



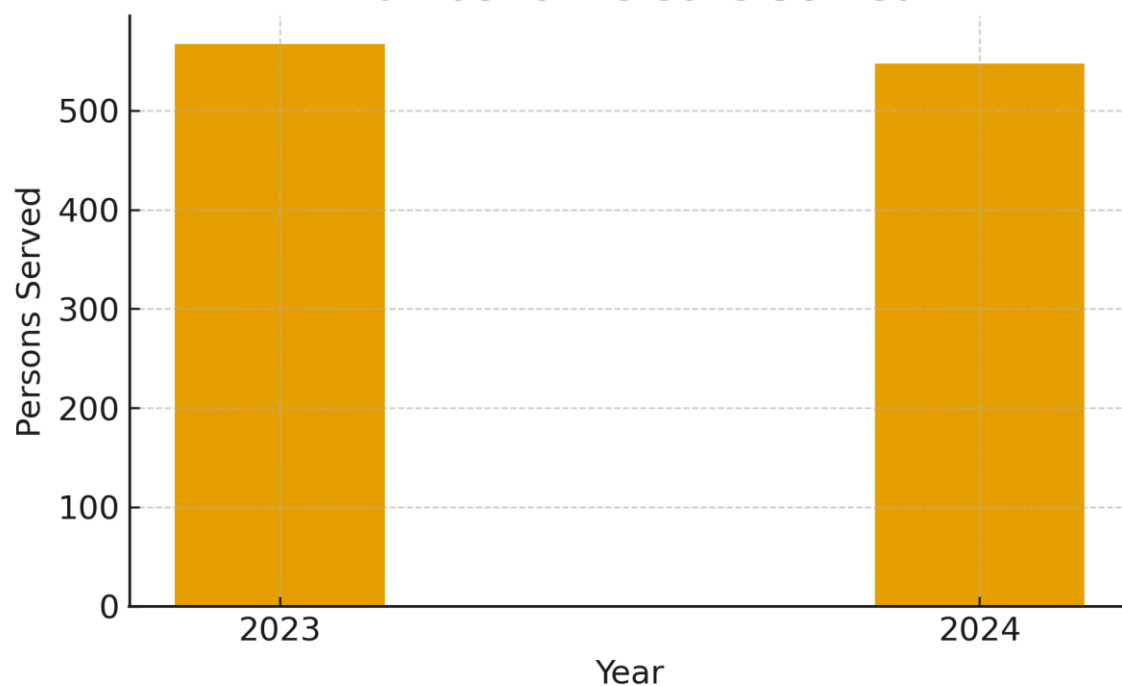
WACOSA – Outcomes Measurement Report

2024 Year in Review

Period Reported: 1/1/2024 – 12/31/2024

Indicator	Result 2024	Change from Previous Year
Total Persons Served	547	-3.5%
Admissions	39	-28%
Discharges	52	-1%
Total Community Crews	29	+1%
New Community Crews	2	+50%
Total Individual Placements	87	+7%
New Individual Placements	17	-2%
Total Center-Based Contract Hours	41,417	+4.5%
Total DocuShred Revenue	\$390,570	+4%
Total DocuShred Pounds Collected	753,393	-5%
Total ThriftWorks! Revenue	\$491,533	+1%
Average Hourly Pay – Individual Placements	\$16.41/hr	+8%
Average Hourly Pay – Community Crews/Enclaves	\$10.79/hr	+25%
Average Hourly Pay – Center-Based Employment	\$10.70/hr	+48%
Total Development Income (no COVID relief)	\$1,398,145	0%
Total Number of Volunteers	49	-16%
Volunteer Hours (approximate)	1,867	+18%

Number of Persons Served



Analysis/Trending of “Year in Review” Data:

The aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic has again made additional analysis of many of 2024’s outcome numbers somewhat skewed from what was once considered predictable. From the time WACOSA was required to close March 2021, the organization experienced a complete disruption in services that continued off and on for the remainder of 2023 with 2024 becoming a more stable and predictable service model. Most of the data and information in this outcomes report can be compared to previous years, however there are instances where 2024 will serve as the new baseline for future comparison.

WACOSA saw a drop in numbers of persons served in 2024 of 3.5%. As the services market stabilizes and staffing shortages remain the constant barrier to providing services to more people, WACOSA’s drop in persons served may also reflect the choice of service providers in our area. WACOSA has 2 shifts to choose from and we consistently have openings on our 2nd shift, which remain unfilled as people wish to receive services in the traditional daytime period. While we work hard to attract and retain good employees, progress is limited and often impossible, as WACOSA loses staff to employers who are often able to pay more in this very competitive work environment. While we are pleased with the 547 individuals, we were able to serve in 2024, we remain guarded as to our ability to grow this number substantially, given the limited number of prospective employees we continue to see. We continue to be as creative as possible in finding new recruiting places and incentives, the fact remains that many employers have already employed many of these strategies and, as previously stated, are often willing to inflate starting wages, benefits, bonuses and various other perks, that attract employees away from WACOSA.

WACOSA has continued seeing persistent decreases in numbers of persons served in our community EE clientele over the past 10+ years. State and national pressures to reduce center-based funding in favor of community- funded services shows no sign of slowing down. WACOSA will continue honoring the expressed choice of those we serve to participate in center-based employment/program services until such a time that funders make it impossible for us to do so. The reductions in Rehab Funded clients served were the direct result of reduced referrals due to the State of Minnesota’s Department of Employment and Economic Development’s sudden budgetary deficits for those services. All providers across the state are experiencing reductions in referrals and/or reductions in services for current clients. This, coupled with Stearns County’s moved to reduce clientele off their EE funding roles (for which the county is financially responsible) to Waiver (State/Federal funding responsibility) funding, thus freeing up more county dollars to be used for other county projects and services.

The category of Total Community Crews increased by 1% with 2 new crews, reversing a 2 year decreasing streak. We were able to add the crews in time frames that accommodated current crews and the new customers. Our crew customers remain pleased with our workforce and are loyal to WACOSA. We do have a small waiting list of potential additional crews that we are unable to accommodate due to our inability to staff work crews if/when asked. We are also watching the trend of clients aging out of their crew jobs due to physical difficulties and younger clients not interested in that type of work. We do continue to look for work types that people are interested in. In 2024, Total Placements stabilized with a 1% increase from the preceding year, with New Placements slowing by 2%. This is due to new job coaches being trained and a tightening job market in the area. This trend has us looking to potentially add job coach positions to increase admissions and increase case loads in the coming year.

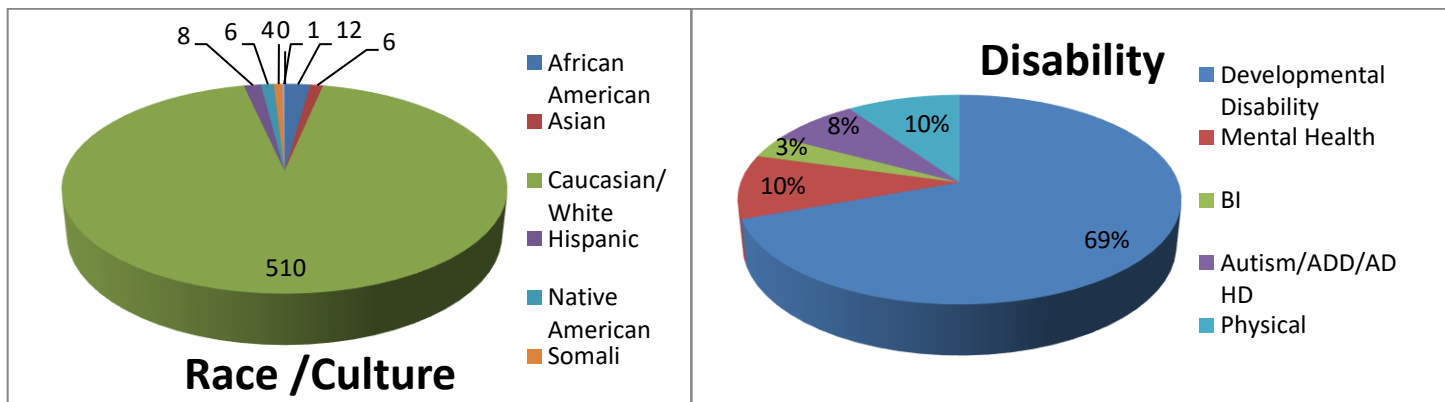
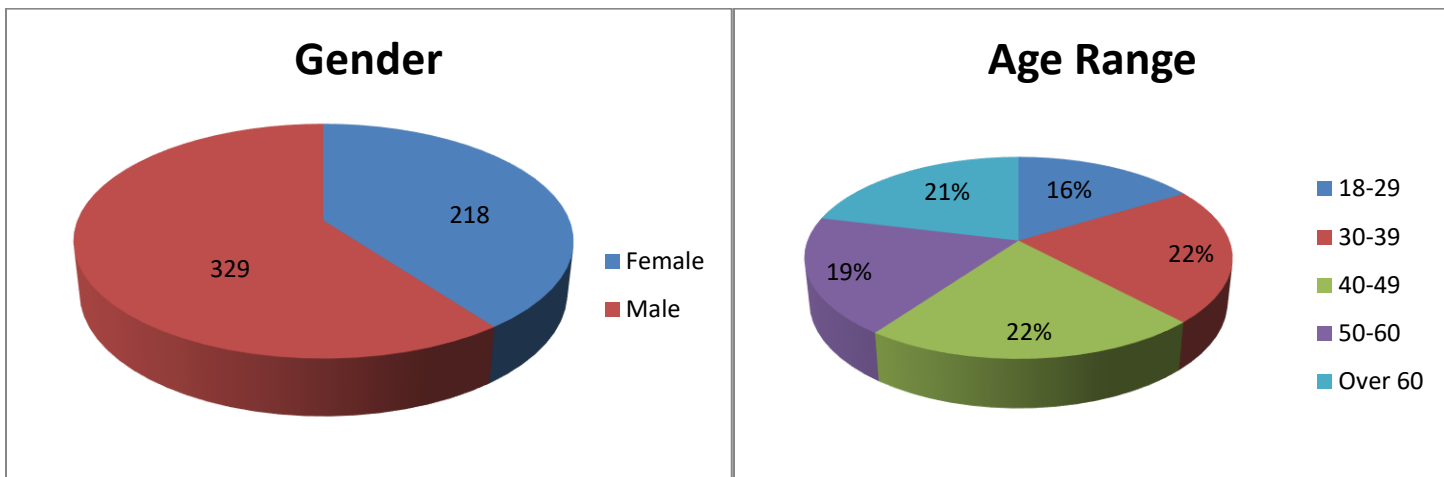
Finally, client wages in 2024 showed a growth of anywhere from 8 – 48% in their hourly rates over the previous year in Center-based Employment, Community Crews and Placement Services. All three of these work areas showing increases are likely the result of hiring difficulties throughout Minnesota and the efforts of employers/businesses to get and keep good workers. The prevailing wage rates for most jobs have increased dramatically, leading to our clients earning more for the work they perform either in-center, on site crews or competitively employed. The trend of increasing inflationary measures in all economic areas are driving this increase, which directly benefits the clients we serve and they enjoy this positive result. We will continue to monitor and adjust our wages in the coming year, as well as adjusting our bidding processes to accommodate this increased expense.

2024 Admission and Discharge Analysis:

2024 saw overall admissions 28% decrease in admissions, in that the majority of new people were coming from home or no previous program services. We did see an increase in recent high school graduates participating in Vocational Rehabilitation independent placement job seekers in the Sauk Centre region, indicating a desire for youth seeking competitive employment in their community. The state of Minnesota has been moving toward competitive employment being the first avenue of funding and long term services being offered after a series of unsuccessful placements. We continue to experience an increase in people switching funding programs, as previously noted. Waiver funding is becoming the predominant source across Minnesota. Personal choice continues to be the largest influence affecting the category of “Discharged to”(at -1%) this past year. However, all other areas remained stable with moving out of our service area coming in 2nd, which reflects the result of Minnesota home care providers downsizing housing options, people seeking a new home are moving farther out of the geographical area to find an open spot for their residence. We lost 12 people to death or poor health. Trends indicate a continued stall in admissions due to state wide staffing shortages in both Day Support Services and Residential services.

2024 Client Demographics:

An analysis of 2024 demographics shows relative stability of gender over the course of the year. In terms of age range, WACOSA clients fell into the ranges of 30–39 and 40-49 more than any other range. This is slightly different from 2023 with the range 50-60 falling out of the top two by a narrow margin. Otherwise, age ranges remained relatively stable when comparing 2020 to 2024, with a trend to monitor the 18-29 age range as they are not receiving the services they are eligible for due to staffing shortages. Already admitted clients that have a stable residential situation tend not to leave services, thereby preventing openings for the youth that have aged out of the school setting and are not receiving any or very limited services.



“Caucasian” continues to represent the largest ethnic category of persons served by WACOSA and all other categories also remaining unchanged, which reflects the demographics of our geographic service areas. We do not anticipate any significant changes to trend in the future. With regard to the chart on “Disability”, clients categorized as having a “Developmental Disability” (DD) continue to represent the largest and most common disability type served, with the category of “Mental Health” being the second most common category. In 2024 the “Physical” category increased slightly with the majority of these clients being referred by Vocational Rehabilitation Services for competitive employment placement. This is a trend to monitor and assess their unique needs for job matching, as they often have a secondary mental health diagnosis.

Program Objectives, Measurements & Results

Note: For all goals, persons responsible for collecting and tracking data are Client Managers, Program Managers, Team Leaders, Contract Managers, Job Coaches, Job Developer, Program Directors, and Direct Support Professionals.

Community Employment Services (CES):

Measurement Category	To Whom Applied	Objective	Data Source	Goal	Result/s	Goal Met / Not Met
Effectiveness	Participants working in CES	Develop new community crews	Client work Contracts Completed by Contract Managers	8	2	Not Met
	Participants working in CES/Placement	Develop individual placements	Client payroll Records Completed by DSPs	50	81	Met
	Work Crew Participants	Maintain average hourly wage	Client payroll Records Completed by DSPs	\$6.15/hr.	\$10.79/hr.	Met
	Participants in Placement Services	Maintain average hourly wage	Client payroll Records Collected by Job coaches	\$10.56/hr.	\$16.41/hr.	Met
Efficiency	Participants referred for PBA's	Minimize time to achieve employment	Client placement Records Collected by Job Coaches	69% within 90 days	75%	Met
Service Access	All participants in WACOSA's CES programs	Minimize wait time for services	Intake records Completed by Program Directors	100% enter within 14 days of completed referral information	50%	Not Met

Day Training and Habilitation Services (DT&H) Now Known as Day Support Services (DSS):

Measurement Category	To Whom Applied	Objective	Data Source	Goal	Result/s	Goal Met / Not Met
Effectiveness	Clients in Whitney Seniors Program	Clients will meet community goals	Client records/data Tracking by DSPs And Client Managers	75%	92%	Met
	Clients in the North program	Clients will meet community goals	Client records/data Tracking by DSPs And Team Leads	65%	100%	Met
Efficiency	Clients in DSS services expressing interest in independent placement	Minimize time to Complete Employment assessment process	Client records/data Tracking by Job Coaches and Developers	90% within 90 days following 45 day assessment	50%	Not Met

Service Access	Clients in DSS Services	Minimize waiting time for services	Intake records Completed by Program Directors	100% enter within 14 days of completed referral information	75%	Not Met
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Organizational Employment Services (OES):

Measurement Category	To Whom Applied	Objective	Data Source	Goal	Result/s	Goal Met/Not Met
Effectiveness	Participants working on center-based work	Maintain/increase employment	Client production Records compiled By DSPs in Payroll system	40,000 hours	41,417 Annual hours	Met
Efficiency	DocuShred Services staff and clientele	Increase business efficiencies	DocuShred Records compiled By DSPs & Acct staff	Average of 56,546 pounds per month	62,783 pounds per Month Average	Met
Service Access	All participants in WACOSA's OES programs	Minimize wait time for services	Intake records Compiled by Program Directors	100% enter within 14 days of completed referral information	50%	Not Met

Situational Assessment (EPS):

Measurement Category	To Whom Applied	Objective	Data Source	Goal	Result/s	Met/Not Met
Effectiveness	Individuals participating in EPS	Maximize days and clients participating in community-based EPS	EPS attendance Records compiled By Job Coaches	75% participating 2+ days in community	1 100%	Met
Efficiency	Individuals participating in EPS	Minimize time to complete new placement assessment	EPS client records Compiled by Job Coaches	100% complete assessment as contracted	100%	Met
Service Access	All participants in WACOSA's EPS program	Minimize wait time for services	Intake records Compiled by Program Directors And Job Developer	100% enter within 14 days of completed referral information	100%	Met

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD):

Measurement Category	To Whom Applied	Objective	Data Source	Goal	Result/s	Goal Met / Not Met
Effectiveness	Participants in ASD In the North Program	Maximize persons served	Client records Compiled by Client Managers	11	14	Met

Efficiency	Participants in ASD	Improve transition Ability between locations	Client goal Tracking data Compiled by DSPs	66%	66%	Met
Service Access	All participants in WACOSA's ASD services	Minimize wait time for services	Intake records Compiled by Program Directors And Program Managers	100% enter within 14 days of file comp.	0%	Not Met

Client Satisfaction (Scores of neutral or above rated as satisfied. Scores rounded up to the nearest whole number):

Objective	Goal	Result/s	Goal Met / Not Met
Maximize overall client satisfaction	95%	90%	Not Met
Maximize overall stakeholder (parents, guardians, residential staff and referral partners) satisfaction	95%	95%	Met
Maximize overall business customer satisfaction	98%	100%	Met

(Note: Also see Stakeholder/Client/Business Customer satisfaction analysis, trending and future recommendations on separate reports)

Analysis/Trending of Objectives/Results:

As expected, the outcomes were better than in the previous 3 years, as we adjusted to a new business and service environment after the pandemic. Slight gains were made in minimizing wait times for some services with openings; however popular services and/or shifts at our various sites remain stagnant due to staffing shortages. We have worked to increase center-based employment opportunities by strategically working with our community partners on long term and ongoing work projects, which has helped us surpass our client working hours goals and number of various jobs to choose from. Client wages were again a bright point of the year growing, representing the wage growth enjoyed by the competitive employment sectors. We are pleased to see that client pay grew for that same period, confirming again the value of WACOSA workers to both our contracted customers, as well as community businesses. While not all goals were met, the trend of improvements in services times, wages, and employment opportunities in all our employment programs, even if stagnant, we did not experience any setbacks in our continuing efforts and we continue to be optimistic for the coming years that we will continue to make advances toward meeting or exceeding all our goals.

Analysis of Client Satisfaction Results: Client satisfaction scores saw relative consistency in 2024. Notable, our history of satisfaction by all our various stakeholders remains extremely high, always in the 90-100% percentiles. The person's served have increased opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas in our online weekly Right On classes and that has garnered new activity ideas that we can implement throughout the year. Our business customers continue to rate us highly for the work output we do for them in a quality manner. Our caregiver and funder stakeholders continue to be pleased with the services offered and, for the most part, understanding our staffing limitations. Rational or not, WACOSA can occasionally be blamed by families and stakeholders for legislative cuts, governmental requirements/changes etc. through no fault of our own. We expect these trending results to continue, as the number one comment is always complimentary of the staff who support their loved ones.

Analysis/Trending of Center-Based Work:

Hours worked on center-based contract work were up slightly by 4.5% as we work on finding stable and predictable job work opportunities for those that want that type of employment. We will be maintaining the goal to maintain 40,000 a year to reflect the political influence of eliminating the FLSA 14C certificate in the coming years. With each new federal or state administration, the threat to eliminate it is still real and would pose a huge employment gap in Minnesota's workforce. We will only be able to rebuild our contract service output commensurate with our ability to hire qualified staff. Presently, the staffing crisis continues to remain the key challenge faced by both the non-profit and the business communities alike, as we entered into 2024. Our goals remain steady, as we work to build on existing business partnerships that will produce a steady stream of work projects that our clients can work on and explore new partnerships that may offer new jobs. A trend to monitor is the automation of some of the jobs we currently do, as the labor market remains stagnant, businesses are relying on AI and automation to complete tasks we currently do. We will monitor and adapt as best possible to counteract this emerging phenomenon.

Cultural Competency Analysis:

A Cultural Competency Plan was originally implemented at WACOSA in the spring of 2013. This plan outlines WACOSA's cultural competency objectives and directs that cultural competency be addressed annually. This plan is used to ensure that services are delivered to all persons in a culturally sensitive manner. The plan covers all levels of the organization including clients, stakeholders, governance, administration and staff. The following represent objectives, along with the status of these objectives, as reviewed by WACOSA's leadership:

Goal I: Ensure that clients receive from all staff effective, understandable, and respectful services that are provided in a manner compatible with their cultural beliefs and language –

Client satisfaction for 2024 was reported to be 90% when asked directly about satisfaction with the services they receive. 95% of WACOSA's clients reported specifically feeling culturally respected in 2024. This represents a significant growth of 18% from 2023. Cultural respect relates to program service activities being integrated into each client's service needs, with annual review of the question of cultural respect normally discussed and documented by each person's interdisciplinary team during annual meetings. While we continue to work to move this number higher, it is noteworthy to understand that we have a stable group of clientele and that longevity with WACOSA has led to better understanding of cultural differences and opportunities to always honor them.

Goal II: Implement Strategies to recruit, retain and promote at all levels a diverse staff and leadership that is representative of the service area demographics –

WACOSA is governed by an affirmative action plan required by the Department of Labor, our funding partners and CARF accreditation. This plan is reviewed annually to ensure that WACOSA maintains appropriately diverse, normed against national, state and regional statistics. Our 2024 review of this plan determined that, in general, WACOSA is properly positioned regarding staff diversity at most levels. WACOSA's leadership will continue to make efforts to broaden management and administrative diversity, as openings occur. Additionally, WACOSA promotes internally whenever possible and does so with a focus on diversifying our staff and leadership at that time also. The WACOSA Board of Directors is continuing to work, redefining itself and has decided to remain at 12-13 members, depending on the skillset needs identified and meeting 5 times per year and sub-committees being formalized and tasked with doing more governance work at the committee level.

GOAL III: Ensure services are sensitive to linguistic needs of clients/stakeholders –

WACOSA serves a variety of persons who require alternative communication systems with which to share their input and concerns. Upon beginning services, all persons are assessed regarding the system/s of communicating that best fit their needs. Depending upon each person served, communication programs may be written and maintained to aid with skill development, while helping each person improve in making their needs functionally known. Communication system examples that have been or are currently in place include Board maker, Bliss, American Sign (ASL) and the iPad based ProLoQuo2Go app. Additionally, WACOSA provides all written documentation in alternative formats, as requested, and provides interpreter services in sign and alternative languages, as may be required for team meetings. When needed interpreters are hired to be at team meetings depending upon the unique needs of a particular individual and their family. At times, WACOSA has asked staff who are bi-lingual and understand cultural issues to sit in on meetings to help facilitate understanding of information shared. Finally, WACOSA staff pays particular attention to the unique communication nuances of each stakeholder receiving services often resulting in specialized training to staff for a particular

individual. Frequently, these individuals maintain communication systems unique only to themselves, requiring time and practice with particular clients to fully master and comprehend. Sometimes these individuals have developed self-taught systems that are combinations or hybrids of pre-existing systems. Regardless, WACOSA staff makes it a point to become fluent in every system that clients present. WACOSA continues to meet this goal.

Analysis/Trending of DocuShred:

2024 saw a 5% decrease in DocuShred pounds destroyed, and an increase of 4% in revenues accrued as 2024 saw price increases to combat inflationary cost increases. At the close of 2024, a long-term view into 2025 looks to be more promising given our stable client base. In 2024, the average pounds destroyed per month was 66,000 meeting our established goal.

Noteworthy is the amount of sustained foot traffic that still managed to bump up storefront customers with an average of 80 walk-in customers a week, which has remained steady in 2021-2024 brining in an average of 4055 pounds per week. Storefront numbers remain encouraging and stable, reinforcing the strength of our walk-in storefronts value to our customers. Because inflationary costs are effecting expenses, we will monitor pricing and practices in the coming months and years and make adjustments in pricing as necessary.

Analysis of ThriftWorks! Store Operation:

ThriftWorks! completed its 11th full year of operation on December 31, 2024. We continue to be pleased with the performance of the store since its opening in May 2013. However in 2024, with a year-end sales finish of \$491,533, we saw a 1% increase versus the 10% of the preceding year, fulfilling our predicted flattening of revenues. This has been aided by the increase in inflation, causing expenses to increase as well. While donation numbers remain strong, the quality of items donated for resale has gone down as well, as the number of local retail stores has declined, leading to lesser quality items donated. More hard goods and soft goods are being purchased online, so quality tends to be lower in general. 2024 saw ThriftWorks hit it's revenue targets 4 of 12 months, indicating a need to budget accordingly in 2025, however the store made larger than expected gains in April and November. Despite the quality concerns, our donation numbers remain stable and we have a large community of regular customers who support what we do and they are our best advertisers. We continue to store pallets of holiday goods and hard goods throughout our own Waite Park buildings. Continued success with our store can be attributed to a persistent marketing effort, significant word-of-mouth within our community and stakeholder base, and our stellar ThriftWorks team of staff.

We remain pleased by the continued successes we have experienced in training individuals with high functioning Autism, related conditions and other disabilities in our retail sales training program. We served 17 individuals in 2024's roster of programs, with 4 of these individuals successfully finished training in 2024 and are currently seeking competitive employment. 102 individuals have gone through or are currently in the program since its inception. While in the program, trainees take part in such retail tasks as accepting donations, sorting, pricing, operating the cash register, direct customer assistance, merchandising and cleaning, as well as other store preparation activities. While skills acquired are taught in a retail environment, it is important to note that graduates of the program are going on to work in areas other than retail, since the curriculum is designed to teach skills that can be generalized across a wide variety of employment settings.

Development Income:

In 2024, WACOSA's development efforts remained consistent with 2023 donations, resulting in of \$1,398,145 development dollars agency-wide. This amount includes Minnesota Department of Human Services grant, civic organization gifts, and 5310 MnDOT grants to purchase buses, and area Community Foundation grants that help fund special projects and specialized equipment needs. Also included, is a combined, restricted donation from Auto Parts Headquarters (APH) and the Bartlett Family. It is important to note this money is given to WACOSA in increments throughout the year, with the amount being received in the current year often pledged in the year prior. WACOSA's accounting department records totals for the Development Department in the year donations are received, not pledged.

Thus, fund development information related to totals is somewhat challenging from year-to-year. Consistent from year-to-year, the APH donation is restricted based upon the preferences the Bartlett's have for its use. This expected restriction has continued to work well for WACOSA, given the continuous number of projects and improvements needed to keep WACOSA's buildings, equipment and program opportunities attractive to our constituents.

Particularly noteworthy is the progress WACOSA has made in planned giving over the past year, with the account totaling to date over \$644,000 in our endowment. WACOSA started a spring appeal and that, together with the Annual Appeal was a solid part of the fundraising dollars. This continued growth is likely due to WACOSA's reaching new/more donors, in addition to focusing our requests for support more strategically, by conducting regular updates of our database and reaching out to current donors about planned giving. 2024 saw a new Development Manager join the team, so there was time spent learning about WACOSA and implementing new strategies to capture more donors based on their preferred way of giving. The trend in cultivating more donors and giving is moving towards more electronic based methods and the new manager has experience with this type of appeal.

2024 Volunteer Data:

The number of our volunteers was reduced by 16% in 2024, with a total number of 49 volunteers contributing 1867 hours of service to various WACOSA programs. The number of hours increased by 18%, due in part to dedicated volunteers who regularly work in ThriftWorks helping get donations ready for sale, packaging and managing our books, media, fabrics, electronics and bedding. Our board of directors and committee members continue to attend and participate in all committee and board meetings as well as assist with special projects throughout the year. Each year our local United Way sponsors a Day of Caring and we invite groups in to help with special projects throughout our programs, leading to a jump in volunteer hours by a small group of people. We continue to develop opportunities for new volunteers and support our current roster of amazing volunteers in any way we can.

Major Goal Areas for 2024 and beyond (presented in no particular order):

- Continue developing the WACOSA ThriftWorks! Thrift Store in order to train/place a progressively larger number of individuals seeking competitive community employment.
- Continue to seek new employees, retain current employees and gather input that can help all departments at WACOSA functioning at their best with the limited resources available, while building a future workforce pipeline.
- Continue to generate funding to reduce dependence on state/federal funding.
- Broaden the scope of clientele participating in arts programming, community volunteer opportunities, and participation in advocacy activities, including continued work with our community partners.
- Continue to implement WACOSA's 2021 – 2025 Strategic Plan.
- Keep DocuShred growing and discover new systems to help make it profitable, while negotiating increased area competition.
- Increase fund development efforts and continue building foundational support for planned giving efforts.
- Navigate a continually uncertain legislative environment that threatens funding reductions and may require significant systems change.
- Throughout 2024, as we continue acquiring new information and systems to address the changing nature of individualized rate setting and integrate this information into WACOSA's current billing structure.
- Continue finding ways to implement the WACOSA Way/Top 20 in very tangible and genuine ways across the organization, as a whole.
- Continue promoting knowledge of WACOSA's services throughout Central MN and work to develop ever-increasing brand recognition.
- Continue efforts to reduce the various waiting lists for services by ensuring all open spots are filled in a timely manner.