

# RVM

RACINE VOCATIONAL MINISTRY

# Community Report 2022



# Futures in Spirit and Hope

## Our Third Decade of Service to the Community

### TWENTY YEARS!

August of 2022 marked the beginning of our 21st year of service, an accomplishment of which we are all very proud. Reaching this milestone is a testament to our funders, board leadership, and to our many dedicated community partners. No organization celebrates two decades of success without committed partners.

### 5,000 PLACEMENTS!

In mid-2023, we placed our 5,000th participant. As of today, we have placed 5,034 people in jobs and education.

### SUSTAINABILITY & GROWTH!

New logo, updated mission, vision, and values!

In 2022, we were clearly on a path of rebuilding our participant pipeline, focusing on strategic initiatives, and rebranding as we moved into our third decade of service. We also focused on building up our relationships in Kenosha to bring the KVM office to full time services.

### SECRET INGREDIENT!

RVM's secret ingredient is the love we have for our work and for the people we serve. The questions we ask of ourselves and of our participants are rooted in identifying the transformative elements that profoundly change participants' perceptions of themselves, their families, their place in our community, and their peers.

### HOPE!

Hope is the engine of transformation. Hope is what most of our participants lack when they come through R/KVM's door. Hope is what we offer. This is no trite, hollow offer. We offer hope with the knowledge that we have helped thousands of individuals change from shattered and disconnected to whole and integrated.

### VOCATION!

Our work is focused not on employment, but on vocation. Vocation is not a job, or even a career; it is a calling. We believe that all people are gifted with unique aptitudes and abilities to build a life that is both personally satisfying and an asset to the community. At R/KVM, identifying and supporting unique callings is the focus of each participant interaction and staff development opportunity.



Carl Fields  
Former participant is  
Interim Director of the  
Hospitality Center



# R/KVM'S MISSION

Racine / Kenosha Vocational Ministry is proud of the many men and women we have helped along the difficult and treacherous road to a wholesome, productive life.



Program Director  
Lori Life teaches a  
class at HALO

***Racine Vocational Ministry prepares participants to become fully engaged in their lives by offering tools and skills, respecting their inherent dignity, and walking alongside them in their transformative journeys.***

I am so honored to remain a part of the Racine Vocational Ministry family. Although we continue to rebuild following the worst of the pandemic, we are fully staffed and transforming lives! 220 individuals were placed in jobs or job training programs in 2022! The average wage for these jobs is \$17.61, the highest we have seen in our history. But job placement is only one result of the work we do. What makes RVM different and successful is our approach to serving our participants.

Those choosing to participate in RVM services and programs are met with support, understanding, and patience by staff truly concerned about them. RVM staff are trained and experienced vocational specialists, but they offer so much more. Staff are hired because they have demonstrated a passion for the work and compassion for those we serve. Many staff have experienced the barriers and struggles that our participants face. They know that the support and encouragement of just one person can make all the difference in the world. Knowing that RVM staff allow them to work at their own pace, choose their goals and celebrate their achievements, no matter how small, allows participants to come back and fight another day.

Most successful RVM graduates express gratitude for the support and guidance they received. They report that it was being supported as they learned to change their thinking along with their behaviors that made the difference, saying that they could not have done this on their own.

Are RVM staff miracle workers? I think so. Jim Schatzman and all the RVM staff deserve our ongoing gratitude. They are the heart and soul of RVM! Thank you RVM staff and board members!

And a heartfelt thanks to each one of you too for making RVM what it is, a harbor of hope for those making positive and life affirming changes. Please continue to support RVM in any way you can. I know I will. Here's to another great year!

Pam Handrow, President



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RACINE VOCATIONAL MINISTRY

# FROM OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS



United Way of Racine County is pleased to support strong organizations that create lasting impact in our community. Racine Vocational Ministry does exactly that. Through our annual community investment process, we support RVM's Jobs Program. Its focus on providing comprehensive supportive services through job readiness and life skills training, employment counseling, intensive case management, job referral and placement, and more helps some of our community's most under-served individuals achieve success. Their Second Chance Re-entry Program, funded through our Equity Innovation Fund, focuses on supporting women and BIPOC individuals to become self-sufficient as they reenter the community following incarceration. The results of RVM's consistent and holistic approach speak for themselves. United Way of Racine County is proud to continue our partnership with the organization.

**Jessica Safransky Schacht**

United Way of Racine County – Chief Operating Officer

At United Way of Kenosha County, we are incredibly proud to support Racine/Kenosha Vocational Ministry and the transformative programs they provide for our community. Their dedication to bringing together participants, employers, and communities is truly remarkable. Their vital reentry support provides individuals in Kenosha County with guidance as well as job and life skills, fostering successful community reintegration. It's inspiring to witness the positive outcomes they achieve, breaking down barriers and giving hope to those who deserve a second chance. The impact they've had on individuals facing unemployment, underemployment, and reentry from incarceration is commendable. I have seen lives transformed, families uplifted, and communities strengthened. Racine/Kenosha Vocational Ministry's commitment to making a lasting difference with a holistic approach that cares for and addresses the whole person aligns perfectly with United Way's mission and together we are working towards positive and transformative change across Kenosha County.

**Jevon Claussen**

United Way of Kenosha County – Senior Director of Community Impact Operations



We are grateful to RVM for the vital work they do in our community, particularly their walk with people who face very difficult hurdles. The work of RVM goes beyond providing a necessary service; they recognize and celebrate the dignity of every person. At The Johnson Foundation at Wingspread, we value our partnership with RVM, especially their contributions to the Racine Speaks report that helped so many gain a better understanding of the community, and their thought partnership in helping to build new efforts that will improve the quality for life for so many.

**Marcus White**

President – Johnson Foundation at Wingspread

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# FROM OUR PARTICIPANTS

## THOMAS KING—A FORMER INTERN'S REFLECTION

As a senior at Carthage, I was starting to think about what I'd like to do after graduation, and I knew that I'd ideally want to be in a technical role of some sort but I was a little disheartened by how cold and impersonal a lot of the tech jobs that I was looking at seemed. When I heard about the opportunity to work with RVM as an intern I was really intrigued. I hadn't really considered that I could work on a technical project for an organization that was actually doing good things in the world and wasn't solely focused on the bottom line. That sounds a bit naïve looking back on it, but I'm so glad I decided to give it a shot even though it was outside of my comfort zone. I really think it gave me that first step in the right direction to start looking for opportunities that combined technical knowledge with helping people and is what ultimately led me to the field of higher education philanthropy where I've begun my career. I think coming into the internship as a math major with very little exposure to social work was pretty much starting from square one. However, I think because I had so little knowledge at the start, the chance to see the work that RVM is doing resonated with me that much more. As someone who's been very fortunate and socially reluctant, I was amazed by the compassion, vulnerability, and resilience of both the staff and the participants to work through incredibly challenging circumstances. Another huge strength of RVM is their ability to advocate for those that have been marginalized and connect with the community at large to help people get back on their feet so the concept of building up strong partnerships and working towards positive change as an entire community has always been a reminder to me that progress like that is possible no matter how bleak things seem. Another thing I learned that I need to keep in mind is that no one is undeserving of help or compassion. Hearing about some of the obstacles people have to overcome in life really provides the perspective that I know so little about. I've learned that it's always best to approach life from a place of seeking to understand and help. My time at RVM

has stuck with me and I've been so grateful to continue the relationship over these past few years. This experience was outside of my normal field which ended up working well for me and gave me a great learning experience I don't think I would have had elsewhere. I especially enjoyed the annual celebration banquet that we got to attend as interns, and I felt like that was a great way to wrap up my internship by getting to hear about so many of the personal success stories of people who have worked with RVM and to see the happiness in the room. I was so glad Jim reached out to me a few years ago to do a refresh of the RVM report I had worked on and was thrilled to get a chance to keep up the relationship. I think getting to reconnect to the project periodically always makes me happy because RVM is such a great example of amazing individual success stories lining up with trends in a larger dataset. It's always very cool for me to see all the hard work the RVM staff does to track and quantify the change they're working towards and the process of compiling and summarizing that information into a final product that shows positive results on both the individual and organizational level is really fulfilling. I'm so glad it's a useful tool for RVM to share the good work they're doing. I'm currently living in Milwaukee with my girlfriend Roxanne, and our two cats. Right after graduation, I moved to Raleigh, North Carolina to start a job at North Carolina State University in their Donor Services department. Since then, I've stayed with NC State and recently started a new position as a Business and Technology Applications Analyst on the Advancement Information & Technology team which I'm lucky enough to be able to do remotely on a full-time basis. During my time with NC State, I completed my master's degree in computer science which I found to be a nice perk of working in higher ed and an interesting continuation of my undergraduate coursework. In my spare time I'm usually playing video games or traveling, and I've greatly enjoyed reconnecting with a lot of college friends since being back here in the Milwaukee area.



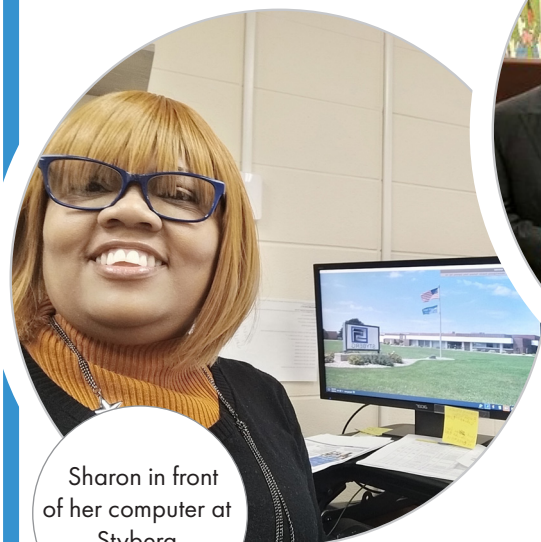
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# FROM OUR PARTICIPANTS

## DANA COLEMAN—FROM HOMELESSNESS TO SUSTAINABILITY

Dana came to RVM unemployed and living at HALO. Finding work at a local foundry, Dana began having trouble with finding a steady place to live after leaving HALO. Dana said of his situation, “I was first introduced to RVM during the recession of 2008. It was the worst time in my life. I was homeless, jobless, and had no hope of seeing my way out of the situation. Working with RVM gave me mental and moral support which gave me a fighting chance.” Not to be deterred, he applied for the Machine Repair Boot Camp training program. A 22-week, full time training program which would require him to quit the only part time, off again on again, job he had. Looking to the future, he took a leap of faith and signed up for the class. Dana worked his way through a grueling 22 weeks of intense education and training while living in a transient situation and sometimes still sleeping in his car when he had nowhere else to go. Dana graduated the program with a 3.65 GPA and at the top of his class. He continued with case management and pursued several opportunities, but nothing came as the holiday season approached. He spent most of the winter interviewing and sending out resumes. In spring he got a call from a contract agency. They placed him at Bombardier in Sturtevant. He worked there for several years. Although this contract job offered him some semblance of stability, there seemed to be no future for him. This put him on the hunt again for a better opportunity. Over the years he worked for Niagara Water Company and Gold Standard Bakery. Today, he works at IEA earning a base wage totaling over \$56,000 a year. Dana stated later, “With their support, I fought through the adversity to get back on my feet and gained my life back.” He has the stability he has not only worked for but earned with hard work, hard skills, and dedication to his employers. He also wants you to know that, “my story is one of many that RVM has impacted in very positive ways!”



Sharon in front of her computer at Styberg



Endel prepping for prison class



Scott hugging his dad after receiving an award

# OUR WALK-IN PROGRAM

For those who maintained a regular connection to programming:

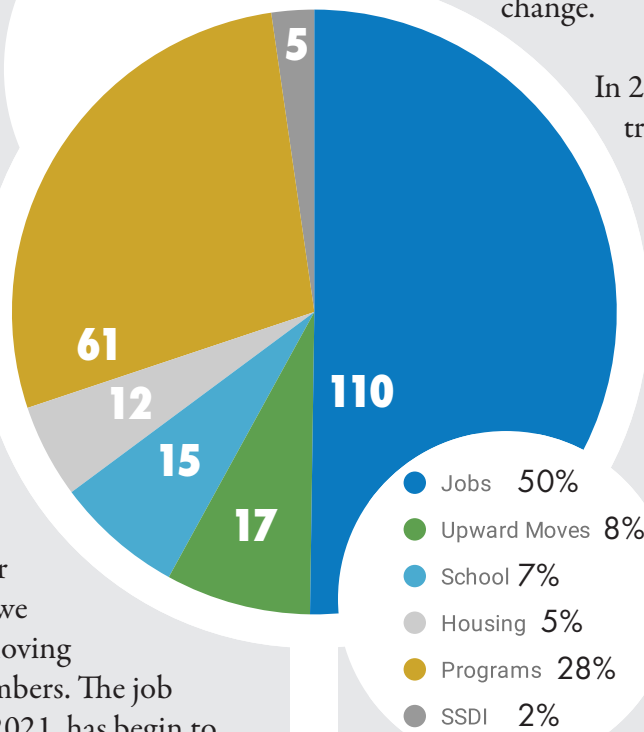
- 51 attained gainful employment, 22 continued employment, 14 continued social security benefits and of those 14, 2 gained employment to increase their income – 3 SSI/SSDI cases pending
- 34 participants got a degree/certificate or are presently enrolled in school
- 75 participants gained marketable skills to advance their careers
- 64 maintained employment above the ALICE threshold
- 55 participants improved their job classification via increased wages or job improvement
- 75 homeless participants and their families were served - 43 of them moved into permanent housing
- 54 applicants were supported with the aid of emergency services

2022 shows improvements in each category above. Placements were up 5% and at 220 for the year. This is the second year we are back over 200 placements, moving slightly above pre-pandemic numbers. The job market, which was booming in 2021, has begun to cool down. Unprecedented hiring and rising wages have slowed in pace, but the market is still relatively strong. In 2021, RVM saw the largest number of participants attaining ALICE wages in our history. This number is still strong at 64 of our current placements. Another strong development is that 55 RVM participants were promoted

within their respective fields, maintaining last year's 45% increase. RVM served 75 homeless participants and assisted 43 into housing, a nearly 10% increase. At intake, more than 80% of program participants had no employment income and nearly all were at least 200% below the federal poverty guidelines. Responses by participants to the pandemic were chronic overwhelming fear, worries about the future, and a profound lack of hope which is the engine for personal motivation. We are continuing to see this trend turning around. At RVM, our focus is to help participants rediscover hope in a path that is rooted in knowing who they are and what they can accomplish. This is the way to positive and life affirming change.

In 2022, Racine Vocational Ministry placed 220 individuals in jobs and job training at an average wage of \$17.61 an hour, our highest mark ever at \$6.30 higher than the County living wage estimate (\$11.31) for a single household. ALICE wages for a single adult are \$10.97 an hour but for a family of four it is \$36.94. For unskilled workers, that means that two wage earners need to earn about \$18.50 an hour to sustain a family. This takes planning, new job skills, and well-developed life skills, sometimes referred to as "soft skills."

## 2022 TOTAL PLACEMENTS



\*To learn more about ALICE in Racine County, click or take a picture of the QR code:



# NEW LOGO & REFOCUSSED MISSION

SAME EFFECTIVE & COMPASSIONATE SERVICE

In 2022, work began to refocus our mission and refresh our brand image to meet our third decade of service with a fresh look and a renewed sense of purpose. With substantial effort from the board and staff, the rebranding was launched.

The RVM rebrand started with a series of strategic planning sessions that were meant to identify key efforts to strengthen our presence in the social service network, rebuild our participant base from the devastation of the COVID pandemic, create a stronger public awareness of our work in Racine and Kenosha, review and revise current policies, expand the board of directors, and prepare for a leadership transition in 2025.

Our board has earned our appreciation for their dedication and focus to keep RVM as a model of non-profit excellence and fiscal integrity. Our board members are:

- President Pam Handrow – CEO of Inventive Solutions,
- Treasurer – Charles Goodremote – Retired CIO of Modine Manufacturing,
- Secretary – Barbara Edwards – Retired Assistant to the Director of Johnson Financial,

Members at large:

- Neal Nottleson – Retired CFO – SC Johnson & Sons,
- Gretchen Herrmann – Retired Talent Pipeline Manager at RAMAC,
- John Koetz – President – Komatsu Mining Corporation,
- James Black – Senior Marketing – Estimating – Michels Corp,
- Keith Bell – Chaplain – Racine Youthful Offenders Facility,
- Aubrey Buchanan – Metallurgical Technician – ATI Forged Products,
- Thomas Buhler – Director – Butter Buds.

## Our Roots in the Church

2002 – 2022

The church is foundational for how RVM perceives the world around us. Following Jesus' command to care for those less fortunate is a driving force in our desire to offer healing and hope to our broken world. Jesus' command to love our neighbors as ourselves is something we take very seriously. We understand that each of us is knit together in the womb by God himself (Psalm 139) which implies a dignity in each person that is inherent. We believe that we are meeting Christ in each person that we meet. We wish to acknowledge our faith-based donors who have supported us, making it possible to move into our 21<sup>st</sup> year of service. The parishes who have been faith partners in this work are:

Covenant Presbyterian • Journey in Faith • St. Luke's Episcopal • First Presbyterian • Mt. Pleasant Lutheran • St. Michael's Episcopal • St. Matthew's Episcopal • St. Mary's Lutheran • Resurrection Lutheran • Holy Communion Lutheran • Sacred Journeys • Olympia Brown UU • St. Paul Catholic • St. Andrew Lutheran • Light of Christ Anglican • Bethel Baptist.

Together we are a community of hope, inspiring all to reach for their dreams in the knowledge that we are all loved and respected.

## Special Thanks to Traylor Creative

RVM is proud to partner with Traylor Creative. Lisa Traylor has been a key to our rebranding efforts. She is responsive, creative, and professional.

630.709.5492 • [traylorcreative.com](http://traylorcreative.com) • [lisa.w.traylor@gmail.com](mailto:lisa.w.traylor@gmail.com)



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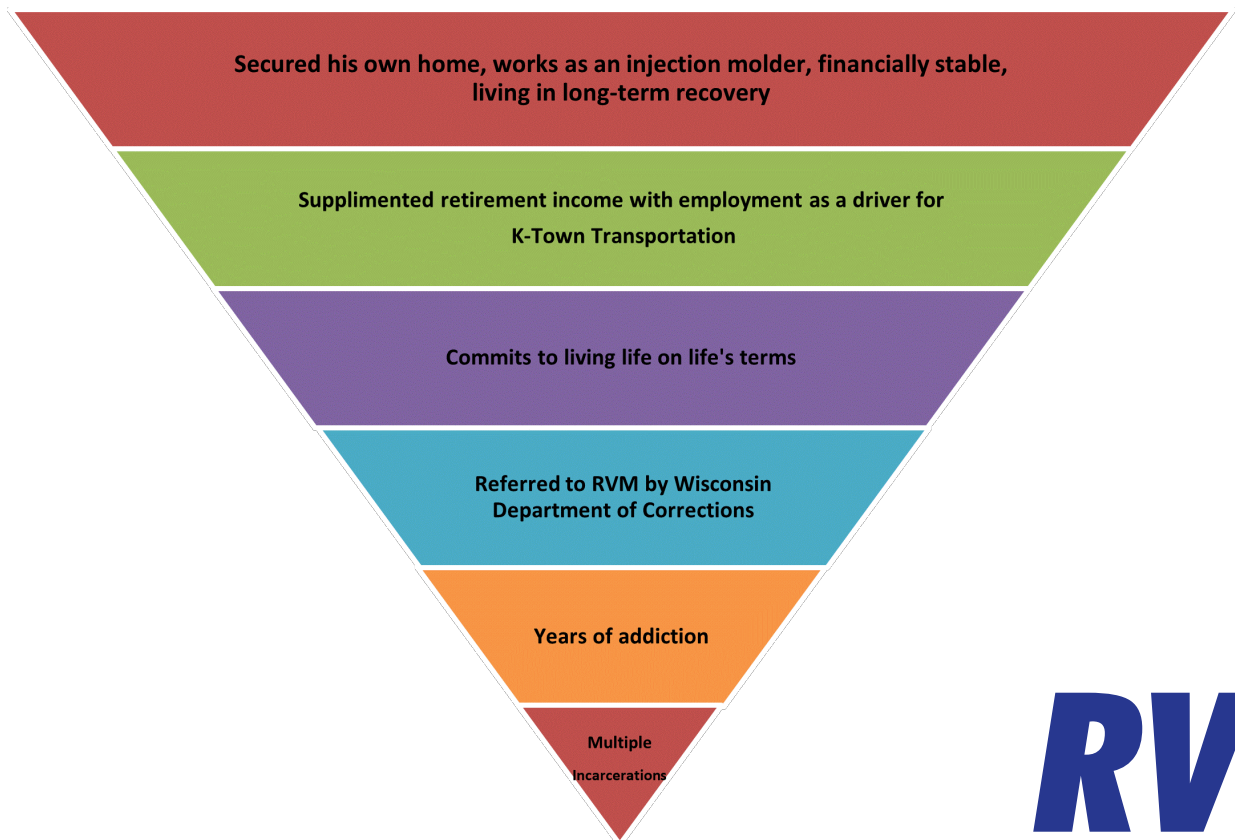
# FROM OUR WALK-IN PROGRAM

## MICHAEL WRIGHT—A RETURN TO FAITH

Michael came home from prison on March 21, 2021, after 9 years of incarceration. He came to RVM after a referral from the Department of Community Corrections. After a tumultuous start and restart, Michael began to embrace the change process that is the very core of true recovery and started to allow RVM to be a part of his process.

Michael grew up in a family that taught him morals and spirituality, supported by his father who was a pastor. When Michael describes his childhood, he speaks of how great it was. As he grew, he began longing to be out of the “sheltered bubble” of his family surroundings. During his junior year of high school, he got his first experience of that unsheltered world. As a teenager, he wanted to be a part of the “in” crowd. Michael’s behavior worsened and his addiction to substances grew out of control. After multiple incarcerations and continued relapses, Michael looked around and realized he was standing alone in the depths of his addiction. Something needed to change and that something was him. He struggled with changing in his thought process and his belief about addiction. Through continued services he has embraced his spirituality, cognitive change, and living his life through the steps of recovery. Finally, Michael reconnected to his passion for music and now delights in having the ability to “get lost” in the healing love of music.

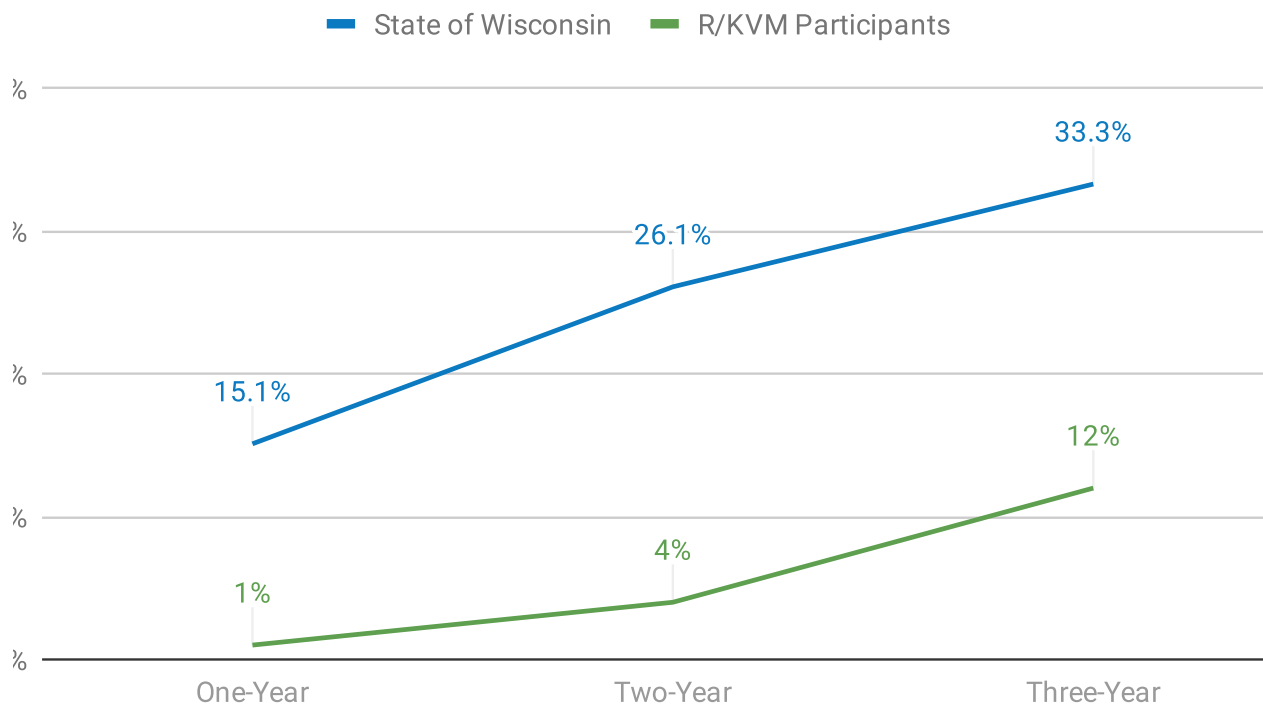
Today he is living in his own place, with a new car, and enjoying his job as an injection molder, while also reaping his retirement benefits. After work he spends time developing his relationships with his family and doing service work for his church.



# OUR RE-ENTRY PROGRAM

In 2005, with the support of the Wisconsin Department of Corrections, the Racine Police Department and the City of Racine, RVM started the Community Re-entry program. From 2005–2010 RVM served 223 re-entry participants. In 2011, the City received a federal grant to serve 150 more reentrants over the next three years. The principle task of federal 2nd Chance programs are to reduce participant recidivism by 50%. RVM was able to accomplish this and more. To date, RVM and KVM have served over 650 reentrants in Racine and Kenosha Counties since the inception of the program.

## Rate of Reentrant Return to WI Corrections, 2022



## IMPACT – LOWER RECIDIVISM

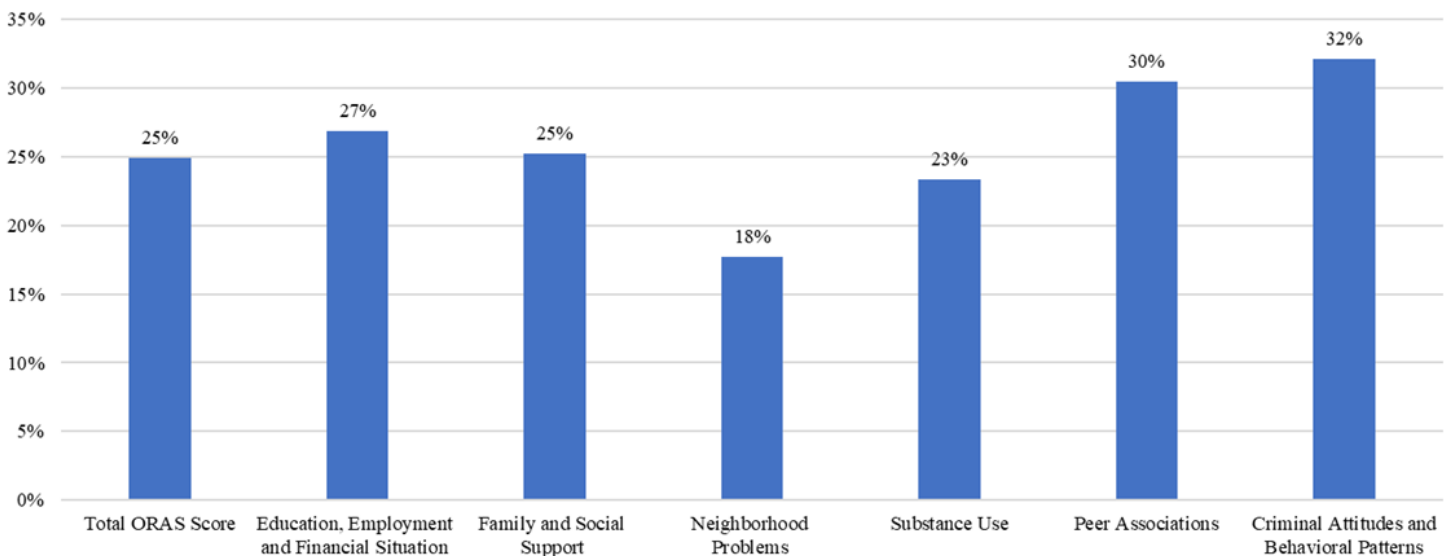
Reducing recidivism has significant civic benefits. First, it keeps people in the community, increasing the effectiveness of program interventions and allowing family and community relationships to be maintained and developed. We believe that keeping families together is the best way to keep our cities economically and socially viable as well as safe. Remaining home also allows reentrants to work, pay taxes, purchase food, clothes, housing and entertainment, thereby adding to the economic vitality of some of our more impoverished neighborhoods.



# MEASURING COGNITIVE CHANGE

The key to creating a path to long term success is cognitive change. If you cannot think about something differently you will not be able to react to it differently. We begin this process of change by simply meeting participants where they are. We then help them negotiate their stages of change, which is a theoretical framework that allows RVM staff to meet participants where they are in relation to their readiness to change. Change is the lynch pin of all program success. Research from the University of Cincinnati identified six key domains of influence impacting the risk of recidivism and facilitating cognitive change. R/KVM's data report for 2020-2022 showed some very positive improvements in prosocial thinking patterns.

## ORAS Average % Improvement 2020-2022 Assessment 1 - Assessment 3



Analysis: All 6 non-static ORAS subfields show significant improvement for those RVM participants being assessed 3 times between 2020 and 2022. The average score across all participants for each of these 6 categories improved by at least 18% with a maximum improvement of 32%. Such marked improvement is no easy feat, as this represents reducing risk factors spread across 6 different facets of life by nearly a quarter each. The consistent improvement across all 6 fields speaks to RVM's commitment to transforming the whole of their participants' lives and their participants' commitment to the incremental change necessary to get there.

Especially prevalent are the 27%+ improvements in the categories of Education, Employment and Financial Situation, Peer Associations and Criminal Attitudes and Behavioral Patterns. These areas of growth underly RVM's dedication to ensuring participants have a strong support system and the tools necessary to make positive changes in their lives.



# FROM OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

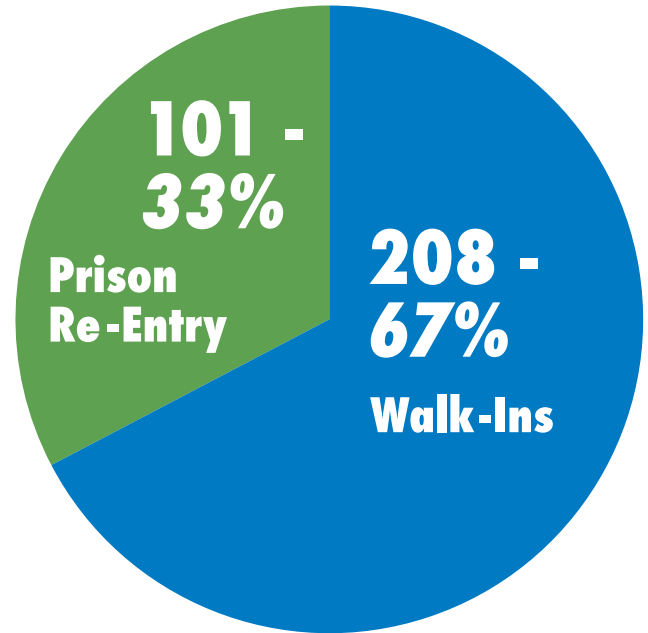


The Racine Community Foundation has been pleased to fund this important community service since 2003. It is important that we diligently assess which organizations can best support our vision of community well-being.

RVM is one of those organizations. Their commitment to transforming the lives of those who seek their services is inspiring and impactful. Their respect for the people whom they serve goes above and beyond the basics of social service. RVM is committed to being community to its program participants as a model for how to live and contribute to a healthy civic life. As they enter their third decade of service and build toward their 6000th placement we wish them the best and look forward to the impact they will make in our community.

**Liz Powell** – President and CEO

## 2022 Program Participation



### Clifford George Forging a New Path

Clifford came to RVM in 2021. Before going to prison Cliff was a university professor and a pastor. When he left prison he had no idea what, if anything, he would be able to do for work. He also had to deal with the shame and confusion of returning to a community that had removed him from everyday contact with the people who knew him best and the life of service he had built over the decades of professional development. On his return, Clifford came face to face with the need to reconcile his past actions with a lifetime of deep and abiding faith that was focused on service to others. How was he to move forward as a child of God after he had violated his communities trust in his contributions? Would they forgive him?

Would God forgive him? Could he forgive himself? With the help of Heather and all of RVM he was able to get his CDL license and found work at Columbian Logistics. He started as a truck driver, moved into the warehouse driving a forklift and used now moving into the administrative side of the business. With RVM's help he is living a full and happy life, something he wasn't sure was possible two years ago when he left prison. He has spent much energy leaning into God's forgiveness and becoming secure in his God-given identity. He has a great relationship with his

children and is looking forward to what the future holds.



# KENOSHA VOCATIONAL MINISTRY (KVM) IS FIRMLY ESTABLISHED

In late 2015, RVM and a group of Kenosha citizens met to address the issue of prison reentry challenges. With support from Kenosha County Human Services, Kenosha United Way, the ELCA Outreach Center and Light of Christ Anglican Church, KVM is now a key player in the Kenosha Human Services community. 2022 began KVM's 5th full year of service. Through a part-time office, we served 37 reentrants. 24 participants have completed AODA treatment, and 31 others are currently in programs. All 37 have participated in cognitive services offered by KVM and 32 have obtained their driver licenses. 26 were currently employed, 6 others had a job at some point during the year and 2 qualified for SSDI. Nearly 70% of those we were serving at the end of 2022 were working. Another 6, or 23% had a job at some time during the year. KVM has aggressively sought new funding to expand the program and recently the Otto Bremer Trust made it possible to open a full-time office in mid-2023. We are thrilled with the outcomes that are a result of our participant's tenacity and dedication to KVM's programming.



**Amber Mosley**  
KVM Rising Star

My name is Amber Mosley and I was born in San Diego, California. I am 41 years old. I was raised by my mother and I have one older brother. I currently reside in Kenosha, Wisconsin with my husband of 7 years. I have one stepdaughter and two beautiful grandkids. I got my GED from Tremper High School. My biggest accomplishment was having a painting of mine in the Kenosha Unified School District building. I love art and it's been a huge passion of mine since I was young. I have also received awards for my art projects throughout the years. I have a passion to redo old furniture and to do small renovations around my home. I am currently a server / manager at Twisted Cuisine in Kenosha for the past 8 years and have been in the service industry for the past 20 years or so. My focus for the future is to keep my sobriety and hopefully one day take my refurbished furniture and small renovation projects I do to another level! I want to help others with projects and am considering creating a small business with my furniture.



**Eric Fleming**  
From Re-Entrant  
to Mentor

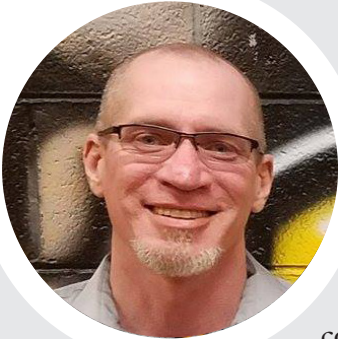
Since re-entering to the Racine community in 2015, Eric has literally hit the ground running. He aggressively began a job search and just two weeks after being released, he obtained full time employment. He has been working at the same company now for 8 years. With the love and support of his friends and family Eric has been able to tackle every challenge he has been faced with. When he needs help, he has learned to step out his comfort zone and ask for it. If you ask Eric what is different this time around he will tell you everything from his attitude to his outlook on life. While he has made mistakes in the past, he knows that it's not what he has done in the past that makes him, but what he does in the future that defines him. Since coming home, Eric has regained relationships with his daughters and now currently enjoys spending time with his grandchildren. He has also been a mentor to others struggling, very active in his church, and spends his time giving back to those who need. Eric is a great example of what seems impossible is very possible.

**KVM**  
KENOSHA VOCATIONAL MINISTRY

# INTERNS & FORMER AWARD WINNERS

## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

We have been sharing about the successes of our participants for over a decade. We hope you enjoy this new feature that presents updates of former participants and interns. We celebrate lives that are on a completely new trajectory and level of professional success.



**Scott Poplawski** came to RVM in 2015 as a part of the Second Chance Program. He started at a local Get It Now store in Racine. He shared how being surprised by the corporate leadership allowed him to handle and deposit money from the days activities. This trust allowed him to grow and become a part of the management at his local store. Scott has lead the teams that opened two stores in central Wisconsin. He is now a regional manager of Get It Now in the Fox Valley.

**Endel Williams** came to RVM in 2002 from a prison sentence for drugs. For nearly 20 years he has been moving forward, rebuilding his life and investing in his retirement. He has recently started his own trucking business in Racine. Endel also is committed to giving back by reaching out to street gangs and recent reentrants, helping them to transition to more pro-social lives.

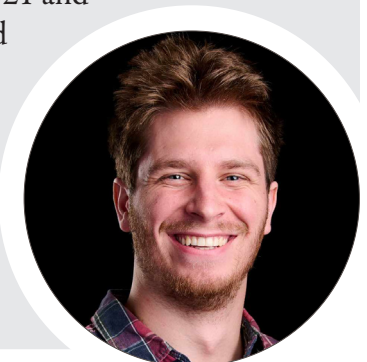
He also presents a program for inmates called Choices Change Lives currently being offered at Racine Youthful Offender Facility and Racine Correctional Institution.



**Karl McNeil** came to RVM in 2004. A native of Chicago Illinois, he grew up in gang infested neighborhoods and was on a path to self-destruction. When Karl came to RVM he wanted something different for his life and the lives of his children. Karl spent a few years delivering the CODING PROJECT to youth in Racine and Chicago. He worked for Case manufacturing as a machinist and currently serves as pastor for Starlight Ministries on Golf Avenue on the North-side of Racine.

**Nathan Engstrom** worked with RVM as a student intern in 2016. After graduating from The Prairie School, Nathan attended and graduated from Davidson College in North Carolina where he was a university Leadership Fellow and completed an internship abroad at the London School of Economics. He has worked for Brex, a financial management company, since 2021 and has recently been promoted to Credit Senior Analyst.

Outside of work, Nathan is a Young Life leader along with his wife, Sarah, at Fort Mill High School in South Carolina where they live.





# INTERNS & FORMER AWARD WINNERS



**Sharon Arscott** came to us in 2019 as a struggling immigrant. She was not getting a fair shot in interviews, maybe due to her heavy accent. Sharon completed her associate degree in business admin and is now in her second year in the office at Styberg Engineering. She is now a homeowner and lives with her daughter and was even able to bring her mom up for a visit from Puerto Rico.

**Anton House** came to us as a reentrant into the Community Reentry Program in 2005. He enrolled at UW-Parkside and graduated on the Dean's List. He then enrolled at Howard University where he earned a master's degree and a PhD. Anton is in his third year as a professor at Delaware State University.



## EMPLOYEE FEATURE

DEBRA BARKLEY



Debra came to RVM in January of 2018. She shared about a life of hard times, some of them self-imposed and some of them just part of life. Debra says of her youth, "I was hardheaded. I had two loving, stable parents but I thought I could do whatever I wanted." She led a life of drugs and alcohol that put her in and out of group homes and bounced around in the foster system. She had four children by the age of 21 and her street life showed no signs of slowing down. By age 23 she did her first stay in prison. She had two more prison sentences before she decided that she had had enough. She felt a call from the Lord and began to do street ministry. She ministered to anyone who would listen. She also enrolled in college and was well into her bachelor's degree when tragedy struck. In a short span of time, three of her four children died. Her son hung himself in the Ethan Allen school for boys, her daughter died of a drug overdose and another daughter, who was suffering with full blown AIDS, died of cervical cancer. She was devastated! At that time, she also required surgery. Following surgery, she was prescribed pain killers that inadvertently led her back into her addiction. Again, she began rebuilding her life again, this time with RVM at her side. She said in an interview, "I love my case manager and I know she loves me!" This relationship and her commitment to herself put Debra back on the path to wholeness. She began paying it forward by working at HALO as a site supervisor. She then took a position at a regional methadone clinic where she took her clinical skills to a new level. She is pursuing her bachelor's degree with hopes of going on for her Master's degree. After 3 years at the clinic Debra was hoping to work closer to home. An opportunity became available at RVM and in 2022 we began talking with Debra about joining the team at RVM. She is now a highly regarded member of our team with a focus on the homeless population. Debra said to us last week, "I am so excited about what God is doing. I just wait on him and do what he says." Debra is now using her transforming life to pay it forward in her local community.

**RVM**  
RACINE VOCATIONAL MINISTRY

# FUNDING HISTORY

## FUNDERS

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG)

SC JOHNSON FUND

STATE EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS GRANT

CITY EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS GRANT

STATE GANG DIVERSION

RACINE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

UNITED WAY OF RACINE COUNTY

THE BRADLEY FOUNDATION

WISCONSIN DEPT. OF ADMINISTRATION

E C STYBERG FOUNDATION

ELCA DOMESTIC HUNGER FUND

KENOSHA COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES

UNITED WAY OF KENOSHA COUNTY

BOB BARKER FOUNDATION

OUTREACH FOR HOPE

## DATES

2005 – 2022

2002 – 2022

2006 – 2022

2006 – 2022

2005 – 2022

2002 – 2022

2003 – 2022

2017 – 2022

2021 – 2022

2017 – 2022

2017 – 2022

2017 – 2022

2019 – 2022

2021 – 2022

2022



We are grateful to all of our funders who aid us in helping the many men and women of our community seeking to reengage economically and civically. Your extraordinary generosity during the COVID pandemic era has made a life sustaining difference to our participants!

**GIVE NOW**

Or mail your check to:  
Racine Vocational Ministry  
214 7<sup>th</sup> Street  
Racine, WI 53403  
262-633-8660

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[rvmracine.org](http://rvmracine.org)