



UNITED WAY OF EAST CENTRAL IOWA

# WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

*women helping women*

# FISCAL YEAR 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

## Mission

Women's Leadership Initiative unites funds and resources to ensure the well-being of women in need.

## Vision

Women in need have the opportunity to achieve well-being and live prosperous, productive lives, creating healthier communities in Eastern Iowa.

## Our Partners

WLI provides funding to the following partners for a variety of services, including prescription assistance, emergency dental care, eye exams, and co-pay assistance.

- Area Substance Abuse Council
- Community Health Free Clinic
- Eastern Iowa Health Center
- Linn County Public Health

## In Fiscal Year 2016

WLI distributed \$236,825 to its partners. Some of the services funded by WLI resulted in the following outcomes:

- 7,545 prescriptions
- 954 women received screenings and care coordination
- 340 women received medical co-pay assistance
- 489 women received dental services
- 209 bus passes to healthcare appointments
- 166 women received care coordination services to transition from treatment program



**389 members**  
the most in WLI's history



**\$252,122**  
pledged by WLI members



**8,000+ services**  
provided to our community

## Our Membership

During the 2015 United Way campaign, 389 women chose to become members of the WLI. This is the most members in the history of WLI.

A steering committee of 17 women leads WLI's efforts. The WLI Steering Committee is chaired by Teri Copler of TrueNorth Companies. Julie Schneekloth of UFG serves as vice chair.

## WLI Pilot Programs' Results

Thanks to the record number of dollars raised, WLI expanded programming to offer funding to two pilot programs at Area Substance Abuse Council and Eastern Iowa Health Center.

### Eastern Iowa Health Center Navigation & Care Coordination

- 35% screened needed basic needs met, like food or housing
- 37% screened needed mental health and emotional supports and interventions
- 54% reported improved social connectedness
- 73% reported improved functioning at school, work, and/or home

### Area Substance Abuse Council – Heart of Iowa

- 72% reported improved functioning at school, work, or home (exceeding 60% goal)
- 64% completed treatment and met their goals (exceeding 52% goal)

# Strengthening Families in Our Community



Wanda Sellers, ASAC



Lindsay with children Nevaeh and Ryder



ASAC Heart of Iowa

Area Substance Abuse Council (ASAC) and United Way have worked together for many years to provide help to those who need it. In partnership with WLI, ASAC's Heart of Iowa is a residential program and halfway house for women who have children or are pregnant at the time they come in for recovery.

The program serves nearly 150 families every year. Most women are in the program for 90 days but can choose to stay up to a year. Those in the halfway house program are able to work full-time and live at the facility, giving them structure and support to become financially stable and move out on their own.

In addition to these services, a **grant from WLI made it possible for Heart of Iowa to hire a care coordinator.** Wanda Sellers of ASAC describes the funding as a godsend. "It was amazing how we could hire someone to handle the care coordination, navigate through all the resources, and let the counselors focus much more on substance abuse counseling."

Having started with Heart of Iowa as a counselor, she understands how WLI makes a difference. "Without United Way and WLI, we couldn't do

the care coordination we're doing now. It's been a wonderful asset to Heart of Iowa, and our clients are getting so much more out of the program."

## A Life Rebuilt

Lindsay had a happy childhood and grew up to be a cheerleader, a high school graduate, and an active community member. Seven years ago, she started using drugs. "I had no idea I was an addict until I came to ASAC.

**WITHOUT UNITED WAY & WLI, we couldn't do the care coordination we're doing now.**

I realized it was a problem when I wanted to stop and couldn't."

The Drug Enforcement Administration raided her house and found drug paraphernalia. After she admitted drug use, the Department of Human Services removed Lindsay's children, six-year-old Nevaeh and three-year-old Ryder, from her care.

Lindsay heard about Heart of Iowa from her sister. Within six weeks, she joined the program. "It was hard the first couple of weeks. But that time allowed me to adjust to the schedule, routine, and big transition before bringing in my kids."

## Sharing Newfound Hope

Lindsay completed the 90-day program and chose to stay at the halfway house. She works full-time, attends church and group meetings, and has dance parties with Nevaeh and Ryder in their living room.

"My motivation is to be healthy, have a happy life with my kids, and give back to others who maybe don't understand addiction or need help but don't know

where to go. I'd like to be an advocate and a voice to give hope to others. Because when you're in the disease of addiction, you feel hopeless, but as long as you're open-minded, you can make it out."

**Sign up for the WLI quarterly newsletter at [bit.ly/WLI-enevs](http://bit.ly/WLI-enevs)**



United Way  
of East Central Iowa