

Appendix V

HIGHLANDS REGIONAL MINISTRY CENTER  
2020 ANNUAL REPORT



1001 NE 16<sup>TH</sup> AVE  
GAINESVILLE, FL 32601

## HIGHLANDS REGIONAL MINISTRY CENTER HISTORY

In 2016, the Highlands Presbyterian Church held its [final worship service](#) and officially closed the congregation. The church and her members had served the community faithfully since the 1960s. The congregation was formed in order to be a presence in East Gainesville, and they had a vision and a passion for making a difference in the community. That vision included being a safe and welcoming location where community groups could gather and organize; a place where healing could take place; a place which fed people both physically and spiritually; a place which offered hope to a hurting world; a place to which the community could turn in good times and in bad. Over the years, the church membership enacted the vision and became a vibrant body of believers. They housed families through Family Promise, offered office space to Family Promise, provided office space for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Network, hosted groups such as NA/AA and Boy Scouts, welcomed the community by providing space for meetings and family gatherings, created a garden to feed and nurture, and housed a school. They even expanded their building by adding on a commercial kitchen and an office with a full bathroom (added specifically to provide shower facilities for guests of Family Promise).



However, like many congregations, the church membership decreased significantly over the years. This placed a financial burden as well as a labor burden on the congregation. Despite that burden, though, they continued to enact their vision and ministry. After years of struggling hard to keep the ministry alive, the leadership and membership of the congregation voted to close the congregation. It was an exceptionally difficult decision for all of those who were still part of the life of Highlands. As they walked toward closure of the congregation, the membership expressed a strong hope and desire that the church would somehow continue to be used for the vision they were founded upon. Their fear was that the building would be sold to a developer and turned into housing or into a commercial property. Their hopes and fears were expressed to the leadership of the [Presbytery of St. Augustine](#), the governing body would take control of the building once the congregation closed.

After nearly 3 years of discussion and debate, the Presbytery of St. Augustine made the bold decision to retain the property and to attempt something new and exciting. The Presbytery voted to create what is now the Highlands Regional Ministry Center, with the hope that the HRMC would become a place where the vision could be resurrected and lived out. In 2019, the HRMC was officially opened and ministry began. That ministry consisted of providing space where non-profit user groups could have office space.



In 2019, the [Presbytery of St. Augustine](#) voted to embrace the [Matthew 25 Initiative](#). This initiative challenges churches and councils to commit to three areas:

- *Building congregational vitality*
- *Dismantling structural racism*
- *Eradicating systemic poverty*

The HRMC embodies those three foci and hopes to continue to do so for many years to come. We invite you to join us in this work. If you are a congregation, we invite you to partner with us financially and physically to continue this work. If you are a local non-profit or community group, we invite you to contact us to rent space for your meetings and events. If you are a service organization, we invite you to partner with us for community service projects and hours.



### Highlights for 2020

- Days for Girls produced nearly 6,000 masks during the pandemic
- The Counseling Center provided nearly 2,400 hours of therapy
- The Mobile Medical Clinic provided nearly 1,500 hours of free medical care to the uninsured/underinsured
- We had approximately 11,000 volunteer hours amongst all the organizations
- **Anticipate being revenue neutral/positive by the end of the year**
- Partnered with the following local groups:
  - Human Rights Coalition of Alachua County – assisted in distributing over \$60,000 in stimulus funds to undocumented individuals/families
  - Human Rights Coalition of Alachua County – produced nearly 400 community IDs
  - Civic Media Center – distributed food to nearly 200 families during the pandemic
  - Indivisible Gainesville – held candidate forums prior to the pandemic
  - Hosted a community education forum about structural racism in the school system
  - Hosted 5 training programs for local mental health clinicians

## USER GROUPS

### Days for Girls



# Days for Girls

Alachua County, FL USA Chapter



## 2019-2020 Chapter Annual Report

***Look what we accomplished June 1, 2019—May 31, 2020!***

We received the Leadership and Service Advocate of the Year Award from the University of Florida. In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, we produced 4733 face masks in the first 9 weeks to distribute freely to local community members. Our sewing workrooms were considered "essential" and remained open while the rest of Alachua County was shut down. Many sewists picked up pre-cut supplies from Days for Girls and then did their sewing at home for safety.

We exceeded our local distribution goals by partnering with free food distribution programs to reach low-income women with free Day for Girls pods. And we distributed more kits this year than last in spite of the cancellation of most international travels. We have almost 600 kits ready for distribution.

**Total Kits Distributed: 2401**

**301**

Local Women & Girls  
Received Kits, Pods,  
&/or Menstrual Cups

**Income-Fundraisers, Grants,  
& Donations: \$21,963**

**Total Number  
on Email List:**

**2205**

**62 Took the Beginner Sewing Class**

**Face Masks  
Produced:**

**4733**

**Total Volunteer Hours:**

**7089**

(Does not include all sewing at home hours)

**Total Unique  
Volunteers:**

**885**

Mail: PO Box 1755, Alachua, FL 32616 Sewing Center: 1001 NE 16 Avenue, Gainesville, FL 32609  
alachuafld@daysforgirls.org (352) 316-6113 <https://www.facebook.com/groups/DaysforGirlsAlachuaFL/> [www.daysforgirls.org](http://www.daysforgirls.org)  
Online Donations: <https://donate.daysforgirls.org/team/151026>



# Gainesville Community Counseling Center

Welcome to the New You!

## 2020 Annual Report

2020 was a year of growth and expansion for the Gainesville Community Counseling Center. As a result of the increasing negative emotional and mental health issues related to Covid-19 our clinical hours have grown exponentially. We provided 2,822 of mental health sessions, with a majority of those coming in the last half of the last half of the year. We partnered with the Alachua County School Board and provided free group therapy for teachers and staff experiencing negative effects of Covid-19, and are now a direct participant in their System of Care. We continue to partner with the UF Mobile Medical Clinic to provide free medical care to the uninsured/underinsured twice a week, and we continue to partner with UF Health Aortic Disease Center to offer the state's only support group for people living with Marfan Syndrome, Vascular Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome, and (vEDS) Loeys-Dietz Syndrome. We applied for and received a \$158,000 grant from Alachua County. The grant helped us to purchase an RV which will be used as a Mobile Mental Health Clinic providing free or low-cost mental health services to low-income residents in Alachua County. The MMHC will also be able to deploy to disaster areas to provide mental health services. We expanded our staff to include a Spanish speaking therapist, a play therapist, and a therapist to specialize in LGBTQIA+ clients. We converted two of our conference rooms into individual offices to accommodate our growth in staff. Our staff now consists of 2 full-time therapists and 6 part-time therapists. Our goals for 2021 are to begin our horticultural therapy garden, to expand our group therapy program, and to expand partnership and sponsorship programs to assist us with providing free and low-cost services to our uninsured, underinsured, and low-income neighbors.

Total Client Hours: 2,822

Total Number of Clients: 404

### Demographics:

White	80%
Black/African-Am	10%
Hispanic/Latino	7%
Asian	3%

### Socioeconomic Status

Less than \$14,999	30%
\$15,000 - \$34,999	20%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	43%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	6%
\$75,000 or more	1%

## Unspoken Treasure Society

Unspoken Treasure Society is moving a little slower than expected but its all due to Covid 19! We have meetings that will be social distancing, mask and sanitizer for each person in both youth groups and our adult group.



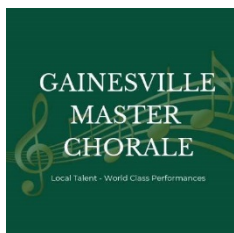
I have however had the chance to assist two transwomen that were displaced and I was able to do assessments on both women. I am working with metro west to assist getting them placed in a shelter until we are able to find adequate housing.

I have been on zoom calls constantly as I am an ambassador of the National Trans Visibility March that will be held in October so preparation for that is helping to keep me busy.

We hosted the first annual Halloween event for the local community. We had several other non-profit organizations participate. We used the event to distribute food and clothing to those in need.

Regina Livingston  
Founder & President, Unspoken Treasure Society  
[unspokentreasuresociety18@aol.com](mailto:unspokentreasuresociety18@aol.com)

## Gainesville Master Chorale



A recent addition to the Highlands Regional Ministry Center is the Gainesville Master Chorale. They hold weekly rehearsals in the newly renovated worship space. Their rehearsals include some in-person singers (following appropriate social distance and mask guidelines) and other singers participating via Zoom. This could also become a possible new source of revenue for Highlands as well as taking the arts and culture to the East Side of Gainesville. They share space with Enduring Faith who currently uses the Sanctuary space for Sunday Church Services.



## Sanctuary of Enduring Faith



For the past 15 years, this congregation has worshiped at Highlands. This vibrant African-American congregation provides a multitude of services to the local community, including food drives, job training, and job placement for individuals recently leaving the prison system. Enduring Faith continues to be a tremendous partner for our ministry center.

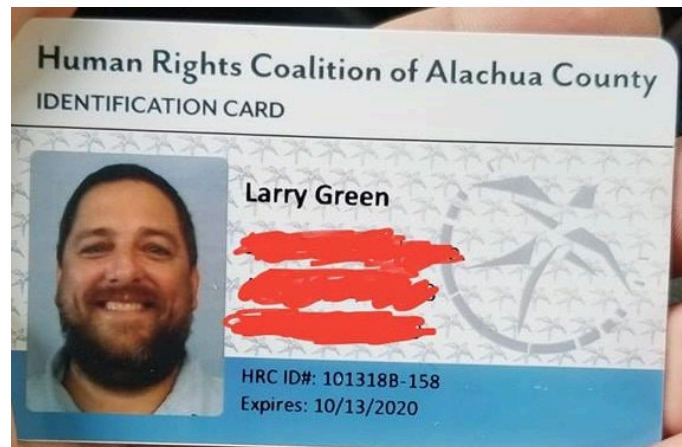
FOLLOWING ARE SIMPLY SOME PHOTOS AND DESCRIPTIONS  
OF THE VARIOUS EVENTS WE HAVE HOSTED AND  
PARTICIPATED IN



**Community ID**

The HRC Community ID card is for any resident in our community who may have limited access to government issued forms of identification. The ID will provide you with a verifiable form of identification, and help police officers and other community partners better serve and protect all residents. The ID additionally symbolizes your support of a diverse and inclusive community.

In 2016, members of Madres Sin Fronteras began advocating for a local ID, one that would grant members of our community, unable to access state-issued forms of identification, a reliable way to identify themselves to local law enforcement. These mothers and families recognized a local ID as an urgent need within our community. In order to address that need, the Human Rights Coalition of Alachua County has partnered with FaithAction International House, out of Greensboro, NC, to provide the HRC Community ID Card.





## Days for Girls



Days for Girls increases access to menstrual care and education by developing global partnerships, cultivating social enterprises, mobilizing volunteers, and innovating sustainable solutions that shatter stigmas and limitations for women and girls.

Together, we're creating a world with dignity, health, and opportunity for all. Our movement

has reached more than one million girls — and counting!  
With your help, we can reach Every Girl. Everywhere. Period.

## Food Giveaway with CWC and the Human Rights Coalition of Alachua County

In May, June, and July we partnered with two local agencies to provide food to over 200 local families in need. Recipients included local individuals and families whose employment was terminated due to the pandemic as well as undocumented individuals and families. As part of this process, we paid two local unemployed individuals \$15 per hour to deliver food to recipients rather than have recipients come to the center, which allowed us to protect the health of all involved.



We hosted an education summit focused upon addressing the race inequities within the local school system. The summit was attended by 50 people and resulted in the production of an equity plan which was presented to the board for consideration.

We coordinated with the Human Rights Coalition of Alachua County to collect and distribute over \$50,000 to undocumented individuals and families in Alachua County who had been negatively impacted by the pandemic. These people were not eligible to receive the stimulus funds from the government, so this was their only option. We receive a grant of \$30,000 from the City of Gainesville and collected \$25,000 through our online donation program. The HRC received a \$25,000 grant from the Southern Poverty Law Center to provide food to community members in need. A portion of that grant will be used to purchase a commercial refrigeration for Highlands, which will be used to store food in a safe manner.

