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WASHINGTON • WYOMING

WICHE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROGRAM ANNUAL REPORT

FY 2023



San Juan Mountains, Colorado

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“ WICHE played a pivotal role in connecting the University of Alaska Fairbanks, Social Work program with Northern Marianas College in Saipan. Recognizing that the UAF Social Work program, with their focus on rural practice, Indigenous communities, and with an expertise in distance education, would be the perfect fit for Saipan’s behavioral health needs. WICHE was instrumental in assisting with the creation of a 2+2 partnership that allows NMC students to seamlessly transfer to the UAF BSW program without ever leaving their home community. In its fifth year, [the program has a] growing number of bachelor- and master-level social workers now in Saipan.”

RETCHENDA GEORGE-BETTISWORTH, PH.D.
 Clinical Professor, Statewide BSW Rural Cohort
 Coordinator, UAF Department of Social Work

WELCOME

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

The Behavioral Health Program of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE BHP) has engaged partners like you since 1955. Our program was created at the direction of the Western governors shortly after WICHE was founded in 1953.

Our focus then, and today, is collaboration with our member states, territories, and freely associated states to improve our public systems of care and meet the evolving behavioral health needs in our communities. With your partnership, these efforts help improve these systems. Your support also helps to build and sustain a high-quality behavioral health workforce — needed now more than ever. As with all programs in WICHE’s broad and deep portfolio of work, we accomplish our goals by fostering innovation, sharing resources, and promoting sound public policy.

The WICHE Behavioral Health Program serves to extend the capabilities of partners like you through technical assistance, research and evaluation, and professional development. As we work towards our objectives, our cumulative knowledge informs our partners across the region. The Behavioral Health Program and its staff have been busy this past year. This report is a snapshot of our work across the West.

Highlights include:

- Supporting existing doctoral clinical psychology internship programs in Alaska, Hawai'i, Nevada, Oregon, Idaho, New Mexico, Utah, as well as cultivating new programs in Guam, South Dakota, and with Sanford Health in North Dakota.
- Providing a range of technical assistance and consultation to support communities in response to the critical health crisis of addiction in rural areas.
- Co-directing the Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MHTTC) for Health and Human Services (HHS) Region 8, in partnership with the University of North Dakota.

The work described within this report is illustrative of the breadth of our capabilities and the value of regional collaboration. As you receive this report, we’re already engaged in another busy year, supporting our partners throughout and beyond the WICHE West.

Sincerely yours,



Dennis F. Mohatt



Demarée Michelau



DENNIS MOHATT

Vice President, Behavioral Health and
Co-Director, Mental Health Technology
Transfer Center



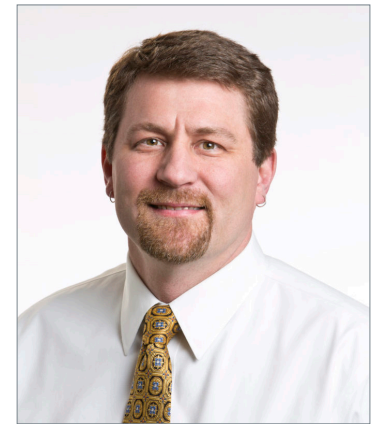
DEMARÉE MICHELAU

President, WICHE

This report covers fiscal year 2023.



Anchorage, Alaska



The WICHE Behavioral Health Program, founded in 1955, improves behavioral health systems of care for mental health consumers and their families in the West and beyond. We work to advance the preparation of a qualified behavioral health workforce in the West. Collaborating with states, territories, and freely associated states, we meet the challenges of changing environments through regional research and evaluation, policy analysis, program development, technical assistance, and information sharing.

wiche.edu/behavioral-health

“Our work at the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (Trust) is aimed at improving outcomes for our beneficiaries; Alaskans with behavioral health conditions and intellectual and developmental disabilities[...]. We know that requires a trained and engaged cadre of health professionals. Our partnership with WICHE has helped us not only better understand the unique needs of Trust beneficiaries from a workforce, service provision, and policy lens, but also take steps to address workforce shortages. Our collaborations over the years have helped to develop, implement, and support a ‘Grow Our Own’ internship training consortium for doctoral-level psychologists, as well as advance the role of telehealth and health technology to support Trust beneficiaries across the state. We look forward to a continued partnership and appreciate WICHE’s focus on ensuring Alaska’s vulnerable populations have access to the care and services they need to thrive.”

STEVE WILLIAMS

CEO, Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority

ALASKA



Sitka, Alaska

Alaska Psychology Internship Consortium (AK-PIC)

The Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Behavioral Health, and the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority contracts with the WICHE BHP to support the AK-PIC to complete the training of students enrolled at the University of Alaska's Ph.D. program in Clinical-Community Psychology, as well as other psychology doctoral students who wish to train and work in Alaska.

PROJECT LEAD: DEBRA KUPFER

ak-pic.org

Native American Research Centers for Health (NARCH)

The WICHE BHP, in collaboration with the Center for Alaska Native Health Research and the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, was awarded a National Institutes of Health (NIH) research grant. This project evaluates the behavioral health aid program focusing on efficacy, implementation, and best practices. As behavioral health workforce issues continue to grow in tribal areas, this research has the potential to significantly influence the development of new programs across the West.

PROJECT LEAD: DENNIS MOHATT

Alaska Psychiatric Institute (API) – Regulatory Compliance

The WICHE BHP was selected through a competitive bidding process to assist the API in maintaining compliance with regulating agencies through review of policies, health information management, infection control, milieu management, risk management, medical staff credentialing, pharmacy practices, and life safety code and environment of care. As part of this four-year project, the WICHE BHP will perform reviews and provide guidance on how to address shortcomings in policies and execution.

PROJECT LEAD: DENNIS MOHATT

Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority – Telehealth Supervision Licensing

The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority contracted with the WICHE BHP to provide outreach, research, and documentation specific to best practices for the supervision of doctoral-level practitioners of psychology who are pursuing state licensure. The BHP reviewed accepted practices for supervision including in-person, telephone, and tele-video modalities for remote locations.

PROJECT LEAD: TODD HELVIG



Superstition Mountains, Arizona

Arizona Evidence-Based Practices (EBPs) Fidelity Monitoring

The WICHE BHP partners with the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System to support fidelity reviews of four EBPs in the Maricopa County public behavioral health system. Additionally, two EBPs are being reviewed in the northern and southern regions of the state. The WICHE BHP employs and supports the project lead and the team of fidelity reviewers.

PROJECT LEAD: ANNETTE ROBERTSON

Arizona Mercy Maricopa EBPs

The WICHE BHP collaborates with Mercy Care Arizona to provide training, education, and guidance concerning EBPs and fidelity tools. The goal of this partnership is to ensure provider staff offer high-quality EBPs and maintain fidelity to identified EBP protocols.

PROJECT LEAD: DEB KUPFER

Arizona Mercy Care Community Action Resources Education and Service (C.A.R.E.S.) Training

The WICHE BHP partners with the Mercy Care Arizona C.A.R.E.S. program to plan and provide trainings, which aim to increase workforce expertise by implementing training strategies for EBPs. Training modules include: Trauma-informed Care for Children, Youth and Adults; Transition to Independence Model; Infant-Toddler Mental Health Coalition of Arizona 0-5 Training; and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Substance Use Disorders including Opioids.

PROJECT LEAD: DEB KUPFER

Avondale Elementary School District Re-Accreditation Technical Assistance

The WICHE BHP provides technical assistance in the Avondale Elementary School District's submission for re-accreditation of the Doctoral School Psychology Internship Program to the American Psychological Association (APA).

PROJECT LEAD: TODD HELVIG

COLORADO



Aspen, Colorado

Colorado Behavioral Health Administration Technical Assistance

The State of Colorado, Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) contracted with the WICHE BHP to support the state's establishment of a Behavioral Health Aide certification process in Colorado. The WICHE BHP has unique prior expertise in the development and operation of the Alaska Behavioral Health Aide Program, and multiple states are considering the replication of this program to address workforce shortages. WICHE will provide technical assistance to the Colorado BHA in its efforts to establish a similar program.

PROJECT LEAD: DENNIS MOHATT



Guam Psychology Internship Consortium celebrates first graduate, Ladera Perez Linn (center).

Guam Psychology Internship Consortium (Guam-PIC)

The Guam Behavioral Health and Wellness Center (GBHWC) contracted with the WICHE BHP to facilitate development of a doctoral psychology internship program. This program supports the preparation and retention of doctoral-level psychologists in Guam. The WICHE BHP is working with GBHWC to ensure the program meets the accreditation requirements of the APA, and will support the internship program through the accreditation process.

PROJECT LEAD: DENNIS MOHATT

guam-pic.org



Kihei, Hawai'i

Hawai'i Psychology Internship Consortium (HI-PIC)

The WICHE BHP continues to assist the State of Hawai'i in the operation and continuous accreditation of the HI-PIC. A primary goal of the internship is to increase the number of psychologists in Hawai'i and build the state's behavioral health workforce. Hawai'i's state Departments of Education, Health, and Public Safety provide funding to support the WICHE BHP's ongoing development and operations of the HI-PIC.

PROJECT LEAD: TODD HELVIG

hi-pic.org

Hawai'i Department of Education – Supplement Recruitment of Clinical Psychologists

The Hawai'i Department of Education has contracted with the WICHE BHP to provide recruitment and contracting of clinical psychologists. This effort ensures that all program requirements for supervision and support of staff, students, and program fidelity are maintained for West Hawai'i's School Based Behavioral Health (WH-SBBH) program. The WH-SBBH program has historically faced significant challenges recruiting and retaining professionals for service provision, due to rural and workforce challenges that leave WH-SBBH without needed professional credentials to supervise and train new SBBH personnel.

PROJECT LEAD: ERIN BRILEY

Hawai'i Early Intervention Services – Rates Study

The Early Intervention Services Section (EIS) of the Hawai'i Department of Health contracted with the WICHE BHP to complete another comparative review of early childhood services compensation methodology and pricing structures. This review included both contracted services and related professional salaries such as general educator, occupational and physical therapists, and speech language pathologist. The EIS rates study compares Hawai'i rates to those in other, analogous states to ensure competitive pay to help maintain a sufficient workforce.

PROJECT LEAD: ERIN BRILEY

IDAHO



Shoshone Falls Park, Twin Falls, Idaho

MONTANA



Big Sky, Montana

Idaho Psychology Internship Consortium (ID-PIC)

The WICHE BHP works with partner agencies to develop a broad and culturally relevant training program to support the preparation and retention of doctoral-level psychologists in Idaho through the ID-PIC. The WICHE BHP facilitates ID-PIC program development, ensures the program meets American Psychological Association accreditation standards, and assists in the accreditation process.

PROJECT LEAD: DENNIS MOHATT

idaho-pic.org

Montana Program for Assertive Community Treatment (PACT) and Montana Assertive Community Treatment (MACT) Fidelity Reviews

The WICHE BHP provides consultation and technical assistance to the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, Behavioral Health and Disabilities Division, regarding the implementation of PACT and MACT. Based on areas of need established by the fidelity reviews, WICHE designed and implemented improvement activities including education, training, and consultation to providers. WICHE BHP developed a Montana-specific fidelity review scale which will be implemented in 2024. Additionally, the WICHE BHP provides ongoing consultation and technical support in developing policies that move services closer to fidelity of the evidence-based practice of Assertive Community Treatment.

PROJECT LEAD: ANNETTE ROBERTSON

NEVADA

NEW MEXICO



Red Rock Canyon, Nevada



Abiquiu, New Mexico

Nevada Psychology Internship Consortium (NV-PIC)

The WICHE BHP continues to support the Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health for the ongoing operations and accreditation of the NV-PIC. The NV-PIC aims to increase the number of psychologists in Nevada and build the state's behavioral health workforce.

PROJECT LEAD: TODD HELVIG

nv-pic.org

New Mexico Psychology Internship Consortium (NM-PIC)

The State of New Mexico contracted with the WICHE BHP to provide consultation and technical assistance to develop and implement a doctoral psychology internship consortium. The NM-PIC will help build quality behavioral health resources in rural areas of the state. The focus of this work is to facilitate the development of the program, ensure that the internship program meets the accreditation requirements of the American Psychological Association, and provide support and assistance for the internship program from initial planning through the accreditation process.

PROJECT LEAD: TODD HELVIG

nm-pic.org

NORTH DAKOTA

OREGON



Watford City, North Dakota



Cannon Beach, Oregon

Sanford Health Psychology Internship Consortium (SH-PIC)

The WICHE BHP worked with the leadership of Sanford Health to develop and implement a broad and culturally-relevant training program to support the preparation and retention of doctoral-level psychologists in North Dakota and Minnesota. Sanford Health has a large national footprint and is a leading agency in the advancement of integrated health services (both physical and behavioral). The internship development began primarily with Sanford's integrated health sites in North Dakota.

PROJECT LEAD: TODD HELVIG

sh-pic.org

North Dakota Behavioral Health Workforce Study

The University of North Dakota contracted with the WICHE BHP to provide consultation and technical assistance as part of the North Dakota Behavioral Health Plan Aim 7: Behavioral Health Workforce. WICHE convened and facilitated a Behavioral Health Workforce Summit with key stakeholders and enabled the development of a Behavioral Health Workforce Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan included recommendations for the North Dakota Legislature about options to increase workforce development opportunities in the state.

PROJECT LEAD: TODD HELVIG

Oregon State Hospital Psychology Internship Program (OSH-PIP)

The WICHE BHP continues to assist the Oregon State Hospital Psychology Internship Program by providing support for the internship website.

PROJECT LEAD: DENNIS MOHATT

oshpip.org

SOUTH DAKOTA



Badlands, South Dakota

South Dakota Psychology Internship Consortium (SD-PIC)

The SD-PIC consists of two sites: The Human Services Center (HSC) and Lewis and Clark Behavioral Health Services. Both sites are in Yankton, South Dakota, and offer a variety of behavioral health services to their clients. The SD-PIC successfully submitted its application to the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers in December 2022 and is currently focused on gathering and submitting all materials for the consortium's website, intern brochure, and handbook.

PROJECT LEAD: TODD HELVIG

sd-pic.org

South Dakota Individualized Mobile Programs of Assertive Community Treatment (IMPACT) Fidelity Reviews and Training

The WICHE BHP supports the South Dakota Division of Behavioral Health in the implementation of their IMPACT, through consultation and technical assistance. This work focuses on conducting quality assurance reviews, based upon the state-specific IMPACT Quality Assurance Scale. The partnership also supports the design and implementation of activities based on areas of need, established by the quality assurance scale findings and previous SAMHSA fidelity reviews. Finally, the WICHE BHP works with the division to provide education, training, and consultation.

PROJECT LEAD: ANNETTE ROBERTSON

South Dakota Human Services Center (HSC) Focused Programming and Staffing Models

The WICHE BHP works with the South Dakota HSC in support of the center's implementation of focused programming and staffing models. The goals of this work include workforce development, establishment of a new strategic plan, and support for employee recruitment and retention.

PROJECT LEAD: DEB KUPFER



Arches National Park, Utah

Utah Psychology Internship Consortium (UT-PIC)

With support from the Utah Medical Education Council, the WICHE BHP worked with partner agencies to develop a broad and culturally relevant training program to support the preparation and retention of doctoral-level psychologists in Utah. Currently, the WICHE BHP provides consulting services to the UT-PIC to assist in preparation for its American Psychological Association accreditation site visit.

PROJECT LEAD: DENNIS MOHATT

ut-pic.org

MOUNTAIN PLAINS MENTAL HEALTH TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER CENTER (MHTTC)



Downtown Fargo, North Dakota

The MHTTC network focuses on augmenting the skills and capacity of the behavioral health workforce by providing evidence-based training and technical assistance that addresses gaps in the continuum of care. This work spans mental illness prevention, treatment, and recovery support across the nation. The MHTTC network has 10 regional centers and two newly appointed Centers of Excellence dedicated to mental health services. The Mountain Plains MHTTC provides free training, resources, and technical assistance to individuals serving those with mental health disorders in the HHS Region 8 states, which include Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming. Particular attention is given to serving providers with limited access to service delivery systems, with a focus on providers working with rural and agricultural communities. Through the School Mental Health Initiative, the Mountain Plains MHTTC focuses on the implementation of mental health services in schools and school systems.

The WICHE BHP, in partnership with the University of North Dakota, administers the federally funded Region 8 MHTTC program. Activities this year include:

- **Webinars and trainings:** The HHS Region 8 MHTTC sponsored more than 100 webinars and training opportunities for more than 6,000 participants on topics such as rural mental health, crisis response and safety planning, traumatic brain injury, implicit bias, cultural responsiveness, trauma-informed practices, mental health practices on resilience and well-being, an interprofessional tool for perinatal mental health, preparing for young adulthood, and direct technical assistance with the Rocky Mountain Tribal Council.

- **Leadership development:** The fourth annual MHTTC Leadership Academy was held over two days in late April. The Academy continues to grow and provides opportunities for emerging leaders from all six states in Region 8 to engage with their peers, network, and learn about their individual leadership styles.
- **Mental health wellness promotion:** Biweekly mental health wellness micro-trainings engage behavioral health providers from a wide range of fields, including rural providers, college mental health professionals, and providers working in addiction and substance abuse and recovery services.
- **School personnel staff development:** An in-person training on the PREPaRE curriculum, developed by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), provides school mental health professionals and other school personnel with comprehensive training on how to establish and deploy school safety and crisis response teams.
- **Trauma-responsive practice:** The third annual in-person Trauma-Responsive Practices in Education Training of Trainers, provided both theory and strategies through HEARTS Core Guiding Principles: Understanding Trauma and Stress; Cultural Humility and Equity; Compassion and Dependability; Resilience and Social-Emotional Learning; and Empowerment and Collaboration. The training also delivered material related to examined trauma and trauma-informed practices through a lens of cultural humility.

PROJECT LEAD: DENNIS MOHATT

mhttcnetwork.org/centers/mountain-plains-mhttc

TOGETHER WITH VETERANS (TWV)



2023 TWV Summit in Westminister, Colorado

Together With Veterans (TWV) is funded by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Office of Rural Health, with support from the Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention. TWV is a program partnership of the VA Rocky Mountain Mental Illness Research, Education and Clinical Center (MIRECC), the WICHE BHP, and local community organizations serving Veterans. TWV engages rural communities via local Veterans and community partners, including healthcare, behavioral health, law enforcement, gun shops, the faith community, and others as identified locally to implement evidence-informed suicide prevention strategies.

The WICHE BHP provides training and technical assistance to Veteran leaders in rural sites to conduct a local needs assessments and create a community-centered action plan grounded in the public health model for suicide prevention. These Veteran-led public health planning efforts apply promising suicide prevention practices and follow these guiding principles:

- **Veteran-driven:** utilizing a local Veteran-majority leadership structure
- **Collaborative:** engaging community partners to strengthen relationships across Veteran-serving programs, healthcare providers, government agencies, and other community leaders
- **Evidence-informed:** leveraging evidence-informed suicide prevention practices
- **Community-centered:** addressing the unique strengths, needs, and resources of each community participating in the TWV program

Since the program's inception in 2015, 37 sites have been launched across 26 states, territories, and one sovereign nation, including 11 WICHE member states and territories. At the close of FY 2023, TWV communities report serving a cumulative of 68,875 Veterans.

PROJECT LEAD: JASON ALVES

mirecc.va.gov/visn19/togetherwithveterans



“Working with TWV has given us a lot of credit in the community because of the programs belief in documentation and the program design. [...] When people see us now, they see us as community advocates and community supporters. [...] We are glad to be a part of the program.”

**JAMES RHODES AND
NINA ALVINA RHODES**

Coordinator and Facilitator for TWV
Coulterville in Coulterville, California

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH (NIH) MONOGRAPH AND ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY



National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Maryland

The WICHE BHP was selected by the NIH to prepare an electronic book and annotated bibliography, "Mental Health in Rural America, 2006-2020," summarizing research findings on mental health and substance use in rural America. This monograph, which is in the process of final review, will provide researchers, policymakers, educators and healthcare providers with the latest information and research results from the past decade concerning mental illness, mental health, and substance use in rural areas. The monograph also identifies gaps in current research and priorities for future research needs. The principal investigator for this 18-month project, Dennis Mohatt, was involved with the development of previous versions of the monograph.

PROJECT LEAD: DENNIS MOHATT

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE



Lexington, Morrow County, Oregon



Student Center at University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire

National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD) Transformation Transfer Initiative

The WICHE BHP is partnering with the NASMHPD in its Transformation Transfer Initiative, funded by SAMHSA. This project is a nationwide effort to implement and expand 988 crisis lines and crisis services, focusing on workforce development, children and adolescents, building crisis services for under-resourced minority communities, crisis and community trauma, and facilitating timely access to community-based mental health services. The WICHE BHP targeted its efforts in rural and frontier regions across all five of these focus areas identified by SAMHSA by developing, organizing, and facilitating designated modules and learning communities, providing follow-up technical assistance and support, and preparing a summary report by late fall of 2023.

PROJECT LEAD: TODD HELVIG

University of Wisconsin – Madison (UW) Learning Collaborative

The UW was awarded a Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grant to initiate learning collaboratives in specialty areas. The UW selected the WICHE BHP as a lead agency to provide training for these collaboratives over four years beginning in 2021, in topics related to behavioral health delivery in rural communities. Each training consists of six remote sessions over 12 weeks educating students, educators, and paraprofessionals on the integration of behavioral health into rural communities. In FY 2021-22, the WICHE BHP collaborated with the Montana Primary Care Association for the provision of trainers to complete the second of four trainings. The 2022-23 training session addressed implementation of substance use and mental health services in traditionally underserved rural areas. Individual technical assistance and mentoring were offered as additional services for those participating in the learning collaborative.

PROJECT LEAD: TODD HELVIG

SUICIDE PREVENTION TOOLKIT



Port Angeles, Washington

The WICHE BHP continues to provide training and support in the use of the Suicide Prevention Toolkit for Primary Care Providers. Originally developed in 2009 with a grant from the HRSA, the toolkit was revised and updated in 2017 to reflect current epidemiological information and align with Zero Suicide, a national best-practice framework for suicide prevention. The WICHE BHP continues to provide training on the use and implementation of the toolkit through webinars and on-site visits.

PROJECT LEAD: DENNIS MOHATT

RURAL OPIOID PROGRAMS



Montezuma, Colorado



Medicine Bow, Wyoming

Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP)

The WICHE BHP coordinates and executes technical assistance and support for the HRSA Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP) – Technical Assistance Project. As a sub-awardee to a JBS International project, the WICHE BHP staff delivers innovative technical assistance to improve prevention, treatment, and recovery services and systems for persons with opioid use and substance use disorders to support 77 designated grant award recipients. Current planning and implementation grantee sites supported by the WICHE BHP are underway in Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, and Washington. This project supports grantees in reducing morbidity and mortality associated with opioid and psychostimulant use in their communities, using evidence-based and sustainable interventions.

PROJECT LEAD: DEB KUPFER

Mountain Plains Rural Opioid Technical Assistance Regional Centers (MP ROTAC)

The WICHE BHP was awarded a Rural Opioid Technical Assistance Regional Centers (ROTA-R) grant from SAMHSA to develop the Mountain Plains Rural Opioid Technical Assistance Center (MP ROTAC). MP ROTAC provides publicly-accessible training and technical assistance to address the misuse of opiates and stimulants across the behavioral health continuum of care in HHS Region 8. Through training, webinars on evidence-based practices, developing a regional advisory workgroup, and providing robust community of practice learning opportunities, MP ROTAC reaches populations impacted by health disparities in rural, tribal, and frontier communities to reduce morbidity and mortality associated with opioid and stimulant use in rural communities.

PROJECT LEAD: BOBBI PERKINS

mprotac.org

WESTERN STATES DECISION SUPPORT GROUP (WSDSG) – ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM



WSDSG State Members, Annual Meeting

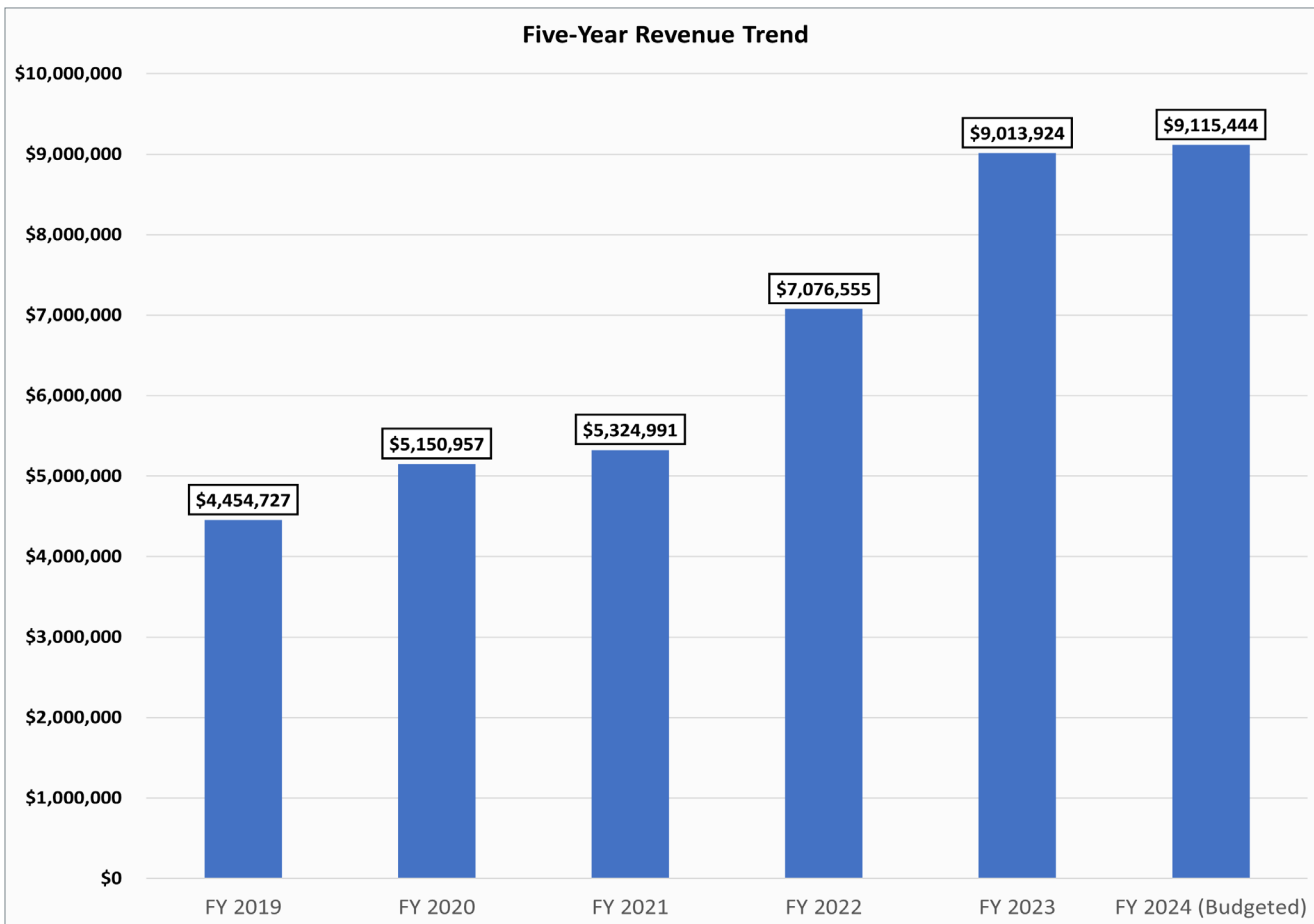
WSDSG is an information-sharing network for state government behavioral health data and evaluation staff and managers from the WICHE states and territories. Since 1985, the WICHE BHP has managed initiatives including information sharing platforms and support to stay apprised of developments and best practices in the field of behavioral health data collection and evaluation.

PROJECT LEAD: GINA BRIMNER

FINANCIALS

The WICHE Behavioral Health Program (BHP) is one of two self-funded units within WICHE, which means the WICHE BHP must earn sufficient revenue to cover all expenses. The program achieves this through a series of contracts and grant opportunities with both state and federal entities. Additionally, the WICHE BHP is required to maintain a reserve to ensure stable operations in lean economic times. As shown in Figure 1, revenues have increased in each of the last five years, exceeding \$9 million in FY 2023, allowing the unit to contribute to its reserve fund in each of the last four years. The WICHE BHP anticipates that revenues will again increase slightly in FY 2024.

FIGURE 1: Five-year trend FY 2019 through FY 2023 actual revenue trends



The largest growth in revenues has come from federally funded projects, including the VA-funded TWV Rural Veteran Suicide Prevention Program, the SAMHSA-funded MHTTC and ROTAC, and the HRSA-funded RCORP. Additionally, in conjunction with the Northwest Indian College and the University of Alaska-Anchorage, the WICHE BHP received a grant award from the NIH to study the efficacy of the Native Alaskan Tribal Health Consortium’s Behavioral Health Aide Program. The WICHE BHP has also received contracts from the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors and the State of Montana to study its crisis services system, both using federal funds to support the contracts. As shown in Figure 2, in FY 2023 federal sources of revenue accounted for just over 55% of all revenue generated by the WICHE BHP, which is a slight increase from 53% in FY 2022, and a significant increase over 44% in FY 2021. Conversely, revenue from contracts with state agencies, nonprofits and other sources decreased from 40% in FY 2022 to 38 percent in FY 2023.

FIGURE 2: FY 2023 sources of revenue

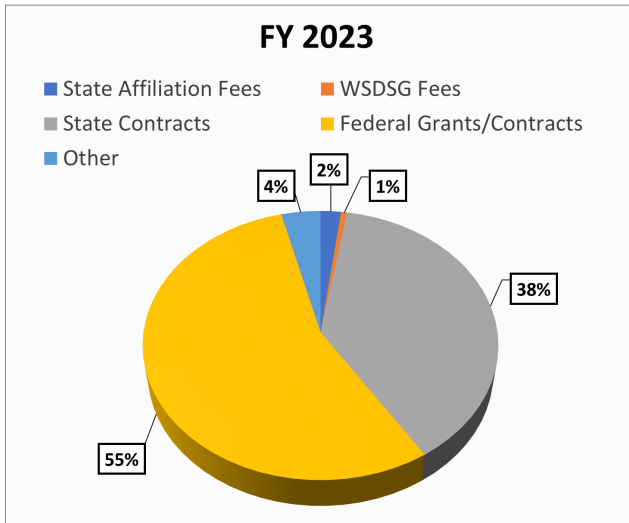
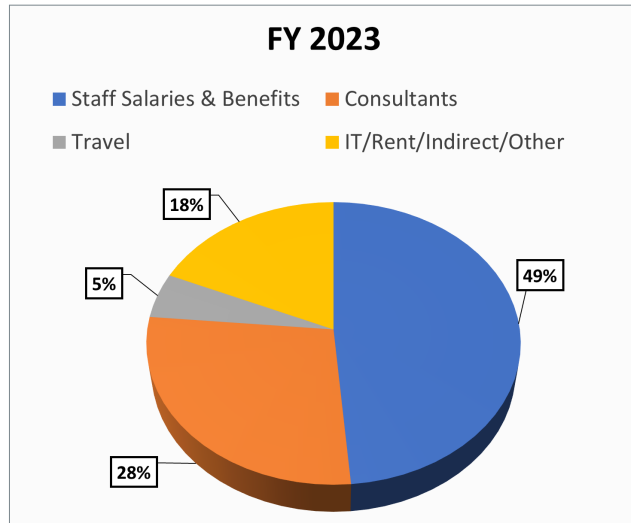


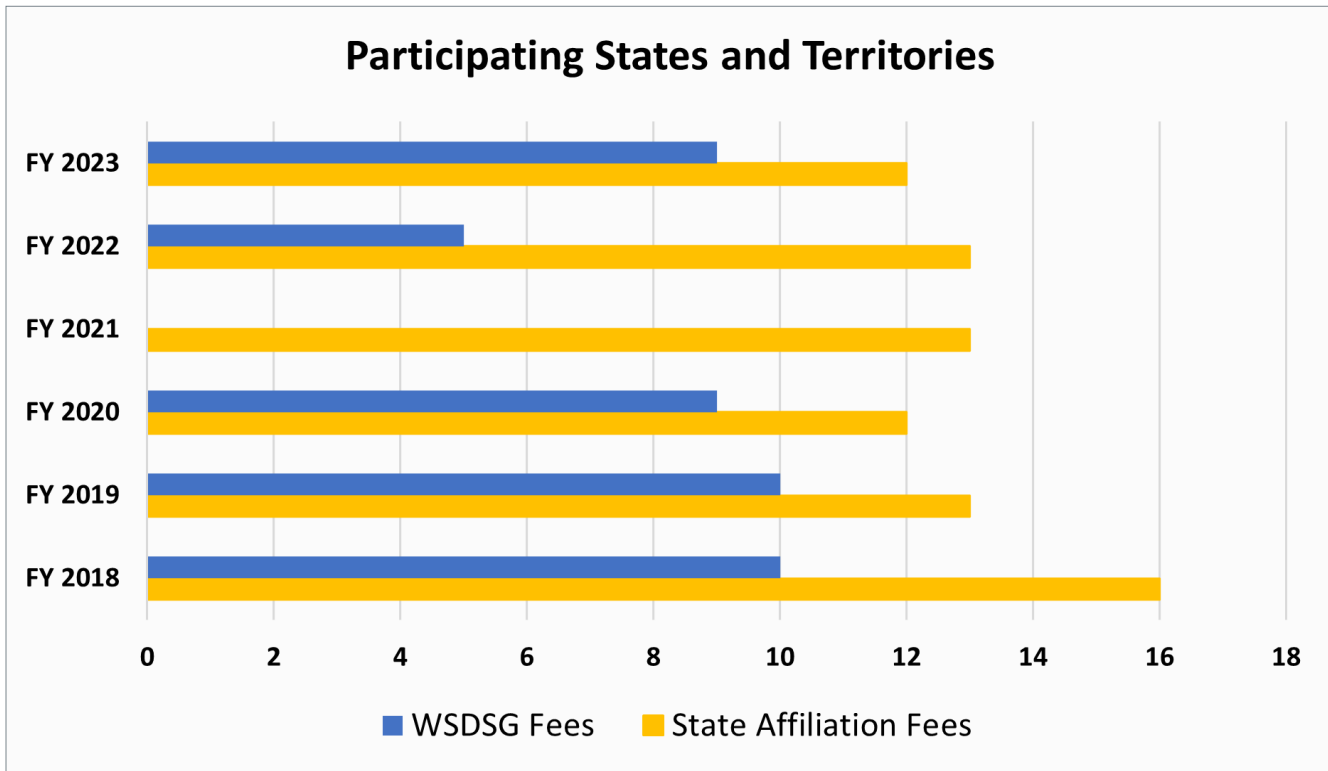
FIGURE 3: FY 2023 actual expenditures by category



As shown in Figure 3 above, the largest portion of actual FY 2023 expenditures was for staff salaries and benefits at 49%, with consulting expenses coming in at 28%. This split between staff salaries and consulting expenses is similar to previous fiscal years. Over the last three years, the WICHE BHP’s use of consultants has increased significantly, because it is frequently more expedient to engage the services of a consultant than to hire additional staff. Travel expenses increased slightly for the second year in a row, as travel continues to expand post-pandemic. During the height of the pandemic, travel was all but eliminated for both staff and consultants.

As shown below, the number of states and territories participating in state affiliation fees (\$15,000 annually) held relatively steady in FY 2023, while the number of states participating in WSDSG fees (\$6,000 annually) increased from five states in FY 2022 to nine states in FY 2023.

FIGURE 4: Number of states and territories participating in state affiliation and WSDSG fees



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH OVERSIGHT COUNCIL



Washington, D.C.

Founded in 1955, the mission of the WICHE Behavioral Health program is twofold: 1) to assist states in improving systems of care for behavioral health consumers and their families and 2) to advance the preparation of a qualified behavioral health workforce in the West. The program collaborates with states, territories, and freely associated states to meet the challenges of changing environments through regional research and evaluation, policy analysis, program development, technical assistance, and information sharing.

The Behavioral Health Oversight Council is the WICHE Behavioral Health Program's advisory board. It is comprised of the chief state behavioral health official from each WICHE state or territory and two representatives of the WICHE Commission.

The purpose of the Behavioral Health Oversight Council is to advise in establishing the direction of the program, to provide active representation of the public behavioral health service system in the program's formulation of its policies, objectives, and priorities, and to review the fiscal performance of the program and advocate for financial and participatory support of the program.

FY 2023 Council Members *As of June 30, 2023*

Tracy Dompeling, Alaska

Carmen Heredia, Arizona

Tyler Sadwith, California

Joseph Villagomez, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

Michelle Barnes, Colorado

Benido Victor, Federated States of Micronesia

Theresa Arriola, Guam, *Chair*

Amy Curtis, Hawai'i

Ross Edmunds, Idaho, *Past Chair*

Holden Nena, Republic of the Marshall Islands

Rebecca de Camara, Montana

Jacqueline Nielsen, New Mexico

Stephanie Woodward, Nevada

Pam Sagness, North Dakota

Ebony Clarke, Oregon, *Vice Chair*

Everlynn Temengil, Republic of Palau

Tiffany Wolfgang, South Dakota

Brent Kelsey, Utah

Keri Waterland, Washington

Matt Petry, Wyoming

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROGRAM STAFF



JASON ALVES

Director of Veterans Initiatives

TWV



GENEVIEVE BERRY

Project Manager

MHTTC



ERIN BRILEY

School Mental Health Coordinator

MHTTC



GINA BRIMMER

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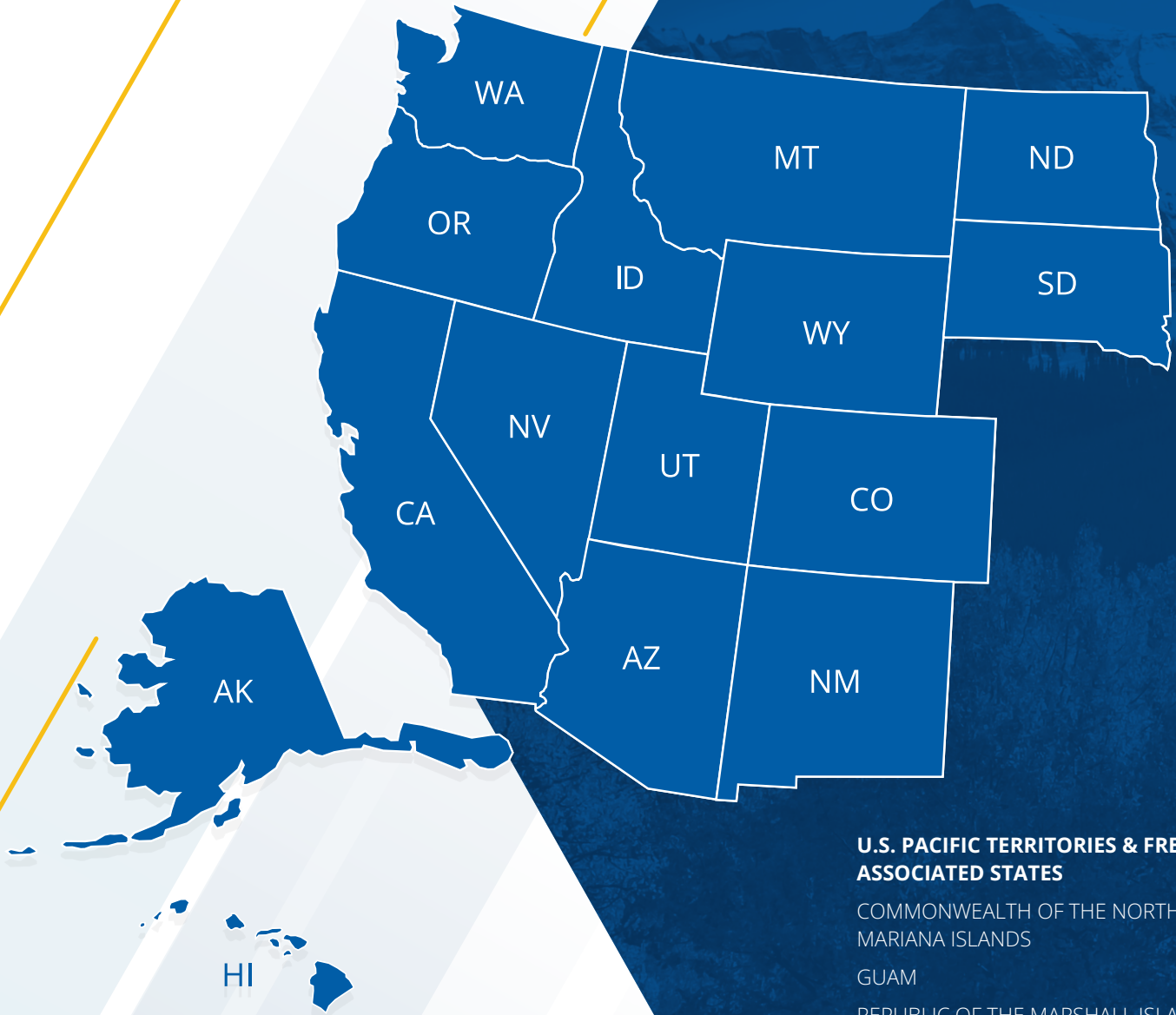
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