**

Board Chair – Sara Vasura, Lexington
Malcolm Brownlee, Rockbridge County
Steve Funkhouser, Rockbridge County
Tracy Harris, Rockbridge County
John Higgins, Rockbridge County
Heather Hostetter, Rockbridge County
Susan Parochniak, Rockbridge County
Perlista Yvonne Henry, Bath County
Kari Lightner, Bath County
Robert Plecker, Bath County
James T. Gire, Lexington
Tulley Raetz, Lexington
Keith Hartman, Buena Vista
Janet Jolly, Buena Vista
Vacant, Buena Vista

**Leadership Team**

John D. Youn, Executive Director
Juliann Smith, Director of Emergency Services and CIT Assessment Site
Mary Powell, Director of Behavioral Health & Prevention Services
Wendy Mace, Director of Developmental Services
Don Sherman, Director of Corporate Integrity
Irma Bailey, Chief Financial Officer
Dr. Kirk Luder, Medical Director

**Locations**

- **Main Office**
  241 Greenhouse Rd.
  Lexington, VA 24450
  540-463-3141

- **Eagle’s Nest Clubhouse**
  101 East 29th Street
  Buena Vista, VA 24416
  540-261-2870

- **Magnolia Center**
  75 Village Way
  Lexington, VA 24450
  540-261-3877

- **Bath County Services**
  9232 Sam Snead Highway
  Hot Springs, VA 24445
  540-839-3382
Emergency Services

Emergency Services serves adults, adolescents, children and their families, who are experiencing a behavioral health crisis. A 24-hour Toll Free Crisis Hotline allows callers to speak directly with a licensed mental health clinician regarding any behavioral health crisis; receive face-to-face crisis counseling or crisis phone intervention, and develop least restrictive plans for follow up which could include a combination of crisis phone interventions, face-to-face Emergency Services evaluations, referrals to additional RACS and/or other community referrals for crisis stabilization. The Crisis Hotline is also available to answer any questions regarding mental health and the Emergency Custody Order/Temporary Detention Order process. Also available through RACS Emergency Services is Peer Support Services, which provide an extra layer of support from someone who has lived experience with mental illness and/or addiction to alcohol or other drugs, and who is specially trained to help you through the tough days. A Peer Recovery Specialist (PRS) will help you identify your strengths and work with you to develop a plan, built around your unique situation, to improve your overall recovery and wellbeing. The PRS is knowledgeable about various resources available through public and private providers and can offer invaluable advice, information, and connections.

Family and Youth Services

Outpatient services provides individual, group, and family therapy to children and teens, as well as medication evaluations. Case Management is designed to help the child and family evaluate different areas of a child’s life to identify not only what treatment needs should be addressed, but also what resources are available within the child, family, and the community to meet those needs. Our school-based counselors provide individual, group, and family treatment, working in conjunction with teachers and school staff to provide the best integrated care possible to help to improve a child's attendance, concentration, behavior, and social skills. Intensive Care Coordination uses an evidence-informed model where an individualized team approach moves the child and family to self-efficacy and minimal professional involvement. A key principle of this model is Family Voice and Choice, in which clients are respected as experts on their own families, identifying their own needs, selecting professionals they want on their team, and participating in all decisions.

ACCESS to Services

ACCESS serves as the point of entry for all non-emergency services via phone or Same Day Access services which are available at the Lexington office weekdays. Clients who walk in for an intake during designated times will meet briefly with our front office staff for registration and then meet with an ACCESS clinician for an agency intake.

Adult Mental Health Services

Assessment and counseling services are provided by a master’s level clinical staff who are either licensed or license-eligible and under the supervision of a licensed professional. Psychiatric Services provides evaluation and specialized medication for the treatment of mental illness through services to help consumers achieve their maximum level of wellness, enhance their quality of life, and help them take full responsibility for the management of their illness. Case Managers enhance the quality of life for those recovering from serious mental illness, through treatment coordination, support and advocacy. Day programs and transitional living services support many facets of evidenced-based practices specific to recovery. Eagle’s Nest supports individuals with serious mental illness to live and work in their community, empowering them to take control of their own recovery.

Substance Use Services

Assessments, limited individual counseling, and primarily group therapy are provided. Referrals and placement in residential treatment are made as appropriate and in accordance with individual treatment plans. We offer gender-specific groups and individual service plans for those with co-occurring disorders. Case management services are offered specifically for women who are pregnant or have dependent children, with the goal being to provide coordination of care and linkage to appropriate community services. Assistance is also provided with referrals for services such as: prenatal screening, physical exam, nutritional counseling, child care, pediatric services for children (which includes immunizations), developmental assessments for children, vision and dental screening, parent education, therapeutic services for children, and transportation. RACS currently provides treatment to adolescents with substance use disorders through individual and family counseling.
Developmental Services

The Community Support Services Unit encompasses all services within Developmental Services and the RAISE program. Services for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities include support coordination, center-based day support, community engagement programs, and residential services. RACS consistently strives to coordinate services on an individual basis that encompass a person-centered, holistic approach to the unique preferences and needs of each person. RAISE provides coordinated, quality, comprehensive early intervention supports and services to families with infants and toddlers, birth to age three, who have developmental delays or disabilities, or who are at high risk for delay. RAISE, recognizing families as the primary agents of change in their child’s development, partners with each family during service delivery, supporting them in ways that enable them to achieve their goals for their child. RAISE is part of the “Infant & Toddler Connection of Virginia," the statewide system of early intervention services.

Prevention Services

Prevention Services offers a broad array of substance use prevention and mental health promotion activities to reduce youth access to and use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs; provide violence and suicide prevention; address family management and parenting; modify community and school policies to provide structure for positive community norms; and support collaborative community approaches to healthy youth development. Prevention Services offers evidence-based programs in schools as well as employing community level strategies. Prevention Services houses the Rockbridge Area Prevention Coalition; whose mission is to reduce substance use by youth by increasing community awareness of substance use and other prevention related issues and by promoting a comprehensive network of prevention services and resources. Prevention Services also houses Live Healthy Rockbridge Kids, a Healthy Communities Action Team partnership, committed to reducing childhood obesity in the Rockbridge Area.

Administrative Services

Human Resources supports the agency’s commitment of being an employer of choice by offering a competitive level of compensation, benefits, and development programs, and establishing a foundation for personal and professional growth. Information Technology (IT) provides timely, accurate, and cost-effective information, technology, and data management services to staff, management, the Board, and outside agencies. This includes managing the day-to-day operations of the agency’s computer networks and assisting staff through the computer help desk. IT also manages reporting of client performance and outcomes and provides critical data to multiple stakeholders. The agency has a fully integrated Electronic Health Record system and is proud that it was one of first CSB’s to implement an EHR system. Reimbursement bills and collects revenue in order to maintain a consistent cash flow for the agency. Finance manages the financial and accounting functions of the Board in a timely, accurate, and professional manner to support all staff in the delivery of services.

Quality Improvement Services

The Quality Improvement and Corporate Compliance Office (QICC) works diligently to uphold RACS’ commitment of providing high quality care for individuals with mental health, developmental disabilities, and substance use disorders. The QICC Office is designed to prevent, detect, and respond to issues of quality assurance and corporate compliance consistent with agency policies and procedures and the Code of Virginia, Federal laws, State Licensure Standards for Behavior Healthcare Programs and Community Service Boards, Medicaid Regulations, and CARF Standards. The QICC Office establishes effective guidelines to nurture a culture of high ethical standards. QICC staff are responsible for working with agency employees and agency clients to address issues related to compliance, privacy, quality improvement, and human rights concerns or violations. The QICC office accomplishes these goals through education and training of RACS Board members and employees.
Same Day Access is an integral part of System Transformation, Excellence and Performance in Virginia (STEP-VA). What does this mean for residents of Rockbridge and Bath Counties and the cities of Lexington and Buena Vista that are served by our agency? It means that when a person appears at our office during Same Day Access hours, they will be assessed that day. Based on that assessment, they will be scheduled for appropriate initial treatment within 10 days. The benefits of this system are that it shifts care away from crisis response when people are more at risk for themselves and for others and better reflects the critical need to “start at the front door” in terms of standardization and accountability. The implementation of Same Day Access and other critical components of STEP-VA requires a change in our business practices, scheduling, documentation, caseload management, and utilization of more focused and practical therapies.

The Governor’s Access Plan (GAP) is a program that integrates primary and behavioral health services and coordinates care for Virginia’s uninsured adults with serious mental illness (SMI). RACS provided 38 GAP Assessments and served 59 GAP eligible consumers this year. These consumers will automatically be enrolled in Medicaid in January 2019 when Virginia expands Medicaid.

**System Transformation, Excellence and Performance in Virginia (STEP-VA)**

**Rockbridge Area Community Services**

**Same Day Access to Services**

Same Day Access allows clients to walk into RACS on weekdays during designated hours and be seen for an intake for services.

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**OUTPATIENT GROUPS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Name/Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MONDAY GROUPS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Co-Ed Wellness Group/ Greenhouse Rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Phase I Substance Use Treatment/ Greenhouse Rd - 3x week</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women’s Phase II Substance Use Treatment/ Greenhouse Rd - 2x week</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men’s Phase I Substance Use Treatment/ Greenhouse Rd - 3x week</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men’s Phase II Substance Use Treatment/ Greenhouse Rd - 2x week</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>WEDNESDAY GROUPS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Women’s Phase I Substance Use Treatment/ Greenhouse Rd - 3x week</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men’s Phase I Substance Use Treatment/ Greenhouse Rd - 3x week</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men’s Phase II Substance Use Treatment/ Greenhouse Rd - 2x week</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>THURSDAY GROUPS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Women’s Phase I Substance Use Treatment/ Greenhouse Rd - 3x week</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women’s Phase II Substance Use Treatment/ Greenhouse Rd - 2x week</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men’s Phase III Substance Use Treatment/ Greenhouse Rd - 1x week</td>
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For Anger Management Group we refer to Blue Ridge Court Services 540-886-1008
The Crisis Intervention Assessment (CIT) Site located on the lower level of Carilion Stonewall Jackson Hospital (CSJH) in Lexington, VA opened October 2016 in partnership with the Rockbridge County Sheriff’s Office (RCSO) and other members of the Rockbridge-Bath Regional Crisis Intervention Team. The site is jointly operated and staffed by RACS’ Emergency Clinicians and RCSO deputies who have been specially trained in Crisis Intervention to provide a therapeutic alternative to arrest, where authorized law enforcement officers from any of the local participating jurisdictions can transfer custody of individuals under an Emergency Custody Order to the CIT-trained deputies at the Assessment site. Following the transfer of custody, RACS’ Emergency Services Prescreeners provide a clinical assessment on site to determine the level of treatment needed that is least restrictive such as referrals and linkage to appropriate services, or most restrictive such as a Temporary Detention Order to an inpatient psychiatric facility due to safety concerns for self or others or lack of capacity to care for themselves. The CIT Assessment Site provides a secure environment for individuals in crisis to be assessed, supported by the CIT-trained deputies. Proximity to the CSJH Emergency Department further streamlines the process of medical clearance prior to transferring the individual in crisis to a treatment facility, if indicated. The site allows local officers who transfer custody of a person on an Emergency Custody Order (ECO) to be able to return to their normal patrol duties. The CIT Assessment Site has recently expanded its hours to 10:00 AM-10:00 PM Monday through Friday and is accessible by law enforcement during off hours to allow individuals on an ECO with an alternative of being assessed somewhere other than the Emergency Room. During off hours, there is no transfer of custody, however individuals are assessed and treated similar to open hours of operation. An update to the site this year enhanced the therapeutic environment of assessment rooms and main office space.

Successful Collaborations with Law Enforcement and Community Partners

Sterile interview rooms (at left) were transformed into comfortable settings for assessment. Furnishings are comfortable and the walls are decorated with brightly colored vinyl graphics and encouraging messages, provided by two local Buena Vista businesses. RACS extends its thanks to Vinyl Cuts and Everbrite for their hard work and donations.

Successful Collaborations – Rockbridge Area Prevention Coalition (RAPC)

Prevention Services houses the Rockbridge Area Prevention Coalition (RAPC). RAPC was originally a task force that was formed in response to concerns expressed by schools, faith-based groups, and other concerned citizens about underage drinking and other youth substance problems. Today RAPC boasts 170 members who working together, have been instrumental in changing the face of prevention in Rockbridge. An award-winning coalition, this year marked the tenth and final year of the federal Drug Free Communities grant. However, the initiatives and support are continuing to grow. The Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Authority (ABC) awarded us a $10,000 grant this year to support efforts to address underage drinking in our area. The project will involve youth both as planning partners and program recipients, an approach that has been in use by RAPC for several years in partnership with its youth coalition (SiRPHA) Students in Rockbridge Promoting Healthy Alternatives. Earlier this year SiRPHA members traveled to Washington D.C. to attend the CADCA (Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America) Forum with the goal of learning the latest strategies to fight substance use from nationally-known prevention experts, federal administrators, and policy makers. While there, the students met DBHDS’ Behavioral Health Wellness Manager who was so impressed with the SiRPHA youth that she granted the youth coalition an additional $15,000 to attend CADCA’s Mid-Year Training Institute where once more they were widely recognized for their efforts and sought out by other coalitions for their ideas.
“This project began as a pie-in-the-sky idea,” said Phil Floyd, Eagle’s Nest director and manager of Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services at Rockbridge Area Community Services. “I thought, wouldn't it be great to have something that represents recovery in the truest sense, to have a project that pulled the community together and gave our members the chance to participate in a project that was a positive part of their recovery?” The collaboration for this project began three years ago, when Floyd reached out to W&L, who has been placing interns from the psychology and sociology departments at Eagle’s Nest since 1983, the year the facility opened its doors.

“Eagle’s Nest has been investing in W&L students for decades,” said Karla Murdock, David G. Elmes, Professor of Psychology. “For the last 13 years, Phil Floyd and Eagle’s Nest Clubhouse members have visited my Introduction to Clinical Psychology class to talk about experiences in coping with and recovering from mental illness. Their input crystalizes and enhances all of the information we cover, and they have educated my students in a way that a traditional classroom process cannot.”

When Floyd broached the idea of a collaborative community mural project, Murdock said the wheels in her mind started churning. She pulled in Andrea Lepage, associate professor of art history. Kathleen Olson-Janjic, Pamela H. Simpson Professor of Art, and Peter Simpson, W&L studio art lab technician, joined the project to provide essential expertise. Lepage studies muralism, particularly produced by Chicana and Chicano artists, and she noted that many cities across America maintain vibrant community mural programs.

Lepage said, “Community murals are a powerful form of art because they can bring together disparate groups to accomplish a communal goal. In the process of designing and painting, murals have the capacity to amplify the voices of marginalized members of the community.”

Olson-Janjic teaches studio art at W&L, and over the years she’s supervised the work of students who have painted murals that decorated the construction fences surrounding much of the Colonnade as it underwent renovations. This spring, with the Eagle’s Nest project in mind, Lepage and Olson-Janjic developed and co-taught a new class open to all students, Community Muralism, which traced the historical development of community murals and gave students experience in planning, designing and producing a large-scale mural. Floyd, who has served the Eagle’s Nest as manager for 30 of his nearly 35 years at Rockbridge Area Community Services procured the necessary permits and permission from Buena Vista’s city council.

Intersecting with the art class was Murdock’s Spring Term class, The Pursuit of Happiness, on multiple subdisciplines of psychology, that illuminates what helps people to thrive,” said Murdock. “But the service learning component working side by side with Eagle’s Nest members allowed us to actually experience processes that promote well-being and recovery. The project has served all of us, because we have shared the excitement of producing something beautiful together and have benefitted in all kinds of ways from the merging of W&L and Eagle’s Nest communities.

Deconstructing the stigma associated with mental illness is also an important aspect of the project. “Part of the impulse behind the creation of the mural is to acknowledge the important work Floyd and the Eagle’s Nest have done for our community while also celebrating the Eagle’s Nest members,” said Lepage. “The mural represents their visions of recovery.”
The process began with Eagle’s Nest members and W&L students talking about positive images and memories that represented recovery. They then chose the prominent elements of the mural — the sun, the soaring eagle, the Blue Ridge Mountains and the Maury River. Smaller panels surround the central images and represent personal memories and feelings of safety, including gardening, friendship, music and freshly baked bread.

After sketching ideas on paper, the groups transferred those images to the panels. “Great conversations can happen when you’re standing next to one another working on a mural,” said Lepage. “Stories come out naturally. Some Eagle’s Nest members talked a lot while others spoke less, but any level of engagement in the process can be therapeutic.”

For several days, the Eagle’s Nest members traveled to W&L’s art studio to work on their creations. Then the panels, mostly complete, were transferred to B.V., for the finishing touches and a couple of coats of varnish. “We wanted to make this as durable as possible, so we used professional-grade materials for the project,” said Olson-Janjic. “With the mural being mounted on a north-facing wall and by using paints that are color-fast, I expect this to last for about 30 years.”

By the end of the term, Eagle’s Nest members not only had a new piece of public art to celebrate, but new friendships, as well. Project partners Skylar Prichard ’19 and Justin Snyder, an Eagle’s Nest member for 2 years commented on what the process meant to them.

“I was impressed by his ability to mix colors,” said Prichard, “Justin has been a light to be around. They are all great people,” she said of the Eagle’s Nest members. “So talented and beautiful.”

Snyder, who creates beautiful handmade jewelry that was sold at the mural unveiling ceremony, said the experience gave him the courage to think about returning to school for his fashion degree. “I don’t want mental illness to define who I am,” he said.

Jayson Wilberger, an Eagle’s Nest member for 28 years succinctly summed up his takeaway: “Heaven can be anywhere as long as you focus on the good things in life, instead of dwelling on the bad. Think about all the good things in life that cheer you up. A smile will always set a person free from sadness.”

Acknowledgments: Thanks to Professor Emeritus Larry Stene, for his extraordinary help with the mural design. Funding for the project came from W&L’s Provost Office and the Mudd Center for Ethics, and support provided by W&L’s Office of Community-Based Learning.
Last year RACS restructured its Community Support Services unit to incorporate the services for individuals with intellectual disabilities into the larger initiative for people with developmental disabilities. This aligns with the Commonwealth’s system of services and supports for individuals with developmental disabilities which has undergone significant transformation under Virginia’s waiver system through the My Life, My Community initiative.

The term My Life, My Community encompasses an overarching vision whereby people with developmental disabilities live, work, play and thrive in their communities, just as others do, with the support they need.

When an individual receives and accepts a waiver, they are choosing to have people support them in their home and in their community instead of in a nursing home or other institution. Not everyone is eligible for one of the Developmental Disability (DD) Waivers, as individuals must meet certain eligibility requirements:

**Diagnostic Eligibility:** This means having a disability that affects the ability to live and work independently.

**Functional Eligibility:** This means needing the same support as someone who is living in an Intermediate Care Facility as determined by an assessment called the VIDES (Virginia Individual Developmental Disabilities Eligibility Survey).

**Medicaid Eligibility:** This means meeting Medicaid income guidelines as determined by the Department of Social Services.

Everyone who meets the eligibility requirements will be added to the DD Waiver Statewide Waiting List. Everyone on the Waiting List will receive a Priority Status which is based on how much and how quickly someone needs help. Waiver slots are only assigned to individuals who have a Priority One status. Only people who have a Priority One Status have their information shared with the committee that decides who receives available waiver slots based on greatest need. Once an individual is assigned a slot, they will be offered one of the DD waivers. A Support Coordinator will describe the services that are available under that waiver and start linking the individual to services with at least one service expected to begin within 30 days of acceptance.

**Building Independence Waiver**

For adults (18+) able to live independently in the community. Individuals own, lease, or control their own living arrangements and supports are complemented by non-waiver-funded rent subsidies.

**Family & Individual Supports Waiver**

For individuals living with their families, friends, or in their own homes, including supports for those with some medical or behavioral needs. Available to both children and adults.

**Community Living Waiver**

Includes residential supports and a full array of medical, behavioral, and non-medical supports. Available to adults and children. May include 24/7 supports for individuals with complex medical and/or behavioral support needs through licensed services.
RAISE Services

RAISE is part of the “Infant & Toddler Connection of Virginia,” the statewide system of early intervention supports and services for families with infants and toddlers, birth through age two, who are not developing as expected or who have a medical condition associated with a high risk for delay.

At RACS, the program provides early intervention services each year to about 140 area infants and toddlers. Recognizing families as the primary agents of change in their child’s development, RAISE partners with each family, supporting them in ways that enable them to achieve their goals for their young child.

Carol Burke, the RAISE Program Manager, celebrated 30 years with RACS this year. Not only has Carol been employed at RACS since 1988; she has served as the RAISE Manager throughout her tenure.

RAISE Services include:

• developmental screenings to determine if a young child is learning, playing, moving, talking and understanding like other children his or her age.

• multidisciplinary team eligibility determination process.

• comprehensive assessments to get a thorough understanding of a child’s strengths and challenges.

• service coordination to ensure that each family receives the necessary services and supports that will help their child reach his or her potential.

• services, including physical therapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy, and developmental services, to help families help their children develop new skills and abilities during their everyday routine.

• transition support to assist families in securing appropriate services, if necessary, once their child is no longer age eligible for early intervention.

Anyone, including families, may make a referral to RAISE.

The Parent Project

This year RACS began offering The Parent Project®, a 10-week training that empowers parents and other guardians to address destructive adolescent behavior through concrete, step-by-step solutions. Working with others in the class, care givers learn parenting principles and practice specific prevention and intervention strategies. Critical issues addressed include teen drug use, arguing and family conflict, poor school performance, youth gangs, truancy and dropouts, teen violence and bullying, media influences, runaways, and early teen sexual activity.

The Parent Project® class is open to anyone parenting a teenager, including grandparents and other legal guardians. Referrals are accepted through RACS, Family Assessment and Planning Teams, school guidance counselors, court services, therapists, and family doctors and pediatricians.
RACS’ Prevention Services is pleased to be a part of the Lock and Talk Virginia campaign which is part of a comprehensive approach to suicide prevention in the Commonwealth. Lock and Talk Virginia is a statewide suicide prevention initiative that focuses on limiting access to lethal means, such as guns and medications, that could be used for suicide as well as offering free or low-cost trainings. RACS provided locking medication boxes/pouches as well as trigger/cable locks free of charge to numerous businesses and individuals throughout this past year.

Rockbridge Area Community Services was a first-round grant recipient of the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth (VFHY), and this year received its 17th year of consecutive funding for RACS Prevention Services with a new three-year $150,000 grant award to continue providing tobacco and other drug-use prevention programming to second through sixth graders in the Lexington and Buena Vista City Schools. Through this programming, RACS has served over 12,000 students to date, most recently using the evidence-based Too Good for Drugs program. In just the last decade, the VFHY has helped to bring youth smoking rates in Virginia to a record low. Smoking among middle school students is down by about 85 percent and smoking among high school students has been cut more than 70 percent! Our most recent local evaluation results show that 83 percent of Too Good for Drugs participants served by RACS Prevention Services demonstrated improved scores on tests given before and after participation on the program, indicating increased knowledge of the harmful effects of tobacco.

Prevention Services also received its 3rd two-year Healthy Communities Action Team (HCAT) grant from VFHY this year. Known locally as “Live Healthy Rockbridge Kids,” this program served over 3,000 local students this year through nutrition and physical activity programs including “Veggie Brigade” (a fruit and vegetable tasting event for elementary school students); cooking classes at summer camps and after school programs; geocaching; a “Run, Jump, Throw” track and field expo with the Washington and Lee University women’s track team; outdoor equipment and trail rehabilitation projects; and more. HCAT works to create a culture of wellness in the Rockbridge area with VFHY funding, grants from Stonewall Jackson Hospital Community Health Foundation, and the support of partnering agencies.

In response to the growing opioid crisis in Virginia, the Central Shenandoah Health District is partnering with RACS and the other two CSBs in their area to provide Naloxone, a fast-acting, safe and easy-to-administer nasal spray that can restore respiration and reduce the potentially fatal effects of opioid overdoses, and free training for how to use it properly as one step in a widespread harm reduction strategy to cope with the growing crisis. Family members, bystanders, first responders, or medical providers can be trained to administer Naloxone and save lives. This year RACS’ Prevention Services was awarded a second year of prevention-related funding from DBHDS under SAMSHA’s State Targeted Response to the Opioid Crisis grant program to continue efforts to mobilize the local community’s response to the crisis, building awareness and providing education, training, and resources.
PSU provides psychiatric and nursing services that include:

- Assessment, diagnosis, and education about diagnosis and medications
- Prescribing appropriate medications and therapy
- Administering injections
- Monitoring of psychiatric and health status related to treatment
- Ordering lab work
- Individualized treatment plans developed by the treating provider and client
- Linking to other services (in-house and other providers) for therapy, substance abuse, or case management.

The mission of the Psychiatric Services Unit (PSU) at RACS is to provide psychiatric and nursing services in a timely and effective manner. PSU's goal is to help consumers achieve their maximum level of wellness, enhance their quality of life, and to empower the consumer to take full responsibility for the management of their mental illness and/or substance dependency.

PSU consists of a part-time contracted Medical Director, two on-site contracted psychiatrists, an onsite contracted Nurse Practitioner. RACS’ nursing staff (pictured at left) consists of two full-time LPN’s and an RN nurse manager. PSU currently provides medication management to over 700 clients from the Lexington, Buena Vista, Rockbridge County, and Bath County areas.

RACS is developing a collaboration with GeneSight®, an innovative technology that analyzes a person’s DNA and can help their doctor get a clearer understanding of what psychiatric medication might work best based on a person’s genetic makeup. Using the GeneSight test report, a person’s doctor can personalize their treatment plan, finding the right medication faster and avoiding medicines that may cause side effects.

Kirk Luder, MD is a board-certified psychiatrist who serves as RACS’ interim Medical Director. He graduated with Highest Distinction from the University of Kansas in 1981, then graduated from Univ. of Kansas School of Medicine in 1985. He completed his adult psychiatry residency at the Medical University of South Carolina, followed by a year fellowship in child and adolescent psychiatry at Children’s National Medical Center in Washington DC, an affiliate of George Washington University. He practiced with the Metropolitan Psychiatric Group in Washington DC for 2 years before moving with his wife to Vermont, where he served as the Medical Director of the Crisis Services of Chittenden County at the University of Vermont, then practiced in Middlebury, Vermont until relocating with his family to Lexington in 1999. He currently works full time as University Psychiatrist at Washington and Lee University, and part time at RACS where he works as a part of the interdisciplinary team providing direct patient care as well as clinical oversight as Medical Director.
RACS works hard to show our appreciation for our workforce. We do this through a number of activities throughout the year. This year in August we hosted our Annual Summer Picnic at Glen Maury Park, with RACS providing the main course and entertainment for our staff families and their children. Staff also enjoyed our annual Ice Cream Social with the Executive Director, along with our annual Thanksgiving Meal and annual Christmas Breakfast. RACS also continued an agency wide Site Orientation with the Executive Director every other month. New employees meet with the Executive Director and tour RACS worksites and end the tour with lunch with the Executive Director at a local restaurant. We continue to look for ways to continue our efforts to appreciate and support our workforce.

RACS qualifies as an active National Health Service Corps site due its designation within a behavioral healthcare workforce shortage area. In this program, employees who are licensed in Virginia as a Social Worker, Counselor, Psychologist or other approved behavioral healthcare provider and who agree to work full time for RACS for two years can qualify for Federal Loan Repayment. RACS has helped up to ten employees to pay down their federal student loans while working at RACS providing high quality care to our clients.

The Emergency Services Department of Rockbridge Area CSB consists of three full-time licensed clinicians, Suzanne Nieves, Sharron Arbuthnot, and Melanie Sheets; a Peer Recovery Specialist, Josh Floyd; an Administrative Assistant, Tammy Royer; and a PRN licensed clinician, Bonnie Harlow. RACS’ Director of Emergency Services & CIT Assessment Site, Juliann Smith, is proud of her extraordinary team and on behalf of RACS, would like to celebrate and honor them for their continued hard work, dedication, and professionalism. Despite personal and organizational changes and other hardships, this team has provided seamless 24/7/365 coverage over the past year to the communities RACS serves -- without hesitation, with smiles on their faces and with compassion for every individual they have encountered whether a client or a community partner. The three full-time licensed clinicians have continually provided this round the clock coverage for the past 3 years. We are grateful to this entire team for their sacrifices, their humor, and their hearts, and believe our community is extremely fortunate to have them, especially in times of crisis. Thank you, RACS ES Team!
**Number of Individuals Served**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE SERVICES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Services (Mental Health and Substance Use)</td>
<td>482</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment &amp; Evaluation Services (Mental Health and Substance Use)</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inpatient</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outpatient</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychiatric Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case Management</td>
<td>346</td>
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<tr>
<td>Day Treatment [Therapeutic Day Treatment]</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehabilitation [Eagle’s Nest]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intensive Residential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supportive Residential [Mental Health Skill Building]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transition Houses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Governor’s Access Plan (GAP) Assessment and Evaluation Services</td>
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<th>DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES</th>
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<td>Case Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rehabilitation [Center-based &amp; Noncenter-based Day Support]</td>
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<td>Intensive Residential [Group Homes]</td>
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<td>RAISE</td>
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<th>SUBSTANCE USE SERVICES</th>
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<td>Case Management</td>
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<tr>
<th>PREVENTION SERVICES</th>
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<tr>
<td>Too Good for Drugs school-based curriculum</td>
<td>555</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rockbridge Area Prevention Coalition (RAPC) Events</td>
<td>9,122</td>
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<td>Live Healthy Rockbridge Kids (HCAT)</td>
<td>4,866</td>
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<td>Communitywide Campaigns and Information Dissemination</td>
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<tr>
<th>Consumers Served by Locality</th>
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<tr>
<td>Rockbridge</td>
<td>54%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Buena Vista</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lexington</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bath</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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</table>

RACS has 99 full-time, 9 part-time, and 8 contract employees who are striving every day to provide excellence in person-centered and recovery-oriented care to residents in our communities.