



HORIZON HIGH SCHOOL

Wisconsin's only Recovery High School
Helping teens succeed in sobriety and in life since 2005

Horizon High School:
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HORIZON HIGH SCHOOL'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2023

Dear Valued Friends and Supporters:

2023 has been quite a year! In late 2022, we started to work on a project to convince the Wisconsin government to provide funding for recovery high schools.

Our dear deceased past VicePresident and long time advisor, Paul Moberg, had told us about the "Massachusetts model", where that state provides \$500,000 a year to each of 5 recovery schools. It started with 3 schools about 18 years ago, and those schools still are successfully operating— when a large number of recovery schools fail (financially) within the first 5 years.

It has been a struggle to keep Horizon open, and we just barely have enough funding to support a staff of 5 full and 2 part time staff and 15 students.

Following the advice of Peter Brunzelle (WisHope Recovery Center), we developed a "white paper" explaining the need for recovery high schools and how they operate and how they are successful. These were distributed to a wide range of Wisconsin legislators and administration officials, with little positive response -- until Senator Jesse James (R-Altoona) said he wanted to visit us.

Senator James and his complete staff visited the school on February 16th, and listened and asked a lot of questions. He said he'd himself been in recovery for 28 years and understood what Horizon was doing, and would see what he could do in regard to upcoming Wisconsin biennium budget.

On May 2nd, he introduced Senate Bill 267, "a grant program for recovery high schools and making an appropriation." And on May 17. Representative Barbara Dittrich (R-Oconomowoc) introduced the companion Assembly Bill.


On May 16, Horizon testified at a hearing of the Senate Committee on Mental Health, Substance Abuse Prevention, Children and Families. We then spent many hours in the Capital, introducing the Joint Finance Committee to recovery schools, to ensure that the \$500K funding for each year of the biennium would remain in the budget -- and it did!



On December 6, Governor Evers signed the Wisconsin Recovery School legislation. Left to Right: Mitch Goettl (chief-of-staff for Sen. James), Rep. Barbara Dittrich, HHS board members Stan Kanter, Jacci See, Ken Adams; Gov. Evers, HHS therapist Madeline Brown, HHS Pres. & Founder John Fournelle, HHS Director Traci Goll, and HHS Secretary & Founder Judi Munaker. Sen. James was in North Carolina getting the Mental Health America 2023 Legislative Award for his work.

We also testified at a hearing of the Assembly Committee on Education on November 1. The bill had been amended, so that it explicitly provided 60% of the money to groups wishing to create new recovery high schools, and the balance to go to existing recovery schools. The legislature passed the bill on Nov. 14. And on Dec. 6, Governor Evers signed the bill!

What Does this mean for Horizon in 2024? The State will start to provide some funds starting in mid-late 2024. This will help us carefully expand some services, but it unclear how much can be counted on a permanent basis, since when new recovery schools start up, the money will be shared — and the state budget could change every two years. The legislation is a significant step forward for Horizon and new recovery schools in Wisconsin, but as our budget on page 5 shows, we still will rely on donation and grants for the recovery aspects of our program. We still depend upon you, our supporters, to keep our doors open!

 1/4/2024

**Horizon High School of Madison, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization
and all contributions are fully tax deductible. Our EIN: 20-1240272**

Horizon Graduate Tells Her Story



My name is Molly and I graduated from Horizon in 2009. Before attending Horizon, I was really struggling in school, I was missing a lot of classes, not turning in homework, my grades were really struggling. I was experimenting with different substances and putting myself in unsafe situations, surrounding myself with people who were not healthy for me, and I had a very strained relationship with my parents and a lot of my other family as well. During my time at Horizon, I was able to get my grades up and graduate on time and start rebuilding the relationship with my parents. I was also able to start making healthy decisions for myself and start putting myself into situations which were not going to be harmful to me. Since then, I have moved out to the East Coast to be closer to my family. I have a wonderful husband and an amazing little son. I started college again in 2018, after taking a lot of time off. I graduated with my BSW in the top 21 of my class in May 2023. I started the advanced standing 1 year MSW program this fall and I am set to graduate this May 2024.. And most of this would not have been possible without the support of Horizon and a lot of other people who cared about me and my life at that time. I want to say thank you for putting me on the right track and I'm excited to see what the future holds for future graduates of Horizon.

Life Skills Program at Horizon

Our students gain a variety of things from our life skills program. They gain knowledge, experiences, social skills, challenges, discover new interests, step out of their comfort zone, discover they like to do something they never tried or didn't have the opportunity to do or were scared. Every life skill trip is a new experience for at least one of our students.

On a trip to a farm, I watched students see chickens, donkeys, horses for the first time. Many students have never held, petted or touched a farm animal. All of our students had the opportunity to ride a horse bare back. Students learned what the animals eat, how to care for them, all the work involved and how animals can bring joy, happiness and a sense of calm. Some of our students were scared of some of the animals and it was awesome to see them relax, become more comfortable and trust the animals.

On a recent hike to picnic point, it was clear that some students love to be in nature and it calms them. Some students struggle to be in nature and they are uncomfortable in the great outdoors. Some students love to hike, others struggle with their weight and hiking is a huge challenge for them. Some students couldn't wait to get to the water to jump in and cool off, some students were scared of the water and couldn't believe their classmates jumped in. All students agreed the view was beautiful and worth the walk to the end.

Students have had the opportunity to volunteer for organizations that have donated to Horizon. We recently packed bags for the Berber Derby race.

Some students have had the opportunity

to share their stories to different organizations to inform different organizations, businesses or public about Horizon. It is always powerful to hear our students' stories and it is great for them to gain public speaking opportunities.

A trip to a fast food restaurant should be simple, right? Don't assume. A few students are independent and able to navigate the menu, budget for the meal they want, order independently, pay and handle all the interactions. A few students are uncomfortable ordering alone, need help with simple math and paying with correct change. A couple of students struggle with anxiety, depression and social situations like this are extremely scary for them and they require one on one assistance.

A trip to the Chazen is always a fun experience. Some of our students love seeing the art, take it all in and ask questions and read all about the artists. Some have ADHD they are done looking at the art in five minutes, and want to leave. So some students learn all about Art and experience beautiful new pieces and others learn about patience and uses different skills to deal with the situation. — Traci Goll, Director

Horizon started 2023 in January with 15 students. On May 25th, 4 students graduated! Three of them are in the work world, with one student is still working with Traci through CCS, (Comprehensive Community Services) and is hoping after they complete their job training and job shadowing will have full time employment. We held summer school from June 19 to July 20th with 8 students.

We started back to school in September with 12 students— which reached a maximum of 14 —and then we ended 2023 with 12. Currently 4 students are on track to graduate in May 2024.

Senator Jesse James Spearheads WI Recovery School Bill

Testimony of Sen. James (District 23) at Assembly Education Hearing November 1

According to the 2022 annual report from the Office of Children's Mental Health, 22% of Wisconsin high school students reported self-harm, 34% felt sad or hopeless, 1 in 4 females seriously considered attempting suicide, and the number of students reporting they feel sad and hopeless almost every day increased by 10% over the last decade. Even more – our children are now turning to substance abuse to cope. Numbers from the National Center for Drug Abuse Statistics show that Wisconsin teens are more likely than the average American teen to have used drugs in the last month. It's clear our Wisconsin teens are suffering right now. Thankfully, we have an underutilized tool at our disposal that can help.

Recovery schools, or sober schools, are institutions designed specifically for students in recovery. They provide young people with essential resources and support who are battling addiction, and they do so at a fraction of the cost. Recent numbers from the CDC suggest opioid use disorder alone costs approximately \$221,219 per year per person, and this figure does not include other dependencies like alcohol. Horizon High School, Wisconsin's only currently operating recovery school, spends approximately \$30,000 per year per person. That is nearly \$191,000 in savings per person per year.

Yet students at Horizon will tell you the school is so much more. Not only does the school push them to rediscover their passion for learning and graduate, it frankly saves their lives.

Unfortunately, these institutions are struggling financially. While Horizon just celebrated its 19th year of operations, the average lifespan of a recovery school is just 9.5 years because they never achieve financial stability due to the lack of resources available to them and the uniquely expensive costs associated with serving students in recovery.

Assembly Bill 271 builds off of funding approved in the 2023-25 state budget to provide some security for recovery high schools in our state. Particularly, I would like to focus on Substitute Amendment 1, which was inspired by the recovery school grant program in Massachusetts. This amendment outlines how the grant program will work.

The first part of the program creates planning grants to help interested parties get recovery high schools up and running. The amendment allocates \$300,000 of the \$500,000 annual appropriation for up to four grants. To apply, interested parties must request a specific amount from DPI and provide a proposed budget for how they will spend those funds. DPI retains discretion to disperse those funds, but they must provide an explanation if they chose to award lower than the amount requested.

Planning grants may be allocated until DPI determines there are three recovery high schools in the state. There may be some confusion as to why this number was chosen. There are 42 active recovery



Senator Jesse James visited Horizon on Feb. 16

schools in 20 states across the country currently. That averages out to approximately 2.1 recovery schools per state. Some states have more, such as Minnesota which has six currently. Three is a solid benchmark for the time being while we are able to better integrate these tools into our larger mental health framework. If there is ever a time when there are less than three recovery high schools operating in the state, planning grants can be allocated again, and the amendment allocates \$100,000 from the allocation for that purpose.

Operational grants operate similar to the planning grants. Existing recovery schools must request a specific amount from DPI and provide a proposed budget for how they will spend those funds. DPI retains discretion to disperse those funds, but they must provide an explanation if they chose to award lower than the amount requested. This model ensures accountability and transparency at all levels from all actors. That is why we chose it for our model here in Wisconsin.

Both the planning grants and the operational grants are also structured to gather as much information as possible. Recipients of the planning grants are required to submit to DPI how the grant was actually used, their plans for opening a new school, or reasons for why a new school is not feasible. These reports will help us identify barriers to creating recovery schools that future legislation would be able to address. Similarly, recipients of the operational grants are required to report how they actually spent the grant funds, along with several pieces of information, including: the number of pupils that apply and enroll, basic demographic information, substance use information of the students, academic information, among other things. This data will be crucial for the state to better understand how these institutions can be fully utilized going forward. ...

We have a moment here in Wisconsin where we can make great strides for young people battling addiction. The state legislature has made mental health a priority by the state assembly combining mental health and substance abuse prevention into a single

Continued on Page 4

Education at Horizon

In Math we continue to primarily use ALEKS, an online math program, in order to help students work through an individualized program starting from the level of math that they are presently at, and at a pace that is appropriate to their learning. We have added a new math teacher, Caitlyn, as she brings her expertise and knowledge in engaging the students through their unique perspectives.

In Social Studies we are focusing on human geography, and current events through maps, discussions and articles.

The focus in Science has been on understanding "scientific method," using a few labs, as well as analyzing videos of science experiments and analyzing famous experiments in history.

English began again this year with a Shakespeare unit that included a trip to see *Romeo & Juliet* at American Players Theatre. We are currently working on a classwide narrative book (*Killers of the Flower Moon*), a non-fiction book applying the principles of 12 Step recovery programs towards creativity (*Artist's Way*), and independent choice reading projects that include assignments for practicing academic writing skills.

Students are also writing scripts for the national Young Playwrights program, run locally by Children's Theater of Madison. Later this school year Horizon students will participate in Poetry Out Loud for the first time. -- Bob Weinswig and Enda Breadon, teachers



Therapy at Horizon

This year in Group Therapy I am implementing more evidenced based materials from the Matrix Model of Addiction Treatment and Stanford's Safety First program. By utilizing these tools, I have seen the students increase their knowledge on triggers, coping with cravings, the harmful effects of vaping, etc. We often implement artistic projects during group therapy sessions which has been affectionately nicknamed "Grart." During one Grart session the students used paints and canvases to "paint their minds." They were then able to share how these art pieces represented their mental health, thoughts, and emotions.

The kids have impressed me this year with their desire to engage in group therapy on Mondays and Fridays... and often request if we can have "extra groups" throughout the week. I've admired the students as they support one another in the Group and in turn this has increased positive peer to peer connections in our school. In addition to Group, I meet with the kids on an individual basis. Some of our students thrive in Group Therapy, but others are much more open when we meet one on one.

Lastly, I spent time creating a new Drug Test policy for Horizon High School which utilizes a color wheel to randomize drug tests throughout the week. —Madeline Brown, CSAC (Clinical Substance Abuse Counselor)

Student Self Identification Demographics (Dec 2023)

Bi-racial-3	
Black/African American-2	Female-7
White-4	Male-5
Hispanic/Latino-2	
Asian-1	

10 of our students are from low or no income families; 5 have IEPs

We have 3 Sophomores, 4 Juniors and 5 Seniors

Senator James — Continued from Page 3

committee, the state senate creating its first ever committee on mental health, substance abuse prevention, and children and families, and both chambers setting funding aside in the state budget for a recovery high schools support program. The executive branch named 2023 the "Year of Mental Health". If both sides are serious, this is a common sense proposal that should receive bipartisan support. Let's not waste this opportunity.

Horizon High School Staff - Jan 2024

Traci Goll - Director — 608 335-0387
Robert Weinswig - Teacher
Enda Breadon - Teacher
Madeline Brown CSAC - Therapist
Mallory Olcott - SEA & Program Assistant
Jason Semenas - PT SEA
Caitlyn Swearingen - PT Teacher

Horizon's 2023 Finances

Horizon High School of Madison, Inc. Income & Expenses Calendar Year 2023		
Revenue		
School Districts		\$145,740
CCS		\$30,907
Donations		\$195,049
Grants		\$82,450
In Kind Donations		\$7,640
Other Income		\$2,916
Total Revenue		\$464,702
Expenses		
Salaries		\$309,993
Benefits		\$31,465
Payroll Taxes		\$24,179
Rent & Occupancy Expenses		\$31,465
Insurance		\$8,433
Student Expenses		\$17,766
Staff Expenses		\$1,250
School Bus/Van		\$6,019
Maintenance & Repairs (flood)		\$15,793
Computer & Phone & Internet&Website		\$6,238
Office Supplies & Copier		\$1,396
Books & Instructional Materials		\$724
Travel & Conferences		\$107
Legal & Accounting Services		\$7,200
Fundraising (Printing, Postage)		\$3,281
Annual Event		\$5,662
Other Operating Expenses		\$2,402
Total Operating Expenses		\$473,373
Net Income		-\$8,671

HHS Board Dec 2023

John Fournelle, President
 Jacci See, Vice President
 Ken Klinzing, Treasurer
 Judi Munaker, Secretary
 Ken Adams (alumnus)
 Brian Dean
 Stan Kanter
 Brian Koenig
 Nancy Meyer
 Liz Feder
 Robyn Reed

Paul Moberg Scholarship Fund

Paul Moberg was a critical part of the creation and operation of Horizon High School. A researcher at UW Population Sciences, he was the national expert on recovery schools. An endowment for a scholarship in Paul's name has been set up at MATC, to support Horizon graduates. We reached the \$50,000 goal in the Spring of 2023. The investments this year did quite well (+\$1,619.95). The total ending balance as of November 11, 2023 is \$52,134.54. There should be funds available for granting scholarships at the end of 2024 or in early 2025. We thank all the donors!



Second Harvest Foodbank works with Horizon students to learn about preparing delicious and healthy meals.

CCS: Comprehensive Community Services—funded by Medicaid through the State of Wisconsin and operated by Dane County Department of Human Services. CCS provides compensation for dual diagnosis support services and therapy provided by Horizon staff counselors. We currently (Dec. 2023) have 6 students (and former students) in CCS.

FACT: It costs close to \$30,000 a year per student, to provide the educational and recovery support services at Horizon.

Research shows this figure is a common expense at many other U.S. recovery schools.

For us, we receive on average ~\$10K/student from school districts, for (only) education. Which leaves us needing to raise ~\$20K/student for counseling/therapy/ recovery programing.

Funding our 1 month **summer school** program is particularly important, and we only receive \$5000 from MMSD; the budget for this is \$45,000. Your donations and grants are critical to helping Horizon continue to service our young people, particularly during the summer when the danger of relapsing is high.

We note the passing in 2023 of two important people for Horizon: Steve Caldwell (1953-2023) and Dan Nerad (1951-2023). Dan Nerad became MMSD superintendent in 2008 (serving until 2012). With his background in social work, he appreciated the role of recovery schools as an innovative way to support students struggling with substance use disorder. Steve played a critical role as our treasurer (2006-2017) and negotiated our agreement with MMSD.

Become a Monthly Sustainer! Your PayPal or credit card donation can be easily made. Currently we have sustainers from \$5 to \$100 a month. Go to www.horizonhs.org and select the green "Donate" button, which will take you to the proper location. **(There are several "Horizon High Schools" in the U.S. —we are HHS of Madison, Inc.)**

THANK YOU FROM OUR STUDENTS, STAFF AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

We thank the community and our generous sponsors who helped to support our school in 2023. We received generous support from many individual donors and organizations and foundations during the calendar year 2023:



Horizon's Fall Festival Fundraiser Sept 20 was a great success, with \$86,810 raised.

Anonymous, CUNA Mutual Foundation, Daniel & Julie Hartung Charitable Foundation, JPK Krogstad Charitable Trust, Cremer Foundation, Philanthropy Lab(UW), Thomas P. and Patricia A. O'Donnell Foundation, William Van Haren, Technology Educational Foundation (Dorothy Steffens), Keller Family Charitable Trust, WI DPI, Harri Hoffmann Family Foundation, Hovde Foundation, Mental Health of Wisconsin, John Fournelle & Judi Munaker, Linda Granato, Shawn Grover, Steve Stricker American Family Foundation, Joe and Kay Tisserand, Gates & Fulwiler Family Fund, Deb Houden, Nancy Meyer, Karen Sprecher, Kids Fund, Inc - Cap Times (Eve Galanter), Dennie Petersen, Veridian Foundation, Inc. (Matt Cudney), John Blaha, Erik Kimble, Laura J Graham Charitable Fund, Middleton Community Church, Kathleen Johnson, David Kindig, Peggy and Jerry Hendrickson, Jacquelyn and Ted See, Marilyn Huset, Katherine Johnson-Becklin, Kristen & David Katzmann, Susan and Ted Oppenheimer, Oregon Mental Health Services (Mary Sella), Patricia Paska, South Madison Rotary Foundation, Vanguard Charitable, Bright Funds, Thomas Kurtz, George Possley, Hausmann-Johnson Insurance Inc (Jim Ahern), James Iliff, Paul and Debra Blair, Teri Edman, Amcor Cares Foundation, Robert Butler, Karen Christianson, Church Mutual Insurance Company Foundation, Kyle Geissler & Robin Stephens, Dorothy Grossi, Elizabeth Katsmann, Ken Klinzing, Lee & Associates of Madison (John Walsh), Renaissance Charitable, Henry Rattunde, Rosecrance Health Network, WIA Insurance, Kathleen Newman, Placon (Heidi Brown), United Way of Dane County, First Weber Group Foundation, George & Patricia Silverwood, Justine Newhouse, Beth Churchill and Stephen Schmid, Sarah Dunn, Jaeckle Distributors, Emily Taylor, Rubin for Kids, Tom & Chandra Brown, Shelly Dutch, Alida Evans & Joseph Newman, Shannon Egan, Robert Elias and Susan Elias, Amy & Randy Heidel, John and Andrea Kenny, Pam Klinzing, Larry Kramer, Ken & Susan Meigs, Eric and Jane Schulenburg, Bonnie Hustad Whalen, John Wozniczka and Jill Kammer, Judith Kay Bodden, George Cutlip, Brian Dean, Janet Hendrickson, Arlene Silveira, Gertrude Williams, Ed Borbely, Anna Becker, Stephen Mebtein, Phil Saunders, John Aeschlimann, Ida Ahifont, Ellen Bernards, Kimberly Carruthers, Ana T. Christenson, Timothy Crummy & Dyana Gold, Suzanne Gilbertson, Rene Hagman, John & Marylou Jacoby, Molly Kelly, Joan Lerman, Paul McMahon, Nancy Mohs, Marjorie and Donald Passman, PFLAG-Madison Inc, Mitchell & Sharon Rapkin, Michelle Ripp, Alice Schneiderman, Robert Stephens, Nick & Judy Topitzes Family Foundation, Jean Wallace-Baker, Stephen and Linda Kailin, Trena Wendt, Jonathan Seymour, Paul and Anne-Marie Correll, Marjorie Crofts, Hiam Garner, Louise Hoffmann, Silvia Jackson, Cindy Joers, Jamie Knippen, Janice and Larry Lehmann, Janet & Bob Lesniewski, Diane and Ray Maida, Valerie Murphy, Barrett Nelson, Zachery Pickett, and Douglas & Mary Poole.

Horizon High School has been blessed by the following families that donated holiday gifts to each of our students: Sarah Dunn, Deb Houden, Carrie Kirkpatrick, Peggy Arnold, Tena Wild, Chris Vincent, Susan Foster, Lynne Pope, Linda Granato, Kelsey Stetzenbach, Kimberly Carrigan, Monica Dunn, Angie Powers, Kristen Ripp, Ripp Family, Laurie (Fitch) Graham, Jenny Lewis, Michelle Ripp, Kim Krigbaum, Delight Olelerich, Joe and Kay Tisserand, Dan Tisserand, Tom and Cheryl Rasmussen and Karen Gray

Horizon High School of Madison, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization and all contributions are fully tax deductible. Our EIN: 20-1240272

Thank you for your support to Horizon High School and our students in recovery!
We'd like to let you know of some opportunities and current needs:

Individualized Math software ALEKS for one student for one year -- \$125

Internet for school for one month -- \$165

Drug testing kits for one month -- \$300

Life Skills expenses for one month -- \$600

Zoom for one year (IEP and CCS meetings, remote for sick kids) -- \$1000

School rent for one month -- \$2500

Recovery support for one student for two weeks -- \$5000

Minivan, gently used -- for transporting students to weekly gym workouts and on
life skills outings

Retired science teacher for a few hours a week