



Champlain Community Services, Inc.

ANNUAL REPORT

2022





Champlain Community Services, Inc.

Champlain Community Services provides essential supports to people with intellectual disabilities and autism, building a community where everyone participates and belongs.

CCS is a Specialized Service Agency (SSA) within the State of Vermont's Developmental Services System.

A 501(c)(3) nonprofit

FEIN 03-6015899

Established 1967

Governed by a volunteer Board of Directors



From the Executive Director

Hi, Everyone!

As I reviewed the draft of our beautiful new Annual Report in preparation for writing this letter, I admit that I worried about being able to “do it with a smile.” Once again CCS pulled together as a community to do our work well, in a mission-driven way, in a tough year: COVID’s impact continued, staffing issues were ongoing, and frankly we got tired sometimes.

However, re-reading our stories, I found both purpose and inspiration in the good work we do, and the amazing people involved in that work. And the impacts CCS is having is reflected in the stories here:

- ★ Brandon building skills in Bridging, positioning him to find employment success at not one but two jobs through School2Work
- ★ Thomas, a Bridging alumnus, returning with a battery of skills to serve as that program’s first peer mentor
- ★ Sadie finding a sense of community and family at CCS to enable her to excel as a Direct Support Professional while raising her daughter as a single parent
- ★ Ashwini being part of a partnership that is making future doctors more aware of the needs of people with disabilities in health care settings – on a project that earned national recognition
- ★ Ashley, our Way2Work Employment Specialist serving as President of Vermont APSE, dedicated to prioritizing employment opportunities and inclusion statewide
- ★ A Board of Directors engaged and brave enough to support the staff that does this work.

These stories, and many others, are daily celebrations at CCS. And I’m reminded that’s where our energy, commitment and drive come from – and writing about it does bring a smile!

This year, our Strategic Planning team suggested a catch phrase for moving forward: Do Good; Be Big; Be Bold! I think this Annual Report reflects that attitude; it’s who and what we are. I invite you to be, or continue to be, a part of that.

Warmly,



Beth Sichtler
Executive Director



Board of Directors



Zoltan Sachs
President



Peggy Day
Vice-President



Carter Bradshaw
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Hasan Ko



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Senior Management Team



Beth Sightler
Executive Director
17 years



Brent Hewey
Associate Director
26 years



Karen Ciechanowicz
Director of Operations
18 years



Michelle Paya
Director of Education &
Employment Services
15 years



Mike Reilly
Development
Coordinator
15 years

Our Leadership's Leap Of Faith

It was November 2021 and the entire nation was experiencing a worker shortage; CCS was no exception. With a vacancy rate of **60 percent**, we had to do something to stop attrition, gain back our workforce, and protect the vulnerable people we serve.

After several tough meetings, the CCS Board of Directors took a leap of faith and raised the front-line pay rate from **\$14 per hour to \$17 per hour**; creating a **\$250K unfunded increase**. It worked! We gained staff and became a model for other agencies.

Thankfully, in 2022, the State followed with an **8% increase**—we were saved. That is an example of the special sauce that is CCS; we lead and sometimes take a risk to do the right thing.

*~ Zoltan Sachs
CCS Board President*



SERVICE STATISTICS

CCS is a Specialized Service Agency (SSA) within the State of Vermont's Developmental Services System of Care. We coordinate and deliver developmental disability services using a distinctive approach to meet distinctive individual needs.

DURING FY 2021-2022 CCS PROVIDED:

7,584 → **59**
HOURS OF EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT INDIVIDUALS

Employment supports include:

- Employer and job development
- Employment intervention
- Employment search
- Job training
- Ongoing support to maintain employment

14,331 → **33**
HOURS OF HOME SUPPORT INDIVIDUALS
(CCS housed another seven (7) individuals through Homeward, our Choices for Care program)

Home supports include:

- In-home supports (Family or shared living setting)
- Staffed living (24 hour/apartment)
- Supervised living (in-home supports independent setting)

19,426 → **57**
HOURS OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT INDIVIDUALS

7,452 → **80**
HOURS OF CASE MANAGEMENT INDIVIDUALS

Throughout our programs, CCS served 106 individuals in FY 2021-22



STAFF DEVELOPMENT

CCS invests in regular, ongoing training and professional development for our staff.

Training Curriculum

Our onboarding training provides a curriculum that includes:

- Therapeutic options
- Pre-service training
- Orientation
- Med admin and delegation
- CPR/First Aid
- Fall protocol training
- W2W pre-service training
- HIPAA
- Bloodborne Pathogens
- Infection Control and Prevention
- Back Injury Prevention
- Maintaining professional boundaries

Opportunities

Last year offered a variety of other training opportunities, including:

- Early goals of care
- Deaf community training
- Supervisory training
- HIPPA
- Driver safety
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Compassion fatigue
- BBP in-service
- N95 masks
- Beyond anti-harassment
- Creating work culture that is post-covid relevant
- Body Mechanics
- History of Developmental Services
- Supported employment
- Howard Center Annual Conference
- Train the Trainer



VOLUNTEERS

Meet Ash

SUPER VOLUNTEER

Meet Ashwini (“Ash”) Sarathy, a CCS “super volunteer” in FY22. As a first-year med student at **The Robert Larner College of Medicine** at the University of Vermont, Ash was part of an eight-student team that worked on a research project with our agency. She called that **Public Health Project (PHP)** experience, “a unique opportunity to learn about the firsthand experiences of patients with disabilities in their own words. In particular, I know we gained a lot of perspective from attending one of the Advocacy meetings with the consumers.”

Ash also offers her time and expertise to write a monthly blog – “Let’s Talk About Health with Ash” – offering health and wellness insights to the CCS community.

“Every month I look forward to writing the blog posts, and really enjoy coming up with new recipes, tips and ideas to share,” Ash said. “It’s a chance for me to translate some of the things I am learning in medical school to real life suggestions, and I have felt more connected to the CCS community through the blogs.”



Originally from Boston, Ash graduated from the College of William & Mary before beginning her medical school journey at UVM. Her experiences with CCS are in line with her career plans.

“In the future, I hope to work with patients with disabilities in some capacity as a physician,” she said. “I am still exploring the various specialties out there, but my experience with the PHP project and CCS has furthered my interest in working with this unique and wonderful population of patients.”



PROFESSIONALS

Meet Sadie

DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL

I've been at CCS for over 6 years, I started when my daughter, Natalie, was in Kindergarten. Long story short: CCS never made me choose between work and being there for Natalie when she needed me. I never felt like I'd be reprimanded, and I never had the fear of losing my job. (I did lose one once when I was in and out of doctors' offices with her when she was little.)

"CCS made balancing work life and being a single parent not only possible, but enjoyable and rewarding."



Whether it was medical appointments, sick days where she couldn't go to school or had to be picked up from school early, or other reasons - I was just able to go do it. There were many, many times over the years when I had to just go be there for her. Being a single mom, with very little help parenting, this was and IS invaluable.

In many cases it's not as simple for other single parents. I don't mean to be dramatic, but the flexibility, understanding, and sense of family at CCS allowed me to be the mom my child needed - whenever she needed it - and believe it or not, support her.



Way2Work at CCS offers a unique continuum of employment supports: from pre-vocational to first job, career development – even self-employment – through retirement. Way2Work provides individuals with disabilities greater opportunities to showcase their skills, build careers, and pursue independence. At the same time, we partner with Vermont employers to build and diversify the workforce.

Bridging

Bridging at CCS partners with **Burlington, Colchester, Mt. Mansfield Union, South Burlington, and Winooski High Schools.**

We offer a full academic year organized around four learning modules:

- Career exploration
- Community connection
- Independent living
- Advocacy

Last year **13** students participated in the program.

School2Work

S2W offers career skills development and job placement that prepares high school students with disabilities for successful transitions to the competitive workplace. It is home to our Youth Employment initiative through Vermont's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

SCHOOL2WORK BY THE NUMBERS

11 students participated
7 total employment placements
6 work Internships completed, 1 summer internship secured
3 of the 11 students graduated from high school with employment
46 worksite tours and informational interviews completed
3,341 hours of support provided to students in FY22

Four (4) Schools participated during our first year:

- Mount Mansfield Union High School
- Milton High School
- Winooski High School
- Bellows Free Academy



ADULT EMPLOYMENT

Adult Employment remains the flagship of our Way2Work continuum, which continues to be a leader in its field. We were particularly proud of our success in both helping reserve jobs and make new placements as the pandemic wore on. In fact, Way2Work earned a \$10,000 bonus for exceeding target performance outcome indicators through Vermont DAIL (Department of Disabilities, Aging & Independent Living).



Way2Work

Supported Employment at CCS

BY THE NUMBERS

- **89%** of Way2Work participants employed in competitive workforce
- **78%** of all CCS consumers employed
- **Nine** (9) new job placements
- All participants at or **above minimum wage**
- Wage range **\$11.75 to \$20.74 per hour** (\$14.07 average)
- Hours worked range **1 to 35 hours per week** (10.5 average)
- Total Wages Earned: **\$233,296.00**
- Total Social Security Savings: **\$116,648.00**

To say I am proud of this “little agency that can” is an understatement. I’m often asked “How do you know that your programs impact the community” or just “How do you do it”?

I answer with our saying, “It’s the CCS secret sauce.” But what is the secret sauce? It’s our people; our staff, our partners and the folks that rely on us for the essential services that we provide. It’s the unwavering determination to make our community more robust, with every citizen participating, belonging and being part of something bigger than us alone.

Michelle Paya
Director of Education and Employment Services





The Bridging Peer Mentor Program

THE NEWEST GREAT THING!



Bridging

Youth in Transition at CCS

Every year, whether prepping for the coming academic year or evaluating one just ended, Bridging Coordinator **Emily Anderson** asks herself, “*What’s the next, new great thing?*” Last year she knew it was incorporating peer mentors into the program.

“Having adults with disabilities in lives of youth with disabilities is vital to their healthy development.”



Bridging is building a model that brings in leaders in the disability world to share expertise with students in a number of ways. From experienced self-advocates, to PhD level academics, to seasoned theater professionals and entrepreneurs, Emily said they add something important, and different from what leaders without disabilities can offer.

As a former Bridging student Thomas made the ideal first peer mentor. “I can mentor and be enthusiastic and inspiring and clear, but it all means more when he says it,” Emily said. “Thomas walked the bridge.” And then there’s his knowledge of the program.

“Bridging is a schedule and maze that can be hard to explain, but Thomas lives the schedule,” Emily said. “It’s part of his blueprint.”

And her next great new thing? “My dream is in three years he runs it!”

Stay tuned . . .



MENTORING

Meet Thomas

BRIDGING'S FIRST PEER MENTOR

I was a Bridging student during its first year at CCS. I was familiar with CCS as a new member of Champlain Voices, the self-advocacy group. Bridging gave me the opportunity to really connect with other students, and schools, and to get out into the community and meet people like I would never have imagined otherwise. I learned about leadership, and becoming Bridging's first advocacy group president helped shape my career with GMSA (Green Mountain Self-Advocates). And although I've been involved with Bridging in some capacity each year since it started at CCS, I never imagined six years after being a student, I would become Bridging's first ever Peer Mentor.

My role as peer mentor involves working with each learning pod in such areas as learning how to use public transportation, friends and relationship classes, going to different places in the community, and much more. Having a peer mentor in Bridging was unthinkable when I was student. To be several years into the program and to have the next generation of students look up to someone who has a disability, that is out in the adult world, feels so rewarding. Someone who inspires them and can appreciate each student for who they are. It's been amazing to see these students grow and develop right in front of my eyes.



Bridging

Youth in Transition at CCS





YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Meet Brandon

A WAY2WORK SUCCESS STORY



School2Work

Career Development for
High School Students at CCS

Brandon says he was initially nervous about his chances to get a first job, but wanted to try. "I thought working would be fun and keep me busy," he said. "I don't like to be bored." No worries there. In June, with support from School2Work, Brandon landed two jobs – at Subway in Essex, and a seasonal gig at West Bolton Golf Course that he hopes to return to next year.

Brandon's favorite responsibility at Subway is "prep work, keeping things nice and neat," he said. "And I like the free food." The golf course is a good fit for his love of the outdoors. "They had a nice view up there," he said.

A graduate of Bridging at CCS, Brandon said that experience helped him negotiate the challenge of starting two new jobs. "The Bridging program helped me learn and practice life skills and build confidence," he said. He said he still calls on skills developed in Bridging.

Brandon said it took some time for him to understand his tasks at both jobs, but learning his positions built his confidence. And he credits his employers with helping him succeed. He said he's received solid training and support and, citing occasional memory issues, said he's confident he'll find support when he's stuck.

Brandon is not certain about his career goals, or what jobs he might want in the future. But he's developing strong work skills and building a solid resume. We like his chances moving forward.

"Brandon began his experience with a great amount of uncertainty in his potential," said Liz Underwood, Youth Employment Specialist. "Since then, he's not only progressed, but flourished at both job sites. Seeing him grow in so many ways and being part of that experience has been an honor. His team and I could not be prouder of how far he's come these past few months."



LEADERSHIP & PARTNERSHIP

Meet Ashley

**PRESIDENT OF THE VERMONT
CHAPTER OF APSE**



Way2Work

Supported Employment at CCS

FY2022 coincided with **Ashley Dubois'** first year of a two-year term as President of the Vermont Chapter of APSE (Association of People Supporting Employment First). Ashley serves as Employment Coordinator in our **Way2Work** program, so she's a natural fit for an organization that seeks "to facilitate the full inclusion of people with disabilities in the workplace and community."

"I'm excited to be on a team dedicated to rebuilding and expanding our VT APSE chapter. I've enjoyed getting to know folks from different areas that are doing similar work to us here at CCS, and collaborating on how to better support Employment First in Vermont."



A vital component is training, and APSE partnered with the Center on Disability and Community Inclusion (CDCI) at UVM to provide a "Mobile Technologies" training, featuring Tony Gentry, at Lake Morey Resort in May. Ashley noted that it was the first training event hosted by Vermont APSE since October 2019.

"We have a goal of offering more trainings and events for supported employment professionals," Ashley said. "So, stay tuned for more to come!"



Public Health Project

CCS partnered with a team of eight medical students from the **Robert Larner College of Medicine at UVM** on a semester-long research project through the **Public Health Project (PHP)**. The group examined ***Understanding communication experiences of patients with intellectual and developmental disabilities in healthcare settings.***

Participating students included **Ashwini Sarathy, Ty Bever, Richard Q. Vuong, Aathmika Krishnan, Olivia Domingue, Rachel Thompson, Charlotte Evans, and Michael H. Le.**

“As a group, we enjoyed every aspect of the project from meeting with nurses, support care persons and consumers themselves.” Ashwini Sarathy said.

“It was very gratifying to develop surveys and piece through the results so that we could make recommendations to providers on how to better the care of these patients.”



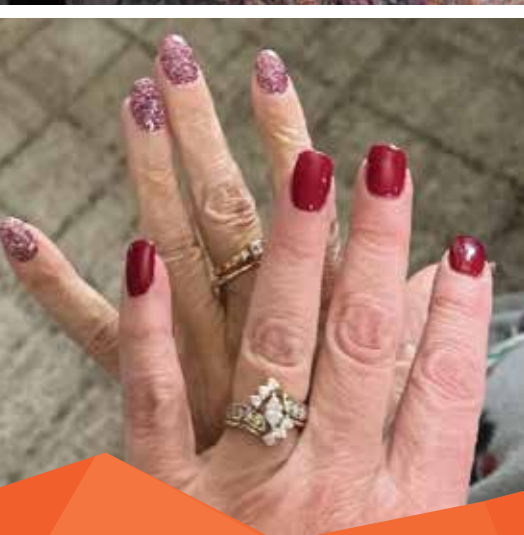
The project found, in part, “Despite high levels of provider experience, communication in the healthcare setting remains challenging for individuals with IDD. Areas for improvement include targeted interventions such as personalized communication tools and patient-centered approaches. HCPs must address these factors to improve quality of care for individuals with IDD.”

The **American Public Health Association (APHA)** selected the project’s final **abstract** and **poster** for presentation at the **APHA Annual Meeting in Boston.**

Dr. Stephen Everse served as the team’s Faculty Mentor and CCS Development Coordinator **Mike Reilly** served as Community Mentor.



ADULT FAMILY CARE



Homeward at CCS is our Adult Family Care (AFC) program. It provides long-term home supports, in a family setting in the community, to individuals who are elderly (or with a physical disability) and are eligible for the "Choices for Care" waiver.



Homeward

Essential Home Supports at CCS

AFC offers a 24-hour shared living option in the home of another person. Homeward participants receive ongoing case management from CCS.

Jean lives with Hilery, a home provider, and her family, and they are such a good match. Jean is able to see her daughter and go on outings of her choice all the time; they get their nails done, eat out and even see shows at the Opera house. Jean's daughter joined the family for Thanksgiving.

Just as important, Hilery said Jean teaches her things daily, including a lot about healthy eating and cooking new things. They have a great sense of humor together, and it's a wonderful match."

Donna lives with her daughter Ginger. The Adult Family Care model enables her to see her husband every day, as long as she wants. That's the independence we really try to support.



ANNUAL AWARDS



In April 2022, CCS finally held its COVID delayed Awards Lunch.

Our own Emily Anderson provided an inspiring keynote and we presented our Community Impact Awards, each named for a founding member of our organization.

JOYCE LAWRENCE AWARD FOR BELONGING:

Freya Waters and Lucy Rogate

PAULINE O'BRIEN AWARD FOR ESSENTIAL SUPPORTS:

Carol Tessier

THERESA VILLEMAIRE AWARD FOR PARTICIPATING:

John Cammarano, Homewood Suites

DOTTIE FULLEM AWARD FOR ADVOCACY:

Greg Haskins



"Greg is a great self-advocate, very fun to be around. He always comes to our meetings. A former vice-president of our group, he tried again to run for an officer role with his 'Vote for Me' campaign speech and, even though he lost, he just keeps coming back. We like that he never gave up on what he wanted to do. As you know, for self-advocates, never giving up is the self-advocacy way. Greg's also the best dancer at CCS!"

~ Hasan Ko, President Champlain Voices Self-Advocates



FINANCIALS

Balance Sheet

| | 6/30/2022 | 5/31/2022 | Variance |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Cash | \$1,266,700 | \$1,168,826 | \$97,874 |
| Accounts Receivable | 718,218 | 657,159 | 61,059 |
| Prepaid Expenses | <u>49,463</u> | <u>44,533</u> | <u>4,930</u> |
| Total Current Assets | 2,034,381 | 1,870,518 | 163,863 |
| Property & Equipment | 1,890,875 | 1,890,875 | 0 |
| Accumulated Depreciation | <u>(1,035,789)</u> | <u>(1,029,900)</u> | <u>(5,889)</u> |
| | 855,086 | 860,975 | (5,889) |
| TOTAL ASSETS | \$2,889,467 | \$2,731,494 | \$157,973 |
| Accounts Payable | 192,301 | 69,650 | 122,651 |
| Accrued Expenses | 495,621 | 521,705 | (26,084) |
| Deferred Income | 17,091 | 45,779 | (28,688) |
| Current Portfolio of Long-Term Debt | <u>30,169</u> | <u>4,137</u> | <u>26,032</u> |
| Total Current Liabilities | 735,182 | 641,271 | 93,911 |
| Long-Term Obligations, less current | 6,032 | 36,130 | (30,098) |
| NET ASSETS | 2,148,253 | 2,054,093 | 94,160 |
| TOTAL NET ASSETS & LIABILITIES | \$2,889,467 | \$2,731,494 | \$157,973 |
| Days cash on hand (1) | 59.52 | 55.51 | 4.01 |
| Days Revenue in Receivables (2) | 32.55 | 29.88 | 2.67 |
| Current Ratio (3) | 2.77 | 2.92 | (0.15) |
| Long-Term Debt to Equity (4) | .28% | 1.76% | -1.48% |

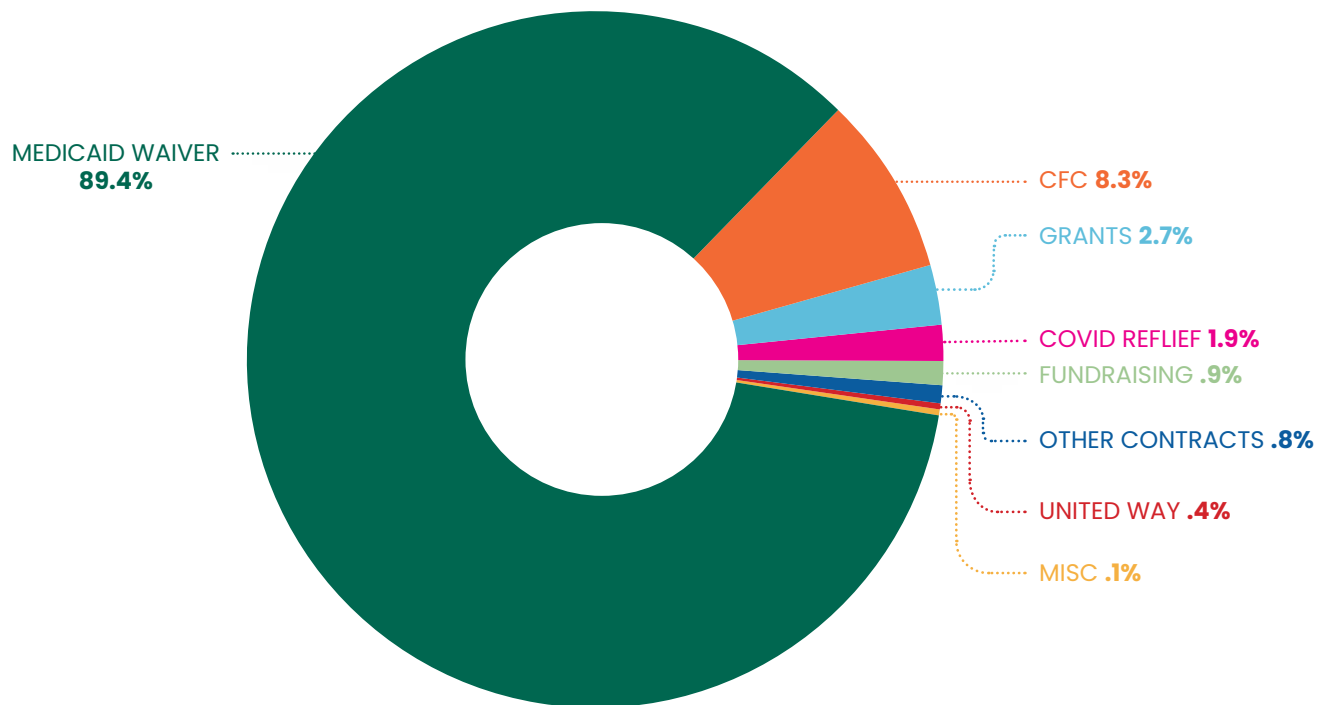
1. Number of days cash w/o add'l funds before agency runs out: **over 90 is good**
2. Number of days on average it takes to collect a/r: **under 45 is good**
3. Ability to pay short-term obligations: **1.5 or greater is good**
4. Determines the level of debt: **below a level of 2 is good**



FINANCIALS

Revenue

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Medicaid Waiver | \$6,843,815 |
| CFC | \$673,112 |
| Grants..... | \$216,002 |
| COVID Relief | \$149,880 |
| Fundraising..... | \$74,473 |
| Other Contracts | \$68,188 |
| United Way | \$30,297 |
| Miscellaneous..... | \$7,443 |
| TOTAL SUPPORT & REVENUE | \$8,063,212 |



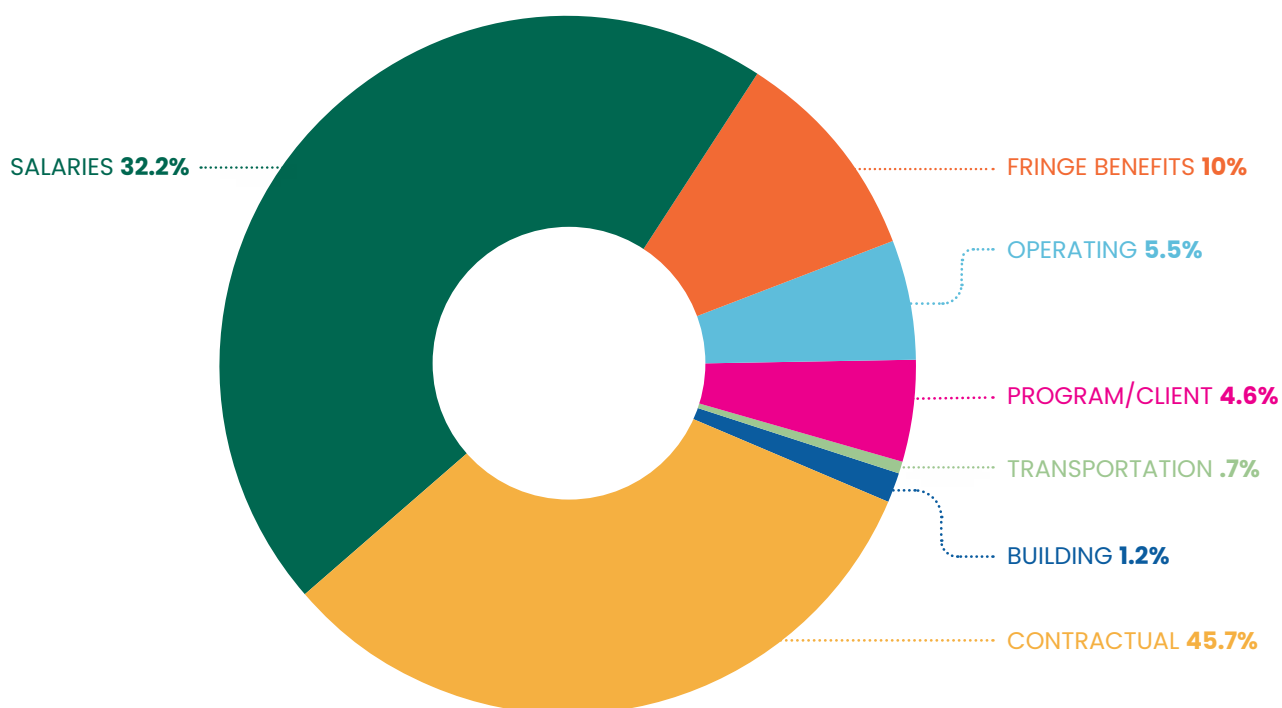
NOTE: The financial statement above represents the agency’s unaudited internal financial statement intended solely for the use of management of the agency and should not be used for any other purpose.



FINANCIALS

Expenses

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Salaries..... | \$2,542,216 |
| Contractual..... | \$3,596,897 |
| Fringe Benefits..... | \$788,525 |
| Operating | \$430,502 |
| Program/Client..... | \$362,675 |
| Building..... | \$91,568 |
| Transportation | \$58,147 |
| TOTAL SUPPORT & REVENUE | \$7,870,529 |



NOTE: The financial statement above represents the agency's unaudited internal financial statement intended solely for the use of management of the agency and should not be used for any other purpose.



BEST PLACES TO WORK

CCS earned a spot on the list of **"Best Places to Work in Vermont"** for a 4th consecutive year. Here are some of the anonymous comments staff provided judges when surveyed on what they liked most about working at CCS:



"Strong, transparent, inclusive, welcoming leadership: it's clear that senior leadership cares and values all employees."

"The team I work with is amazing and one of the best I've ever been a part of."

"Community Heart."

"Small organization with family-style culture."

"CCS is a great place to work and I'm proud to be an employee."

"Work-life balance, fun and meaningful work with clients."

"Supportive work culture, accessible relatable leadership, excellent mission."

"I am thrilled to be a part of this engaging, vibrant community of compassionate professionals."

"Staff feel respected and part of a team."

"Leadership, flexibility, valuable work, excellent mission."

"Has a community feel. People's voices are heard."

"Working here feels like family. This place makes people feel proud to be here."

"They value each employee and we have a tight-knit work community. I am proud to work for CCS!"

"CCS values it's employees, listens to our concerns and ideas and is always actively advocating for the employees and clients. They push for the wages we deserve, think outside the box in all aspects, and have many fringe benefits that other employers don't have."



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 Benjamin Watson
 Bruce & Carol Weimer
 Douglas & Claire Weston
 Jody Whalen & Phil Merrick



Champlain Community Services, Inc.

Champlain Community Services, Inc.

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Champlain Community Services (CCS) is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) corporation in it's 55th year of service to our community. CCS offers support to individuals with intellectual disabilities and autism throughout Northern Vermont.