

Motivated

“My career coaches go above and beyond to help me succeed and I never feel judged for my past when dealing with them.”

Candance, WRC Participant



WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER
STRATEGIES FOR WORK. SKILLS FOR LIFE.

A
ASPIRE

SUMMER 2019



WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER
STRATEGIES FOR WORK. SKILLS FOR LIFE.

PILLAR AWARDS

More than 400 people gathered at the JW Marriott in March for the 30th Annual Pillar Awards. Four companies were recognized for their “best practices” that improve the recruitment, retention, and advancement of working women within an inclusive work culture.

We salute the 2019 Honorees:

Axios HR
Consumers Energy
Management Business Solutions
National Heritage Academies

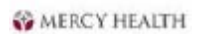
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Rockford Construction

WINE, WOMEN & CHOCOLATE

Save The Date

**Thursday,
October 3rd**

5:00-7:30pm

**Cascade Hills
Country Club**



THANK YOU

for your support

Afello

“One of the marvelous things about **community** is that it enables us to welcome and help people in a way we couldn’t as individuals.” – Jean Vanier

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Dear WRC Partners and Friends,

As I reflect on community, I think of you, a group of women and men who are not only committed to helping one another flourish, but also have a heart to lift up those who face tremendous challenges. You recognize that together we can use the power of community to help everyone achieve their goals and find their self-defined success. But as you’ll read in this newsletter, there is a lot of work to be done to help those who are working toward a better life and face barriers that keep them from achieving financial stability.

The 2019 ALICE report highlights the struggle of those who are working but do not earn enough to cover the cost of basic living expenses. Unfortunately, we are not surprised by the findings in this report. Every day we hear the stories of our participants who are unable to financially support themselves and their families. This report reinforces the continued need for our programs and services that educate, equip, and empower women to financial security.

Our personalized and holistic approach connects women to the resources and the tools they need to improve their employment opportunities. We strive to offer innovative and relevant programming to serve women from all backgrounds. From specialized computer class offerings to helping women explore non-traditional career opportunities like MTec’s Metallica Scholars Welding Program through GRCC, WRC is empowering women to focus on career pathways and skill development that provide a viable way out of low-paying jobs and economic insecurity.

We are able to provide these services through the partnerships and financial support of our community. Working together, we are elevating training opportunities and support programs to help women develop the skills and the confidence they need to find long-term employment success and build financial security.

Thank you for helping women aspire to better futures!

Sandra Gaddy
Chief Executive Officer



One Decision **MADE** **ALL THE DIFFERENCE**

No matter the circumstance, Candance always finds a way to persevere. It's this spirit that is forming Candance into the woman, mother, and employee she always knew she could be.

Candance was introduced to Women's Resource Center when she was incarcerated in the Kent County Correctional Facility. Candance admits to joining New Beginnings, WRC's job readiness program for incarcerated women, as a way to pass the time. But it did so much more for her. "It was one of the best decisions I've ever made. Being a part of the program gave me something positive to look forward to each week," explained Candance.

"Since I've been a participant with WRC, I have accomplished so much," added Candance. She said the employability classes and information about community resources helped her prepare for her release. She also appreciated learning about different coping skills and how to deal with her anger issues. Candance believes New Beginnings created a safe place to express her thoughts and emotions about her upcoming re-entry into the community.

After Candance was released, she began meeting regularly with her Training to Work Career Coach Tia over the course of this 18-week job training program. During this time, Tia recommended Candance create a résumé – so she did. Tia urged Candance to complete a certified customer service training course – so she did. Training to Work funds covered the costs for the Rise Up Certification in Customer Service and Sales which Candance completed. Tia said, "Candance really took ownership of her own success." She was very self-motivated and eager to complete whatever training or tasks were asked of her.

Candance said WRC offered the kind of support she needed. "WRC helped me with references, interview clothing, bus tickets, gift cards and diapers for my one-year-old twins, and most importantly, emotional support and encouragement."

Candance says it is this personal approach that sets WRC apart. She said her Career Coaches have been supportive every step of the way. "They are always available and get things done in a timely manner. They go above and beyond to help me succeed, and I never feel judged for my past when dealing with them."

Being a part of the program

gave me something positive

to look forward to each week.

The amount of progress Candance has made in the last eight months is tremendous. She recently accepted a new position with Mercy Health, which offers a work schedule that is more conducive to her raising her family. Candance has already enrolled at Grand Rapids Community College to pursue an associate degree in Human Resources this fall.

Candance credits the New Beginnings program for helping her become self-sufficient and avoid becoming a repeat offender. She is grateful that WRC is here to offer support. "It is all a blessing and helps us as women to grow and become self-sufficient, functioning members of society again."



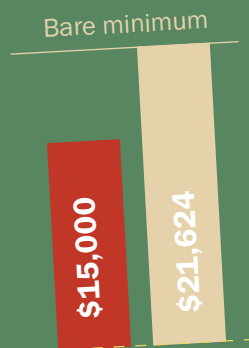
Alice:

ASSET LIMITED, INCOME CONSTRAINED, EMPLOYED

Working households throughout our state find themselves unable to cover the cost of basic living expenses. Single working women are hit the hardest; stuck in low wage jobs and not earning enough to cover the increasing costs of housing, food, transportation and health care. The 2019 ALICE report brings to light the reality of households earning income above the federal poverty level but less than the basic cost of living.

According to the 2019 Michigan ALICE Report:

Over 50% of women come to WRC earning \$15,000 or less annually. \$21,624 is considered the bare minimum a single adult needs to live and work in Kent County. This basic budget does not allow for saving opportunities and leaves households with little cushion for emergency expenses.



50% of households struggling to afford basic needs are single women and their families

We see many of these ALICE households represented in the women WRC serves. It's a challenge for many to afford housing, child care, food, transportation, and health care for themselves and their children.



9% of people working in Michigan are underemployed

Many of the women we serve are underemployed, meaning they work less than 35 hours a week, despite wanting to work full time. And while the state's unemployment rate is low, the majority of recent job gains are for jobs paying less than \$16 an hour.

The findings of the ALICE report, while alarming, reinforce the need for WRC's services. Women need allies as they strive to improve their economic situation. It's the reason our personal, holistic approach to workforce development helps women believe in themselves and in their ability to find ongoing success at work and at home. Read the full ALICE report on our website: grwrc.org



**Heart of West Michigan
United Way**





WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER
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Grand Rapids, MI 49504
(616) 458-5443 | grwrc.org



Why I Give



Shaquanda Gordon
WRC Board Member

Why do you support Women's Resource Center?

The mission of WRC has always resonated with me. I have a long-standing passion for empowering and helping women, so when I seek out opportunities to reach back or pay it forward, initiatives related to women are oftentimes my first choice.

What inspires you to give your time, talent, and treasures to WRC?

Recently, I was speaking with my mother and she shared that when we relocated to Grand Rapids some 30 years ago, WRC was one of the first organizations to assist her in preparing for employment. It was in that moment my affinity to WRC became clear. WRC was instrumental in my mother's journey, which ultimately impacted my journey. For this I am grateful.

Why is giving important?

We all want to leave behind a legacy. If you have a desire to build a legacy and be a part of something that transforms lives, Women's Resource Center is it. There's a role for everyone. Not only will you help transform the lives of our clients, but yours as well.



#WHYIGIVEWRC