



2023 Annual Report

We provide affordable mental health care and counseling in Western North Carolina.

Our Story

In the wake of Blue Ridge Mental Health's closure in 2007, founder and current Executive Director Ellen Begley was approached by a woman in urgent need of mental health services. Realizing that the Swannanoa Valley had a huge (and now unserved) need for affordable, accessible care, Begley—along with co-founders Jack Culbreth and Bill Christian—formed the Black Mountain Pastoral Care and Counseling Center. In 2013, the name was changed to Black Mountain Counseling Center to better encompass the services provided and its approach to counseling.

Since 2017's move to the current main office location in the Renae Brame Opportunity House, Black Mountain Counseling Center has only continued to expand to meet the increasing demand for services. In 2018, new offices were added to the building, and in 2021 a satellite office in Old Fort was opened. In 2022, an agreement was reached with our neighbor, Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministry, to expand into the space formerly occupied by their GED classroom to allow for new one-on-one and group counseling rooms.

What We Do

Black Mountain Counseling Center provides professional, quality counseling to children, adults, elders, couples, families, and groups regardless of their ability to pay. We provide many types of counseling including behavioral, career, substance use, childhood development, and more. We accept all insurance programs and use BMCC's donation-funded internal insurance system, the Client Assistance Program, for clients who are uninsured or underinsured.

BMCC undertakes community advocacy and education through partnerships and programs with the Town of Black Mountain, Old Fort Elementary School, local civic organizations, and local religious organizations. We hope to be a community resource on mental health and reduce the stigma around counseling.

Our Vision

As the mental health crisis continues to deeply impact WNC, we hope to be an affordable and accessible mental health resource for people in Eastern Buncombe County, Western McDowell County, and beyond. We are committed to providing quality, professional services to clients from all backgrounds and advocating for mental health in the communities we serve. In 2023, our vision led us to open a mental health hub in Old Fort, expanding our community work through partnerships and events, and conducting a record number of counseling sessions. We hope you will continue to be a part of our vision in 2024.

A Word From the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

In 2023, the dedicated staff of BMCC went above and beyond anyone's expectations. The clinical staff served more clients than ever before, with a 29% increase in the number of sessions over the last year. Almost 300 different clients were served and the average number of sessions per week grew to 100 by the end of 2023. We continued our ongoing partnership with the Town of Black Mountain through mental health and wellness Lunch and Learn seminars for staff. Our partnership with Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministry grew as we provided services to the community neighbors they serve and supported their staff with training. Because of our diverse and talented clinical staff, we have been able to respond to urgent community needs such as debriefing with first responders and counseling youth following a tragedy.

We feel blessed to serve this community and thankful for the courage our clients have to be vulnerable and open to receiving needed support.

Ellen Begley, LCMHCS, NCC, RN
Executive Director



A Word From the Board Chair

Dear Friends,

Black Mountain Counseling Center had an amazing year in 2023. It began with an appeal to the community to help us continue to serve the people of Eastern Buncombe and Western McDowell Counties, and you answered that call. Your generous donations coupled with a very hard-working board and capable staff allowed us to continue to meet our mission to provide mental health services to people regardless of their ability to pay. We had another successful May Mental Health Month and are so grateful to our many partners who made it possible. We are grateful to White Horse Black Mountain who partnered with BMCC for three benefit concerts, which were enjoyed by many.

It has been both a challenge and a joy to serve as the chairperson of the Board of Directors. I am now beginning the second year of a two-year term. The Board is a dedicated group of individuals that I am proud to serve alongside. I am also grateful to have the opportunity to work with the staff of BMCC who are committed to addressing the mental health needs of our local community. I cannot say enough about our staff; they are an amazing group of people whom I admire deeply for their dedicated service.

Thank you so much for supporting BMCC throughout this year. We look forward to partnering with you toward our shared mission for many years to come.

With Deep Gratitude,
The Rev. Deacon Kristi Neal
Board Chair

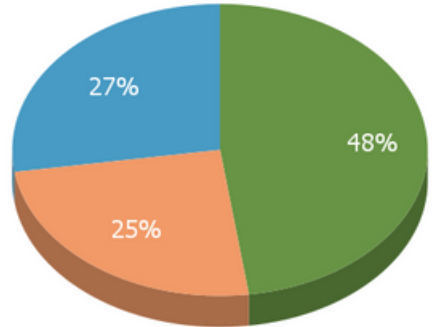


Financial Report

Total Operating Budget: \$510,190.35*

SOURCES OF REVENUE

- Client Services
- Grants
- Donations



*Unaudited

Fundraising in 2023

We had another amazing year of fundraising at Black Mountain Counseling Center. We're so grateful for each and every one of our 224 total donors, including 63 new donors and 36 sustaining, monthly donors. In total, we were able to raise more than \$266,000 from individuals, organizations, businesses, churches, foundations, and more! Donations fund our internal insurance system, the Client Assistance Program. When you donate to BMCC, you directly support mental health services for people in need!

To learn more about supporting BMCC's work, visit www.blackmountaincounseling.org/support or email office@blackmountaincounseling.org to get in touch.

Community Clinical Events

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In 2023, Black Mountain Counseling Center clinical staff hosted or attended 21 events in the communities we serve. These included Lunch and Learns with Town of Black Mountain employees, a "Conversations that Matter" talk around teen mental health at St. James Episcopal Church, and the McDowell County Back to School Community Resource Fair pictured to the right. Not only is BMCC committed to providing quality services, but we strive to be a community advocate for mental health as well.





Service Report

The past year saw the expansion of our office in Old Fort, going from 9% to 15% of our clients, as well as a record-breaking number of clients and sessions due to an increase in staffing capacity. We hope you will see our dedication to mental wellness for all in the following data.

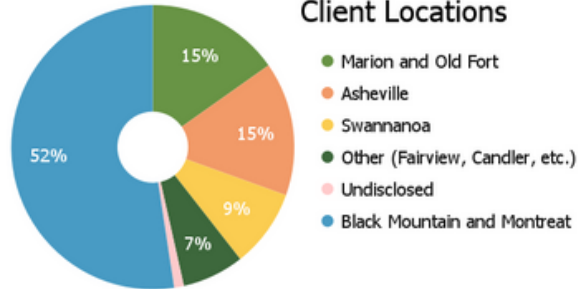
CLIENT SESSIONS: 3,560

AVG. DAILY SESSIONS: 14

TOTAL CLIENTS IN 2023: 291

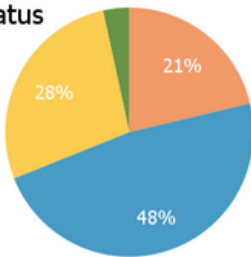
NEW CLIENT INTAKES: 158

Client Locations

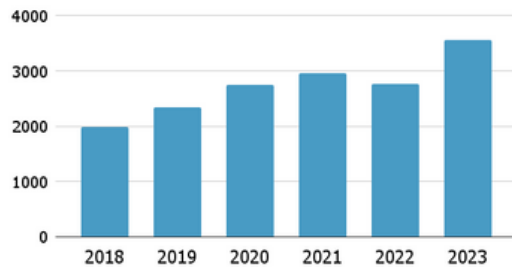


Client Insurance Status

- Client Assistance Program
- Private Insurance
- Medicare and Medicaid
- Out of Pocket



Client Sessions 2018-2023



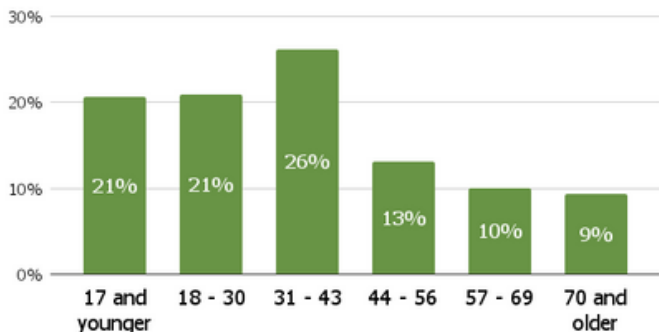
19%

Increase in clients compared to 2022

29%

Increase in sessions compared to 2022

Age Range of Clients



Partnerships

In 2023, we partnered with 28 organizations in support of our mission. Our work would not be possible without them!



Stronghold Society (\$1,000+) Organizations

- Black Mountain Presbyterian Church
- Bloom WNC
- Community Foundation of Western North Carolina
- Four Sisters Bakery
- Gateway Wellness Foundation
- Kiwanis Club of Black Mountain - Swannanoa
- Lipscomb Family Foundation
- McDowell County Opioid Settlement
- Montreat Presbyterian Church
- St. James Episcopal Church
- Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministry
- Swannanoa Valley Medical Center
- The Episcopal Diocese of WNC
- White Horse Black Mountain
- WNC Bridge Foundation

Volunteers



Thank you to the many hands that have uplifted our work this past year. Whether it was sealing hundreds of envelopes for a mailing, representing BMCC at Walk for Your Neighbor, or helping at an event, we are so grateful for your work! If you're interested in volunteering with BMCC, make sure to follow our social media and subscribe to our newsletter to stay up to date on our volunteer needs. Visit blackmountaincounseling.org/volunteer for more information.

Staff

This work would not be possible without our incredible staff, which includes full-time and part-time employees and contractors. In 2023, the 11 clinical staff saw a record number of clients and conducted a record number of sessions. The Counseling Center greatly benefitted from the addition of Clinical Director Shana Brown, LCSW, LCAS, CCS. The staff's skills and certifications encompass many areas of the counseling field, including career coaching, substance use recovery, and bilingual counseling. This allows us to see a wide array of clients. This work can be challenging, and we are so grateful for the dedication all of our staff have to our mission of affordable mental health care for all.



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**BMCC Staff
in 2023**

Staff Retreat at Camp Grier

2023 Milestone Moments

MAY MENTAL HEALTH MONTH

In May of 2023, we worked with local businesses and organizations (and were on WLOS!) to spread the word about BMCC's work and to remind people that their mental health matters. Through collaboration with Bloom WNC, Upbeats Ukulele Band, The Grocery, Cup of Jomo, Dark City Poets Society, and the WNC Outdoor Collective, we hosted four events throughout the month.

Additionally, we are so grateful to Carolina Mountain Life for sponsoring our booth at the Black Mountain Tailgate Market every Saturday in May. We were also so happy to partner with Dough House, Four Sisters, and Dynamite Coffee on community fundraising efforts during the month. We look forward to expanding on last year's successful May Mental Health Month in 2024.



WHITE HORSE BLACK MOUNTAIN

We're so honored to have been able to partner with White Horse Black Mountain for three benefit concerts in 2023. We hope you were able to attend one of these fun events and we look forward to continuing this partnership, combining good music with supporting mental health in 2024.

WEST MCDOWELL MENTAL HEALTH HUB

In August 2023, through a grant from the McDowell County Opioid Settlement, BMCC established the West McDowell Mental Health Hub in Old Fort. The Hub allows anyone, regardless of insurance status, age, or background, to schedule counseling, career coaching, substance use and recovery support, and more. This initiative has allowed BMCC counselors to seek deep community connections in McDowell County, establishing new partnerships with career resources and Old Fort Elementary School. BMCC staff participated in numerous community events in McDowell in 2023, including the Old Fort Fall Community Festival and the Blue Ridge Recovery Rally. We are eager to continue offering these services in McDowell and strengthening our community partnerships to enrich the resources the Hub has to offer.



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