


# CREATING *a NEW & Better* FUTURE



WESTCHESTER INSTITUTE  
FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

2016 ANNUAL REPORT



**“BECAUSE OF  
WIHD, I WAS ABLE TO  
GO TO HIGH SCHOOL  
ALONG WITH  
EVERYONE ELSE.”  
-CLIENT**

**283**

Research publications  
and presentations  
(2015-2016)

**1,027**

Children and adults  
served by Dental Van  
(2016)

**3,794**

Audiology visits  
(2016)

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**1,730**

Speech-language  
visits (2016)

# MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

## *Creating a New and Better Future*

I joined the WIHD family as CEO less than a year ago, and it has been my privilege to get to know the organization, the talented and dedicated professionals at WIHD, and our many community partners and supporters. Joining an organization with a vibrant 50 year history has been an exciting venture, offering daily opportunities to make a positive impact in the lives of the individuals and families we serve in a multitude of ways, both big and small. This was the inspiration for the theme of this year's annual report: "Creating a New and Better Future."

As a University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD), WIHD has an obligation to provide excellence in leadership, and to continually educate, innovate and advocate for the people we serve. In order to ensure that our work stays responsive to the ever-evolving needs of the communities we represent, and that we maintain our position at the cutting-edge of research and technology in the field, WIHD has made it a top priority to cultivate a culture of inclusion and diversity.

This means we make the conscious and intentional choice to seek out, invite, encourage and integrate the unique and valuable perspectives of every stakeholder, at every level, from leadership, to faculty and staff, to professionals in the field, and, most importantly, to the individuals and families we support. These are the many voices that enrich our work, enhance our understanding of one another, and set the stage for successful relationships, at every step along the way.

It is my pleasure to reflect on all we've accomplished in 2016, and to offer a glimpse into what we've got in store for 2017, as we share this annual report of our work at the Westchester Institute for Human Development UCEDD. I am proud to join with all of you as we work together toward our shared vision of a future in which individuals with disabilities and vulnerable children live healthy and productive lives as full members of society. Thank you for taking the time to learn more about us.

**SUSAN FOX, PhD**  
**PRESIDENT AND CEO**

*Susan*



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## CORE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Adult Health Care Services

Dental Services

Speech and Hearing Services

Behavioral Psychology Program

Assistive and Multimedia Technology Center

Early Intervention and Special Education Parent Information and Training

Medicaid Service Coordination and Self Directed Support Brokerage

Early Intervention Service Coordination

Child Welfare Services

Children's Advocacy Center

Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and related Disabilities (LEND) Training Program

Research and Dissemination

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For more information, visit our website at: [www.wihd.org](http://www.wihd.org)

# TRANSFORMING CHILD WELFARE



## BUILDING ON EXCELLENCE IN CHILD WELFARE INITIATIVE

WIHD is committed to providing a safe, healing space and a continuum of effective clinical services to support Westchester County children and families served by our Child Welfare program. Our beautifully redesigned Child Welfare space, as well as our enhanced clinician training in a variety of treatment modalities with proven results for children and families, represent the culmination of our Building on Excellence Child Welfare Initiative.

The three-year project was completed in 2016 with the support of individuals, local foundations and organizations, whose donations and fundraising efforts ultimately raised \$180,000. A professional design firm was commissioned to transform eight therapy rooms and the designated waiting area into warm, bright, calming spaces that introduce elements of the natural environment into the formerly institutional-appearing space.

Fresh paint and cheerful wall graphics; new carpeting; durable, child-friendly furniture; functional storage; and brand-new therapeutic toys and games have all been incorporated into the space to better serve all the children and families who come to WIHD for services. These renovations send the reassuring message to the children we serve that they are important, and that there are many people who care about them.

# 750

Children in foster care received specialized medical services, (including routine developmental screenings, though the Pediatric Medical Unit)

# 283

Children evaluated by Children's Advocacy Center CAC (2016)

# 220

Children participated in Every Family Counts Aftercare program (2016)

“WE OFFER THESE CHILDREN HOPE FOR A BETTER FUTURE - A SAFE PLACE TO EXPLORE THEIR THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS, AND A WELL-TRAINED EAR TO LISTEN.”

- Danielle S. Weisberg,  
LCSW, Director,  
Child Welfare Services  
& Children’s Advocacy  
Center



## TRAINING ON EVIDENCE-BASED TREATMENT MODELS

In addition to these beautiful enhancements to our physical space, our highly qualified clinicians receive professional training in some of the latest and most effective treatment models. Two such models are Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) and Alternatives for Families, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (AF-CBT).

Evidence-based treatment models enhance our work and improve the efficacy of the interventions we provide to families in the Child Welfare system. The result is that more children in foster care can be reunited more successfully with their families. These kinds of positive outcomes reaffirm the importance of keeping our staff current in best practices in the field through training and ongoing clinical consultation. This training, which is not funded by our program’s contract with Westchester County, is made possible through generous ongoing donor support.

### Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT)

TF-CBT is a model of psychotherapy that combines trauma-sensitive interventions with cognitive behavioral therapy, and is demonstrated to be effective in improving symptoms of post-traumatic stress, depression and anxiety.

### Alternatives for Families, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (AF-CBT)

AF-CBT is an intervention for families who are struggling with anger, conflict and aggression. This approach teaches families positive coping and self-control skills, constructive problem-solving and effective, non-physical discipline strategies to promote calmer, safer, stronger family relationships.



# CULTIVATING A CULTURE OF INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY



## CULTIVATING A CULTURE OF INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

At WIHD, we are committed to reducing disparities in healthcare and community supports that can result from differences in ability, race, ethnicity, language, socioeconomic status, and other factors. As part of our ongoing effort to remove barriers to access to high-quality, competent health care, WIHD actively cultivates a diverse workforce culture that reflects the demographic trends of Westchester County, and to continually improve cultural literacy within our organization.

## DIVERSITY WORKGROUP

Jenean Castillo, PhD, WIHD's Cultural and Linguistic Competence Coordinator, is leading our work in this area. She has convened a Diversity Workgroup in which staff representing all of our programs have developed goals to promote and enhance individual and organizational cultural and linguistic competency in order to better serve individuals with disabilities, vulnerable children and their families.

Dr. Castillo is highly qualified to lead these efforts at WIHD through her experience as a Diversity and Inclusion Fellow at the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD); as the recent director of an Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD)-funded Diversity Fellowship Program at WIHD; and through her completion of the National Center for Cultural Competence's Leadership Institute for Cultural Diversity and Cultural and Linguistic Competence.

**34%**

WIHD staff who are from underrepresented racial & ethnic backgrounds (2016)

**23%**

WIHD staff who are bilingual (2016)

**14**

Languages in which WIHD staff are fluent (2016)



## BILINGUAL OUTREACH

Luarben Bencosme, MS, is the Bilingual Outreach Specialist at WIHD's Hudson Valley Special Education Parent Center (HVSEPC) and the Lower Hudson Early Childhood Direction Center. Lulu has translated many of WIHD's parent materials into Spanish, and is committed to reaching out to and supporting diverse communities. She recently collaborated with the White Plains Public Schools and El Centro Hispano, Inc. at an event for Spanish speaking parents where she talked about special education services.

## DIVERSITY WORKGROUP KEY OBJECTIVES

1. Carry out staff development and training with a focus on unintentional bias and its impact on health disparities.
2. Shape the organization's recruitment and retention strategy towards a more diverse staff at all levels.
3. Identify methods to assess and address health disparities within WIHD's programs and services.



# BUILDING BRIDGES THROUGH ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY



Assistive Technology (AT) is one of our most exciting and ever-changing areas of service. AT refers to any device that helps a person with a disability complete everyday tasks – from traditional devices, such as hearing aids and wheelchairs, to cutting-edge technology such as communications devices, tablets and apps.

Our AT program provides information and referral services, device demonstrations, graduate-level training for health and educational professionals and school consultations.

We also offer an AT loan library program that bridges gaps between funding sources, so that individuals with disabilities aren't left without supportive devices during transition periods, such as when a child advances from preschool to kindergarten.

In 2016, we expanded our loan library through the New York State Education Department Adult Career and Continuing Education Services-Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR). We are now able to loan AT devices to young adults, such as those starting college or entering the workforce.

Matching children and adults with the best devices for their needs can be life-changing for these individuals – and at the same time, their successes can be used to demonstrate the value of AT, providing the evidence needed to secure long-term funding for these devices. Here we share two such success stories.

## 1,328

Client visits to AT for evaluations (2016)

## 317

AT devices borrowed by children (2016)

## 33

School districts received assistive technology evaluations and trainings (2016)

# SUCCESS STORIES



## *Cara*

Cara is a bright, creative 16-year-old girl who is unable to write due to paralysis. In 2016, Cara was matched with a special stylus known as a mouthstick, which would enable her to operate an iPad using her mouth.

To help Cara develop the muscles needed to master this new skill, occupational therapist Izel Obermeyer, the director of the Assistive Technology Program at WIHD, introduced Cara to an artistic technique known as mouth painting.

Mouth painting has been a gift to Cara in more ways than one: In addition to helping her master the mouthstick, it gave her an enjoyable new pastime, and opened up whole new avenues for creative expression.

Cara's beautiful artwork graces the front cover of this report. In 2017, her success will be used as a case study to demonstrate to her school district the value of mouth painting as an important therapeutic model that addresses not only disability, but the whole person.

## *Joy*

Four-year-old Joy, an adorable children's clothing model with curly blond hair and a sunny smile, has a developmental disability that makes her speech unintelligible. Joy was able to overcome this obstacle with an iPad app that could speak for her. But during a transition period between funding sources, Joy temporarily lost the use of the device.

With the help of generous donor funding, Joy received a free evaluation through the AT loan library and was matched with a replacement iPad. In 2016, Joy's extraordinary progress became the pivotal case study that demonstrated the value of the iPad, and successfully convinced her school district to cover the cost of the device.



Izel Obermeyer,  
Occupational  
Therapist,  
Director of  
Assistive  
Technology  
Program



# INNOVATING FOR BETTER OUTCOMES IN SPECIAL EDUCATION



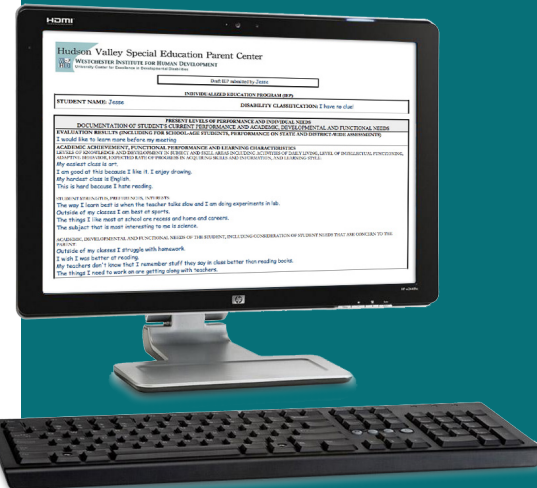
**“WHEN WE INTRODUCE TEAM-BUILDING STRATEGIES INTO THE SPECIAL EDUCATION PLANNING PROCESS, WE SHIFT THE ENTIRE DYNAMIC FROM ONE OF POTENTIAL CONFLICT TO ONE OF COLLABORATION. THAT’S WHEN REAL PROGRESS HAPPENS – AND THE RESULT IS A BETTER OUTCOME FOR THE CHILD.”**

- Naomi Brickel, M.S.Ed., HVSEPC Director and UCEDD Transition and Technology Specialist

The development and execution of a student’s Individual Education Plan (IEP) is a complex and often emotional process involving numerous stakeholders. Thus effective communication between parents, students, and local and state special education directors is critical to its success. By taking the time to consider all of these diverse perspectives, and by implementing smart strategies to bring those priorities into alignment, the Hudson Valley Special Education Parent Center (HVSEPC) helps these parties recognize that ultimately they share a common goal – the best possible outcome for the child.

To help students become more involved in this important process, HVSEPC Director and UCEDD Transition and Technology Specialist, Naomi Brickel, M.S.Ed., spearheaded the development of an innovative new online resource, the Student Draft IEP Tool. She has been invited to present at conferences and in school districts throughout the Hudson Valley region and New York State. This user-friendly program helps parents, guardians and students prepare in advance for the IEP meeting. The interactive tool uses plain-language prompts to generate information from the student that is relevant and important to IEP development, walking them through the IEP online to create their own draft IEP document which they can print and bring to their Committee on Special Education meeting.

The new Student Draft IEP Tool is a valuable supplement to the numerous free resources our program already provides to parents and students, including worksheets, suggested preparation timelines, newsletters and online video learning modules. Our highly qualified and dedicated staff, and the many free resources and services we provide, help families to better understand the special education process and engage effectively as collaborative members of their children’s decision-making teams to promote better special education outcomes.



**The Hudson Valley Special Education Parent Center (HVSEPC) at Westchester Institute for Human Development (WIHD) provides free resources to parents and guardians of students with disabilities in the Hudson Valley, to help families to better understand the special education process and engage effectively as collaborative members of their children’s decision-making teams.**

# COMMITTING TO EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP



The LEND Program (Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and related Disabilities), funded by the US Maternal and Child Health Bureau, prepares health and education professions graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, people with disabilities and family members of people with disabilities for leadership roles working with and on behalf of children with disabilities and their families.

WIHD's LEND Program provides 300 hours of innovative interdisciplinary leadership training each year to 25 trainees from many disciplines. Trainee disciplines include audiology, family specialist (a parent or sibling of a person with a disability), genetic counseling, health advocacy, health administration, medicine, nursing, nutrition, occupational therapy, psychology, public health, self-advocacy, social work, special education, and speech language pathology. The training focuses on the skills and knowledge required for leadership in advocacy, including policy, research, education and training, and clinical systems, to assure best outcomes for children with disabilities and their families.

WIHD's major education and training affiliate is New York Medical College (NYMC). LEND trainees may choose to earn a fifteen credit certificate from NYMC's School of Health Sciences and Practice for the work they complete as a LEND trainee. In addition, LEND faculty and trainees from WIHD collaborate at the local, state and national level in research, training and advocacy activities. LEND faculty provide consultation, continuing education and technical assistance to professionals and organizations in our local community, at the state level, and across the nation.

## WIHD LEND'S DISTANCE LEARNING COLLABORATION WITH TWO U.S. TERRITORIES

The WIHD LEND Program is in its 11th year of our LEND training collaboration with Puerto Rico University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (PRUCEDD). Since 2006, twenty health professions graduate students at the University of Puerto Rico have completed the LEND training program. Every year, two students participate as WIHD LEND trainees.

In July 2016, the LEND Program expanded its distance learning component to provide WIHD LEND training to the United States Virgin Islands (USVI), with two trainees from St. Croix, USVI, participating annually as WIHD LEND trainees.

# ENHANCING PATIENT-CENTERED CARE



The PCMH model, which emphasizes value-driven vs. volume-driven care, has been shown to provide the following benefits:

- improved patient outcomes
- reduced health care costs
- enhanced overall care experience
- increased satisfaction for patients, providers and staff

In keeping with WIHD's patient-centered philosophy of compassionate, comprehensive care, we are now working to achieve recognition as a Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).

A PCMH strives to meet patients' health care needs and preferences using a team-based approach, with expert care coordination among providers both within the primary care setting and in the broader community, including hospitals and emergency rooms. The PCMH model is particularly well-suited for individuals with disabilities, who may have multiple, complex and chronic health problems managed by numerous providers.

In 2016, WIHD completed the planning phase to become an accredited PCMH. We have dedicated one of our talented researchers to the role of Project Manager and are working with the New York State Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment (DSRIP) Program to achieve PCMH recognition by the end of 2017.

## SERVICE ENHANCEMENTS

WIHD's enhanced health care services will include patient-centered interaction, care coordination, linked health care data, continuous quality improvement and self-management support.

## STRUCTURAL ENHANCEMENTS

WIHD realizes it needs to bring its space into alignment with the PCMH model of care. Our vision includes a forward-thinking design concept for a primary care suite that would allow patients to remain in one place while professionals providing ancillary services such as blood draws would rotate through the facility. This new delivery approach would streamline the entire care experience for both patients and providers while alleviating stress and anxiety for all of our patients.

# 5,066

people with disabilities received comprehensive and compassionate health care (2016)

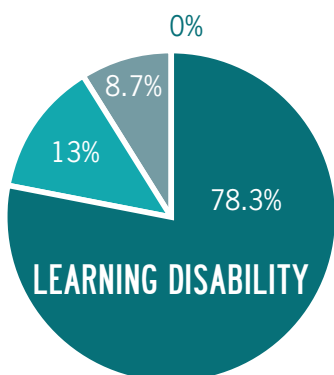
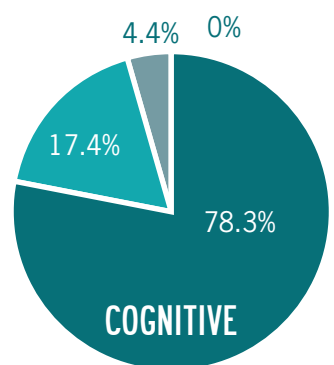
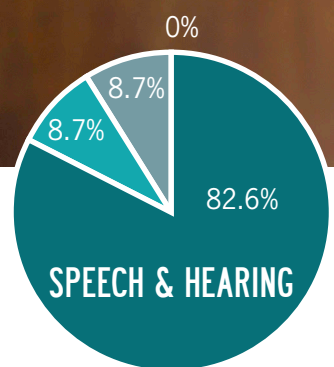
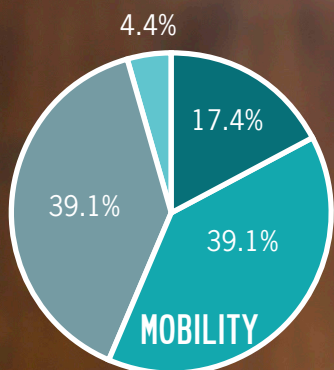
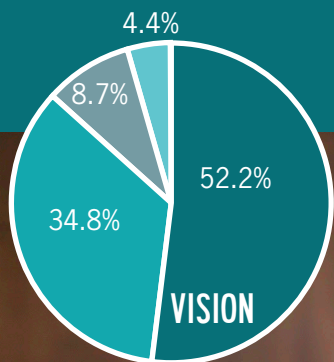
# 40,997

visits by our patients for primary and specialty services (2016)

# 17

specialty areas, including cardiology, dentistry, dermatology, endocrinology, neurology, ophthalmology, podiatry, psychiatry, urology and women's health. (2016)

# EMBRACING COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH



**Levels of self-reported competency in offering assistance to library patrons by disability type.**

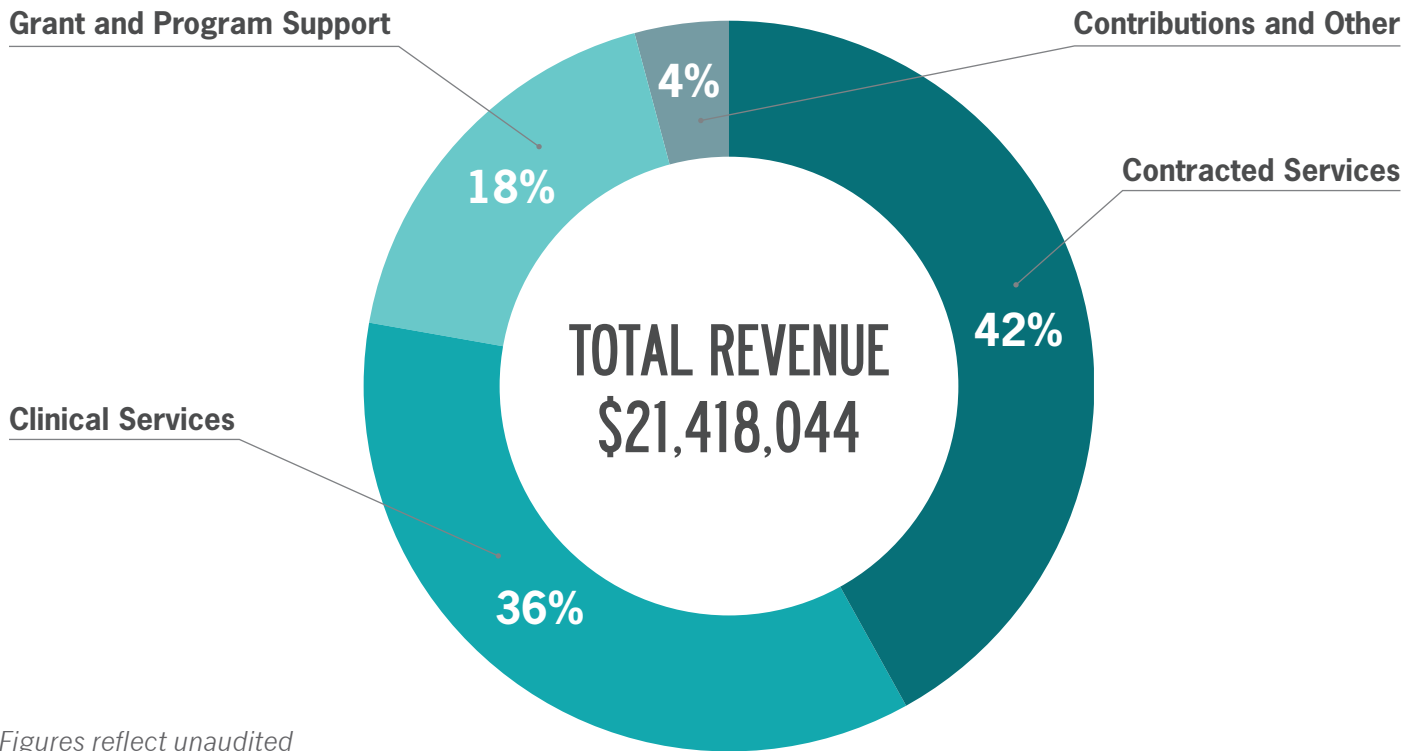
- Beginners
- Novice
- Intermediate
- Expert

Pamela Thornton, WIHD's Board Chair, who also serves as the Director of the Chappaqua Library, was concerned as to whether the public libraries in Westchester County have the ability to appropriately serve people with disabilities in the community, including physical accessibility, assistive devices and appropriate technology.

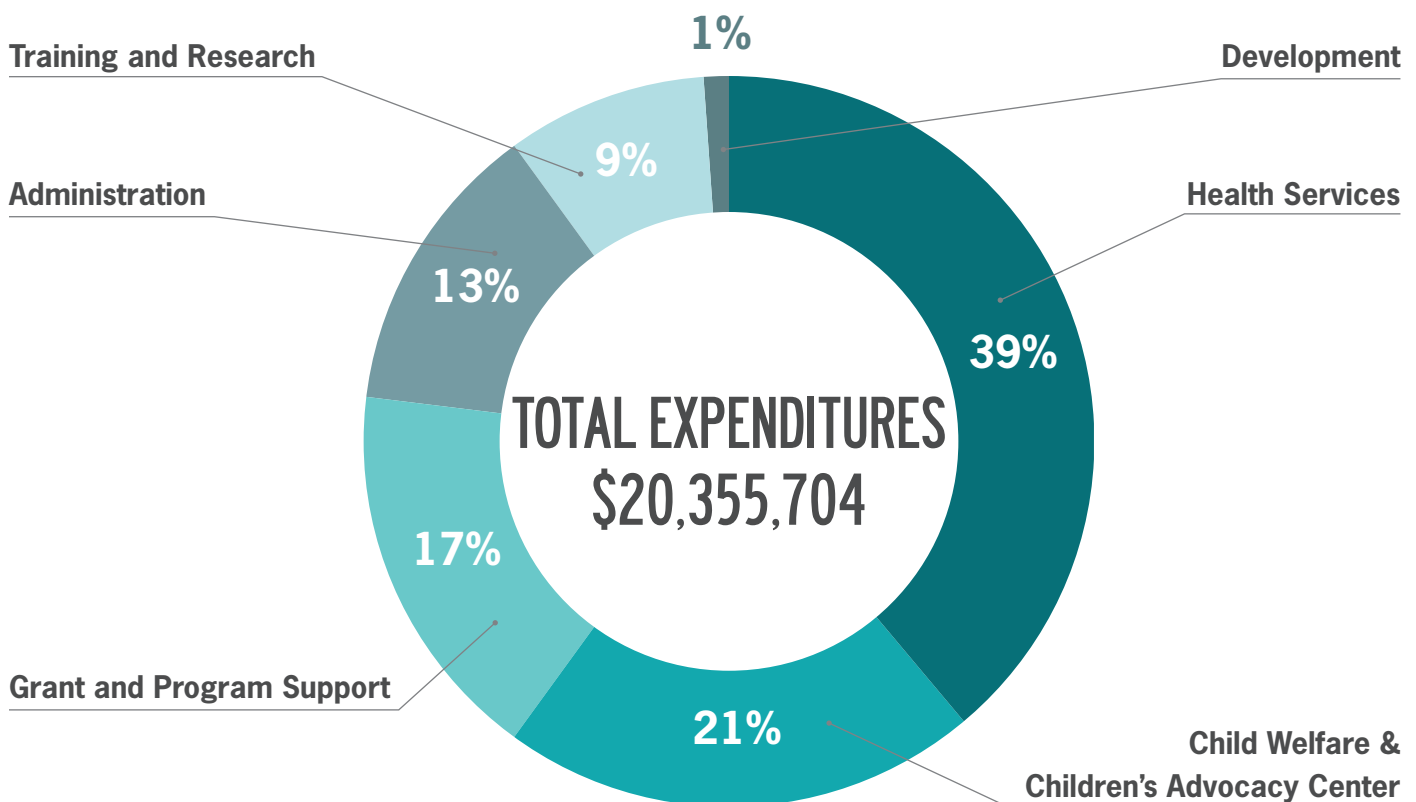
With the leadership of WIHD's researchers, Pam's question sparked a research project that includes trainees in WIHD's Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND) Program. At the early stages of inquiry within Westchester County, we found that most librarians and staff consider themselves at the beginner or novice level in terms of their ability to offer assistance to library patrons with disabilities (on left).

We are currently working to distribute the survey to other Hudson Valley counties as well as New York City and Long Island to obtain additional survey responses. With this information, as well as that from a follow-up project that seeks to better understand local library use and personal experiences, we hope to develop educational modules for librarians and staff. Our overall goal is to make recommendations on how librarians can best serve people with disabilities in our community.

# 2016 FINANCIAL REPORT\*



*\*Figures reflect unaudited financial statements for 2016*



# HONORING OUR DONORS



## ANSLEY BACON FUND

To honor Dr. Ansley Bacon's thirty year legacy and to ensure WIHD's long-term sustainability, generous supporters established a dedicated pool of funds in 2015 intended to provide enduring support for WIHD and its work. We thank the following donors for their generosity to WIHD and the Ansley Bacon Fund. The following list represents total pledges and one-time donations received in 2015 and 2016.

### **\$100,000 and above**

Anonymous  
Dr. David O'Hara and Dr. Ansley Bacon  
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# HONORING OUR DONORS

WIHD is greatly appreciative of the generous support of our many donors. Without your support, we could not carry out the many programs at WIHD. This list acknowledges the contributions made from 2014 through 2016. We at WIHD want to thank each and every one of you for your generosity and support over the years.

The following list acknowledges gifts made to WIHD from 2014 through 2016. Please let us know if your name or that of your company, foundation, or organization is missing or printed incorrectly.



## **\$25,000 and over**

Dr. David O'Hara and Dr. Ansley Bacon  
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Steven and Lisa Yellen  
Mary Zingaro

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New York Medical College  
NYS Children's Alliance  
Lyn-Marie Pilgrim  
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Andrew and Margaret Rubin

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John Sites  
Marie Smith  
Teresa and John Speranza  
Daniel Splitzger and Danielle Weisberg  
Wilson, Elser, Moskowitz, Edelman & Dicker LLP

## **\$100 - \$499**

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Michael Altshuler  
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Joan and Alan Ast  
Robert and Carol Barber  
Martin and Louise Barry  
Charles and Ruth Barton  
Betty Beckler  
Christine Bevilacqua  
Paula Bianco  
David and Karen Blumenthal  
Nancy Boaz  
Bradhurst Pharmacy  
Edward and Susan Brancati  
Richard and Deborah Brennan  
Douglas and Naomi Brickel  
Netsy Burtnik  
William and Clara Carley  
Linda and Frank Caruso  
David and Marianne Chao  
WIHD Child Welfare Department  
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Peter and Margaret Corbett  
Jay and Alezandra Couzens  
Chris Dalrymple  
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