



# 2023 Grant Recipients

## Final Report

# Caring Women Building Community



Greenwood Women Care (GWC) engages community-minded Greenwood women in collective learning, giving, and growing together. We are a strong, vibrant group of women committed to our mission as *Caring Women Building Community*. The overarching goals of Greenwood Women Care are to offer participants the opportunity for personal growth, to develop as engaged members of our community, and to improve the quality of life for everyone in Greenwood County through our grantmaking.

**The Greenwood Women Care tagline serves as an abbreviated reminder of our mission:**

**learn • give • grow**

We welcome, include, and reflect the broad range of Greenwood women from many professional and personal sectors. Our quarterly meetings, socials, and other events are fun and interesting experiences open to all members and any interested women who would like to attend as guests. Our current membership includes more than 160 women, and new members are always welcome! Each member contributes an equal amount annually and has an equal vote in granting decisions. Annual membership contributions are directed to our Granting Fund for awarding grants to nonprofit organizations serving in Greenwood County and to the Greenwood Women Care Endowment. A small percentage is applied to administrative costs. The full membership contribution and all additional contributions to Greenwood Women Care are tax-deductible.

Applications for annual grants to nonprofit organizations serving Greenwood County are accepted from August 1-31, and voting takes place in October. Each year, GWC holds a grant writing workshop, as well as information sessions for local nonprofits. Information on the grant requests is presented to members to help us make informed voting decisions.

**In 6 years of granting, we have awarded 62 grants totaling \$403,974!**

In 2023, collective funds received through annual membership and other designated contributions enabled GWC to disburse a total of \$75,000 in grant funding for 10 nonprofits serving residents of Greenwood County. Each recipient organization was asked to submit a final report describing their use of the funds. The following pages summarize these final reports.

Greenwood Women Care is an initiative of the Greenwood County Community Foundation, a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt, public foundation. Contributions are fully deductible to the extent permitted by law. To find out more, check our website at <https://www.greenwoodcf.org/greenwood-women-care/> or send an email to [gwc@greenwoodcf.org](mailto:gwc@greenwoodcf.org).

## Beyond Abuse

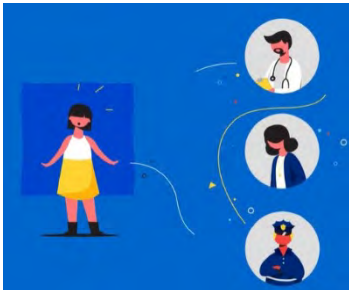
**\$7,000**

# Training Symposium on Child Abuse

**Staff training on investigation, evaluation, treatment, and prosecution of child abuse**



A crucial part of Beyond Abuse's purpose is to provide support and services to victims of child abuse and their families in accordance with the National Children's Alliance Standards. When a child discloses abuse, the child is brought to the Children's Advocacy Center, a child friendly, neutral, safe facility, where they are interviewed by a highly trained forensic interviewer. The Children's Advocacy Program provides forensic interviews, child maltreatment medical exams, advocacy, and counseling for child victims of physical and sexual abuse and ensures that abused children are not further victimized by the systems designed to protect them. It is through the Children's Advocacy Center that child victims and their families can find comfort, healing, and justice.



The professionals involved in the investigation convene for the forensic interview to hear the child's disclosure, share information with one another, and determine next steps in the investigation.

The Children's Advocacy Center model promotes the multi-disciplinary team approach when handling these cases in order to reduce trauma and increase communication and efficiency throughout the investigative process. The Beyond Abuse multi-disciplinary team consists of staff members (family advocates, therapists, and forensic interviewers), law enforcement, the Department of Social Services, the Solicitor's office, and medical personnel. It is important to provide professional development and continuous training concerning this approach.

## Use of Greenwood Women Care Funds

The South Carolina Network of Children's Advocacy Centers and the Children's Advocacy Centers of North Carolina held a symposium in Myrtle Beach in May 2024 to offer multi-disciplinary training for professionals involved in the response to child abuse. The program included discipline-specific and cross-training of professionals in

the investigation, evaluation, treatment, and prosecution of child maltreatment cases. The grant from GWC allowed the Beyond Abuse Client Services Director, Therapists, Family Advocates, Forensic Interviewers, and one multi-disciplinary team member to attend the symposium.



## Impact of the GWC Grant

The 3-day training equipped staff with the knowledge and skills to increase a personal and organizational vision. The training was in May 2024. From May to October 2024, Beyond Abuse conducted 180 intakes, 48 medical exams, 159 forensic interviews, and 130 family advocacy sessions.

One of the forensic interviewers who attended the conference wrote, "It was a great opportunity to meet other professionals in this field and learn from their experience. It was inspiring to see so many men and women from different areas of law enforcement and child advocacy come together to discuss the wide variety of topics that play a role in our work. Not only did I gain additional knowledge related to my profession, but I was also moved to see just how many people are dedicated to serving the children and families in our state. It was a vivid reminder that we are not alone in our work, and that no child is alone in whatever they may be experiencing. Attending the Symposium allowed me and my team to strengthen the connections we have with other agencies across the state so that we can further our efforts against child abuse. It was truly an eye-opening experience."



## Burton Center

**\$5,500**

# Learning Through Technology

## Tablets for day program serving people with disabilities and special needs



Burton Center is a nonprofit, multicounty agency that was created in 1971 to provide essential services to individuals with disabilities and special needs and to offer much needed assistance to their families. Burton Center provides services for people with autism, intellectual disabilities, head injuries, spinal cord injuries, and related disabilities.

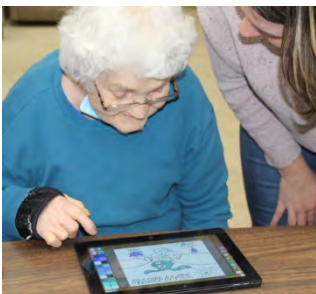


The Burton Center Day Program offers day support and services in a therapeutic setting to enable individuals to achieve, maintain, improve, or decelerate the loss of personal care, social, or adaptive skills. These services are provided in non-residential settings that are licensed by the state. Adult Day Services typically provide supervision, social activities, arts & crafts, reading, music, exercises, and outings in the community, along with games and activities.

Burton Center currently operates 4 Day Programs in the Greenwood, Ware Shoals, Saluda, and Lexington areas. The Day Program serves both residential individuals and individuals that live at home with their family members. For some individuals, attending the Day Program is their only outlet from their home during the day/week.

## Use of Greenwood Women Care Funds

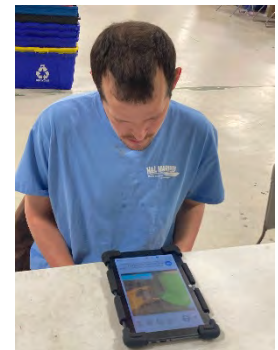
The funds from Greenwood Women Care were used to purchase tablets (iPads) for program participants to use in classroom settings to help these individuals meet their personal Day Activity individual support program goals and provide additional educational training. These



individuals were able to utilize the games & activities on the tablets to help them with their reading, math, fine motor, and memory skills, and to teach them how to work independently.

## Impact of the GWC Grant

Susan Keown, Day Program Director, stated that "When we introduced these tablets to the individuals, they were excited and very interested. As the trainers began to assist them, it was heartwarming to watch them learn how to operate them. These tablets open up a whole new world for them."



One staff person wasn't sure if an elderly individual would participate. When presented the tablet, the individual moved to the table without hesitation and enjoyed participating.

This funding provides the training needed to help with memory skills, fine motor skills, math skills, reading skills & to teach them how to work independently.



## Community Initiatives

**\$10,000**

# Healthy Opportunities for Prenatal Equity (H.O.P.E.)

## Materials and staff costs for expansion of obstetrics clinic at La Clinica Gratis



Community Initiatives provides an umbrella of services for individuals and families, including health services, outreach programming, and youth programs. La Clinica Gratis/The Free Clinic meets the healthcare needs of uninsured and under-insured residents of Greenwood, Abbeville, Laurens, Saluda, Edgefield, and McCormick counties. Bilingual staff are available to assist patients during all operating hours

The Healthy Opportunities for Perinatal Equity (H.O.P.E.) program addresses health disparities for specific demographic groups regarding maternal health by developing and providing a program



led by Community Health Workers through the obstetrics clinic at La Clinica Gratis. The program targets uninsured and under-insured expectant women who face barriers to accessing quality healthcare services during pregnancy, childbirth, and the

postpartum period. These disparities are influenced by various factors, including race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, age, geographic location, and immigration status.

### Use of Greenwood Women Care Funds

Community Health Workers undergo a 5-month training period that includes certification as perinatal specialist and certification as Community Health Workers (Navigators). Funding from Greenwood Women Care was crucial in supporting the recruitment and training of the program's 2 initial Community Health Workers, ensuring the successful launch of the H.O.P.E. program. The Community Health Workers guide participants through prenatal care, connect them with vital resources, and educate them on breastfeeding and newborn care. The funding allowed for the development of culturally sensitive training and educational materials, enabling the Community Health Workers to build trust and empower participants with knowledge and confidence.



### Impact of the GWC Grant

The Community Health Workers have been instrumental in providing personalized support to uninsured minority expectant mothers in Greenwood County, helping address disparities in maternal health outcomes. The foundational support from Greenwood Women Care has established a strong framework for the program's success in serving this underserved community.

Targeted outcomes include lowering the number of infants with low birth weight, increasing the rate of breastfeeding, enhancing knowledge and self-confidence of mothers, and increasing attendance rates at scheduled medical appointments. A full case load is considered to be 35-40 participants. At the time of this report, 70 participants were enrolled. Of these, 5 mothers have given birth, and all delivered babies at normal birth weights. Two of the 5 mothers initiated breastfeeding. All participants completed a survey assessing their knowledge and self-efficacy, and early responses indicate increased confidence in managing their health and navigating pregnancy. All enrolled participants attended their scheduled appointments. One mother volunteers as part of the advisory board to figure out ways to encourage other expectant mothers to join the program. These factors combined suggest that the program is on a solid trajectory to meet or exceed its long-term goals.

## Connie Maxwell Children's Ministries

**\$7,500**

# Connie Maxwell Fitness (MaxFit)

## Fitness equipment for middle school and high school student Connie Maxwell residents



Connie Maxwell Children's Ministries is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a long history of

caring for children and their families, and it has continued to develop new programs with individualized services that provide stability and Christ-centered support during their time of need. Each year, more than 200 children and their families participate in several core programs: residential care, crisis care, foster care, and family care. Its vision is to become a national leader in Christian ministries of healing for vulnerable children and families. Connie Maxwell Children's Ministries offers children a holistic approach to healing from trauma. One way they do this is through Connie Maxwell Fitness Health and Wellness program (MaxFit for short).

### Use of Greenwood Women Care Funds

MaxFit serves both students and staff on campus by providing a fitness facility on campus that hosts daily fitness classes, as well as one on one meeting for nutrition and wellness advice. These classes not only allow the staff and students to work on their physical well-being but also allow a safe space to address other facets, such as emotional, spiritual, and mental well-being.



The funds from Greenwood Women Care were used to purchase needed equipment to serve students who live on campus, as well as staff. The purchased equipment included 2 rowing machines, 2 ski ergs, and 2 Push Sleds (fan favorite), kettlebells in various weights, resistance bands in various sizes, 6 penalty boxes, as well as a few medicine balls. This equipment has allowed the workouts to be more diversified to meet more needs of the students, as well as serve more students and staff in a given class. The funding from Greenwood

Women Care enables Max Fit trainers to meet students where they are at, and to provide a service that has been scientifically proven to help rewire the brain and help to heal a child that has experienced trauma. Because of this grant, along with other funds



that were allotted to this project, the services have been expanded to elementary-aged students. A bigger space was needed to do this for safety reasons, as well as some different equipment for their physical needs.

### Impact of the GWC Grant

Lauren Boyd, the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM)-certified personal trainer who leads the program, reports the following:

"I have watched children's walls break down. I have had some hard, yet extremely meaningful conversations with so many students. I have watched children walk in, defeated from a hard day, and leave with confidence and their head held high knowing they conquered something difficult. Our staff and students' favorite pieces of equipment came from this grant. I have watched rowing competitions spark a light of competition amongst those who participate. I have watched students and staff find friendly competitions in 40-second to a minute sprints. I have witnessed both staff and students push limits on the push sled to see how strong they truly are. But it's not just equipment. It's what the equipment has provided to those using it...those things being confidence, self-worth, the knowledge they are capable and able to push through hard things, because if they can do it at MaxFit, they can conquer other difficult things in the real world. It's become about relationships, but the space and equipment were needed to accomplish all of this. It's so much more than we envisioned and we are so grateful. Greenwood Women Care was a pillar of support as we dreamed of a space to serve our students and staff through fitness and wellness."



## Faith Home

**\$10,000**

# A Hand Up for Women in Greenwood

## Materials & supplies for expansion of addiction recovery services for women



Faith Home provides a faith-based, 8-week, in-house rehabilitation program for men and women seeking freedom from drugs and alcohol. Since its founding in 1966, more than 45,000 men and women have participated in Faith Home's programs. A team of certified clinical addiction counselors develops specific treatment and implementation plans for each resident's individualized recovery. The program includes counseling sessions, weekly meetings with addiction counselors, church services, nutritious meals, daily devotions, work therapy (assigned tasks in and around the Faith Home campus) and healthy fun activities.



Faith Home is the only facility in Greenwood County that provides free inpatient alcohol and drug addiction recovery treatment. Because the number of women needing rehabilitation and recovery services in Greenwood County and outlying counties has increased in recent years, in order to help reduce the growing waiting list it became necessary to increase the bed space to accommodate additional residents. Four years ago, another facility for women was added, which has allowed Faith Home to accommodate up to 44 beds dedicated to female clients.

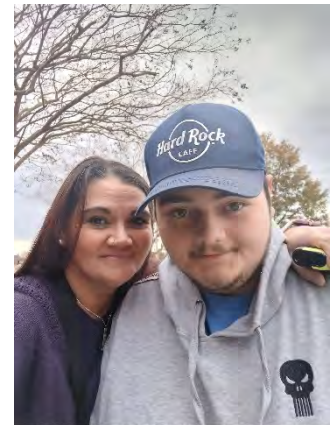
### Use of Greenwood Women Care Funds

Faith Home now provides services annually to more than 600 residents from Greenwood and neighboring counties, including 60 women from Greenwood County. The funds from Greenwood

Women Care fully covered the expenses for 7 women to participate in the 8-week program.

### Impact of the GWC Grant

One female participant, echoing the experience of many others, stated: "This program taught me essential life skills, but more importantly, it revealed to me the profound love of God. I learned that the antidote to addiction is connection with others. Previously, I lacked a support system and family, but Faith



Successful Faith Home graduate and her son

Home provided me with both. Today, I am proud to say I have been sober for 17 months. I have secured my own housing, a vehicle, and a job, and I have reunited with my children. Most importantly, I have developed a close and intimate relationship with my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Faith Home truly transformed my life, giving me the family I never had, for which I am forever grateful."



Successful Faith Home women 1 year after recovery

*Greenwood Community Theatre*

**\$10,000**

## Penguin Project Theatre Program

**Theatre program for children and youth with special needs**



The Penguin Project is an inclusive theatre opportunity that allows children of all abilities to participate in a fully realized musical production. It prides itself on being a safe environment for creative expression. Penguin Project productions provide young artists who are differently-abled (including Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, autism, intellectual disabilities, learning disabilities, visual impairment, hearing impairment, delays, emotional disorders, and other neurological disorders) the opportunity to star in the roles of a musical. These artists are joined on stage by a "peer mentor"—a volunteer buddy who works alongside the artist through the full rehearsal and performance process. Parents assist their children in learning lines, songs, and dances outside of the rehearsals, since rehearsal times are limited and need to focus on interactive processes rather than memorization. Family members and other adult volunteers also help build sets, sew costumes, find props, coordinate the backstage area during the run of the show, and are often called upon to assist the staff at rehearsals.

### Use of Greenwood Women Care Funds

Expenses of a Penguin Project production include cost of the set, costumes, props, lighting, sound, and royalties, as well as additional expenses to make the theater more accessible for the Penguin artists, such as ramps for wheelchairs, projection equipment for subtitles, and specially printed scripts. The funds from Greenwood Women Care were used toward the 2024



production of Winnie the Pooh Kids. A total of 22 artists, 25 mentors, and 10 volunteers were involved in the production. Almost 1,000 community members attended a performance.

### Impact of the GWC Grant

A drastic cut in 2024 funding from the SC Arts Commission had put the 2024 Penguin Project production at risk. The grant from Greenwood Women Care, along with funds from other sponsors, enabled the production to continue as planned.

The Penguin Project not only provides children with a valuable recreational experience and an opportunity to display their creative talents, but also enhances social interaction, communication skills, assertiveness, and self-esteem. For example, one mother was convinced that her child would never be able to participate due to his disruptive behavior, but she signed him up to "give it a try," and he ended up successfully playing the role of Pooh's belly.



Benefits include friendships formed between the artists and mentors, including increased interaction in social settings, and increased social activity and engagement of the families of the artists, who typically feel isolated and alone. The project also creates a broader awareness in the community of the ability of children with special needs and engages a new segment of the Greenwood population in theatre. In addition, it has facilitated new partnerships between Greenwood Community Theatre, The Burton Center, The Genetic Center, Project HOPE, and Greenwood School District 50.





## Junior Achievement of Greater SC

**\$3,500**

# JA Inspire—A Career Exploration Learning Experience

## Program management, materials, and technology for virtual K-12 classes



Junior Achievement of Greater South Carolina is a nonprofit organization dedicated to giving young people the knowledge

and skills they need to own their economic success, plan for their futures, and make smart academic and economic choices.

Junior Achievement (JA) was founded in 1919. Its first program, JA Company Program,<sup>®</sup> was initially offered to high school students on an after-school basis. In 1975, the organization entered the classroom with the introduction of Project Business for the middle grades. Since then, Junior Achievement has expanded its activities and broadened its scope to include in-school and after-school programs.

Nationally, Junior Achievement reaches more than 4.8 million students per year in 209,651 classrooms and after-school locations. JA programs are taught by volunteers in inner cities, suburbs, and rural areas throughout the United States, by over 100 Area Offices in all 50 states. JA of Greater South Carolina reaches approximately 21,000 students per year.

### Use of Greenwood Women Care Funds

The funds provided by Greenwood Women Care enabled a total of 90 students at Emerald High School to participate in an online career exploration experience called "JA Inspire Virtual." The funding helped provide the resources for the program, including the platform's access and program materials to enhance the program's effectiveness.



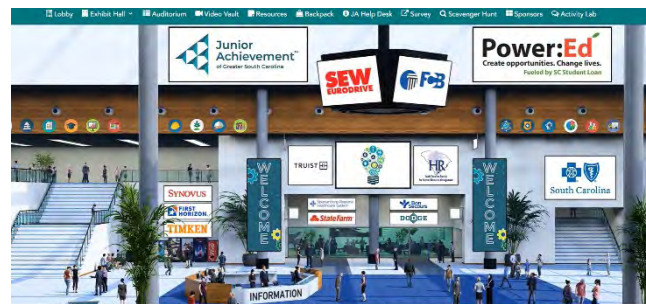
Landing page of the JA Inspire Virtual Interactive Platform

The online interactive platform allowed students to attend webinars and presentations, explore company exhibits, and interact with career speakers as a powerful way for students to

learn about real-world career opportunities and their local economy. The students had several pre-lessons before they experienced and explored the online interactive platform.

Students were able to:

- Gain insight into career clusters that interested them
- See the connection between high school programming choices and careers
- Collect information about the education required to be successful in a job
- Practice soft skills



Virtual lobby (navigation center) of the online interactive platform JA Inspire

### Impact of the GWC Grant

The funding provided by Greenwood Women Care was instrumental in the success of JA Inspire being delivered at Emerald City High School. It enabled JA to offer the learning experience at no cost to the school. This support allowed students to engage in a robust, interactive virtual experience where they explored diverse career paths and connected with local industries.

As a result, the students reported feeling more confident in their career exploration journey, and the school gained a valuable resource for preparing students to meet workforce demands. Teacher feedback was enthusiastic, "JA did an excellent job with this program." "Students were able to explore and learn about many opportunities!" "This is a great program." Students reported that they "learned a lot about different jobs and many companies in South Carolina."

The investment from Greenwood Women Care directly contributed to equipping students with knowledge and tools for future success.

*New Morning*

**\$7,000**

## Expanding Access to Contraceptives

Staff training and salaries for family planning counseling and access to contraceptives

**NEWMorning** New Morning's mission is to provide all South Carolinians with access to information about family planning and equitable access to high-quality contraceptive services. New Morning's program:

- Educates South Carolinians about family planning and contraceptive methods.
- Ensures that all women have equitable access to all FDA-approved contraceptive methods, no matter their insurance coverage, socioeconomic status, or where they reside in the state.
- Increases the knowledge and skills of the state's healthcare workforce related to family planning counseling and contraceptive care.

To meet the needs of Greenwood County women, New Morning partners with Carolina Health Centers, a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) that provides services in 5 Greenwood County Clinics, The Montgomery Center for Family Medicine, and Juniper Women's Health & Wellness. These 7 sites together have served 1,923 women with contraceptive services (counseling and FDA-

approved birth control methods) during the grant period.

These 7 clinics care for predominately low-income uninsured or under-insured women across the county. Each clinic provides ongoing appointments for women in Greenwood County who desire to plan for their futures and prevent an unintended

pregnancy. Staff at each of these locations are trained in providing quality, patient-centered services. Women can obtain services by contacting the clinic directly or via [www.nodrama.org](http://www.nodrama.org).

### Use of Greenwood Women Care Funds

The grant from Greenwood Women Care supported New Morning's program and the 7 Greenwood partner clinics to continue to provide uninsured and under-insured women with contraceptive education and a choice of FDA-approved birth control methods for free or reduced cost.



### Impact of the GWC Grant

Greenwood Women Care has allowed the women served in the county to determine when—or if—to have children, on their own timeline, empowering them to plan their futures.

**58%**

**reduction in unwanted births**

New Morning's program with Greenwood Women Care's funding support served 1,923 women in Greenwood County last year alone. Through our combined efforts, the

Guttmacher Institute estimates that 410 unintended pregnancies were prevented and \$3,592,340.00 in maternal and birth-related gross public costs have been saved to date in Greenwood County.

## The Greenwood Promise

**\$7,000**


# Greenwood Promise Phase 2

## Scholarships for the junior and senior years for Bachelor's degree programs



The vision of The Greenwood Promise is to foster a community actively engaged in education. The mission is to provide a tuition free path for Greenwood County students to obtain the post-secondary education needed to develop a highly skilled workforce, improve overall quality of life, and increase economic vitality. The program is a place-based last-dollar scholarship program designed to reach beyond the boundaries of economic need and academic ability. As such, the Promise awards funds to offset the remaining balance of post-secondary tuition and mandatory fees for every high school graduate whose primary residence is zoned for Districts 50, 51 or 52. Initial Promise awards began with the SPRING high school graduating class of 2017.

The Greenwood Promise starts by changing mindsets of what is possible with kindergarten visits. This Promise is being made to those students from kindergarten to seniors; that this funding will be there for them when they graduate. Extensive amounts of time are spent in high schools coaching students on their options for post-secondary education. In 2024, The Greenwood Promise connected with 4,000 students and/or parents to share more about the opportunities available to them.



**Complete Your Bachelor's Degree at No Cost!**

Scholarships are available for tuition and mandatory fees for eligible majors.  
**Apply today!**

**Questions?**  
(864) 377-8110  
nherbert@greenwoodpromise.com

South Carolina. The program funds majors deemed essential and/or difficult to fill roles. Eventually The Greenwood Promise would like to broaden the degree programs offered. The goal is to expand the program to fully fund a 4-year degree for every high school graduate zoned in Greenwood County District 50, 51, 52.

## Use of Greenwood Women Care Funds

The bachelor's pathway began with the 2023-2024 school year. On average, The Greenwood Promise invests approximately \$1,700 per student. The funding from Greenwood Women Care enabled support for 4 additional students who might not have received assistance otherwise. The grants to these 4 students allow them to graduate without taking out any loans for final year, easing their financial burden and setting them up for future success.

## Impact of the GWC Grant



Phase 2 of The Greenwood Promise program will contribute to multiple outcomes for Greenwood County, including improved student performance, proven high school graduation rates, and a better prepared workforce that will make the community more attractive, setting in motion a virtuous cycle of attracting new residents

and recruiting new businesses.

Recipients of Promise scholarships will appreciate their community's investment in education and return with an enhanced level of engagement and pride. The place-based nature of The Greenwood Promise will be integral to these efforts as it facilitates the alignment that is crucial for positive community growth.





## Tranquility Point

**\$7,500**

# Mission Aqua Therapy

**Water therapy program for children, limited-mobility veterans, and 1st responders**



Tranquility Point is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping struggling members of our community find a more solid footing spiritually, emotionally, and physically. The mission of Tranquility Point is to prevent suicide among at-risk groups, including veterans suffering from PTSD, first responders, and foster children who have aged out of the system. Tranquility Point offers a free 5-day visit a healing environment with over 15 recreational activities. The support team strives to meet guests where they are at mentally and spiritually, and to encourage their physical well-being.

The goal of the Mission Aqua Therapy project is to help guests of Tranquility Point access the waterfront of Lake Greenwood safely in order to participate in aquatic healing activities, such as kayaking, fishing, swimming, and meditation.

## Use of Greenwood Women Care Funds



To allow safe and secure participation in water activities, it was necessary to construct a seawall along the shoreline, with a sandy beach area and a dock, as well as a wooden path for guests to access the water without having to go into weeds and rocks on the shoreline. The funds from Greenwood Women Care provided the base to start this project while lake levels were dropped

during the winter. This was the prime time to get seawalls in and work on anything that needed to be done underwater, like placing riprap stones for protection against erosion, and placing sand for the waterfront. All this had to be put in place before construction on the dock could take place. This area was the base for all the other pieces to fall into place to make it a safe environment for the second phase of the project.

## Impact of the GWC Grant

The sea wall and wooden path have made a stable entry point to get into kayaks. The dock has made it possible for fishing guides and their boats to pull right up and the guest can enter boats with their gear without having to walk through a shoreline of weeds sticks and rocks. Water has been proven to lower blood pressure and anxiety. Water can also ease the tension in muscles and give a sense of calm. Water activities can improve your sleep, build self-esteem, and add a sense of freedom and independence. The experiences of visitors to Tranquility Point support these benefits.

For example, a Marine Corps visitor who went on a guided fishing trip reported that, although he only caught a few fish, the time spent on the water talking about experiences in the military and the struggles that come with trying to reintegrate into civilian life again made this the best day he had had in a VERY-VERY long time. It gave him relief knowing he was not the only one who has those struggles. Being around people he could relate to gave him a tight bond that he had not felt in a very long time.

Another example was a female veteran who went kayaking and felt like a flood gate had opened and she could pour all her demons out onto the water and the weight was lifted. She wanted to be on the water every day during her stay. She said the sunset cruises in the evenings brought a sense of peace and tranquility to her.

Other veterans who have visited enjoy just hanging out on the dock and having peer-to-peer talks. They say there's something about the sun setting over the water that make it seem like you can solve all the world's problems.

