

HERS Mission, Vision & Values

At Pointtters Community Initiatives (PCI), we are driven by a singular mission: to facilitate accessible pathways to resources and programs that elevate economic opportunities, foster stability, and enhance the overall quality of life for minority communities. Through a meticulously crafted blend of strategic initiatives, educational endeavors, and robust community engagement, we endeavor to bridge socioeconomic disparities and empower individuals to unlock their fullest potential.

Vision

Our vision transcends the mere concept of inclusion. At PCI, we envision a society characterized by equitable opportunities, where every individual, regardless of their background or circumstance, not only finds their place but thrives. We aspire to cultivate an environment where barriers are dismantled, and every community member is empowered to pursue their aspirations with unwavering support and encouragement.

Values

At the heart of Pointtters Community Initiatives lie our foundational values, guiding every aspect of our operations:

1. **Drive the Change:** We are not merely observers but catalysts for transformative change. With a steadfast commitment to progress, we proactively identify and address societal inequities, driving meaningful and sustainable change.
2. **Make the Impact:** Our success is measured not by words but by the tangible impact we create in the lives of those we serve—every endeavor and every initiative is designed to effect positive, lasting change in our community.
3. **Create and Capture Value:** Innovation and adaptability are ingrained in our DNA. We continuously seek opportunities to create value, leveraging emerging trends and technologies to maximize our impact and ensure the longevity of our efforts.
4. **Show Respect and Empathy:** Central to our ethos is respect for every individual's inherent dignity and worth. We approach every interaction with empathy, compassion, and a deep-seated commitment to fostering inclusivity and understanding.
5. **Deliver and Measure Results:** Accountability is non-negotiable at PCI. We hold ourselves to the highest standards of transparency and accountability, ensuring that our promises are fulfilled and backed by concrete actions and measurable outcomes.

These guiding principles serve as the bedrock of our organization, steering us toward our overarching goal of empowering minority communities, fostering inclusivity, and contributing to realizing a more equitable society for all.

Impact on the Fox Valley Region

At Pointtters Community Initiatives (PCI), our commitment to empowering minority communities extends deeply into the fabric of the Fox Valley region. Through our multifaceted programs and collaborative efforts, we have made significant strides in addressing pressing socio-economic challenges and fostering

positive change within the communities we serve. At PCI, we measure our success not just in statistics and metrics but in the profound impact we make on the lives of individuals who participate in our mental health program. Our motivation and strength are fueled by transformative stories like the one of a woman who joined our program a year ago. She was battling bipolar disorder, living without a home, and struggling with anxiety and substance abuse. Her temporary refuge was a friend's place, where she unfortunately faced physical abuse from her friend's partner. However, her life turned for the better when she joined our program. With unwavering support from the peer support group, she successfully secured a voucher for transitional housing. Today, she enjoys the security of affordable housing, a testament to her incredible transformation journey. Her story is a powerful reminder of the resilience of the human spirit and the remarkable change that can be achieved through collective support. It underscores the importance of our work at PCI and the life-changing impact of our mental health program.

HERS Program

HERS (Healing, Empowerment, and Resilience for Sisters) is a comprehensive and pioneering mental health program specifically designed for women from minority backgrounds. We focus on fostering healing, empowerment, and resilience, acknowledging that mental health encompasses emotional, psychological, and social well-being and impacts every stage of life.

Our three core pillars are:

1. **HERS Support Group (Peer Support)** fosters connections and solidarity among women, providing safe spaces to share their experiences and learn from each other. This initiative creates safe spaces for open dialogue, allowing women to engage in meaningful conversations about their experiences, challenges, and triumphs - substance use,
 - a. **Health & Wellness** - substance abuse, suicide prevention, children and parent relationships, sexual violence, domestic abuse and violence, and other things.
 - b. **Parenting Support** - Offer support for single mothers, new mothers, and mothers of children with special needs.
 - c. **Personal Development and Empowerment** - focus on building self-esteem, confidence, and personal growth.
 - d. **Resource Sharing:** Groups often share valuable resources, such as contacts for therapists, legal assistance, or educational materials.
2. **Zumba & Yoga Fitness:** This promotes physical activity and social interaction, enhancing mental wellness through fun and energetic exercise.
3. **HERS Hub Network** - This network of women creates opportunities for HUB creation within the FOX valley of Wisconsin

Benefits of HERS Support Groups

- **Emotional Support:** Women can share their feelings and experiences in a safe, non-judgmental environment, reducing feelings of isolation.
- **Practical Advice:** Members can offer advice and tips based on their experiences, providing practical solutions to common problems.
- **Resource Sharing:** Groups often share valuable resources, such as contacts for therapists, legal assistance, or educational materials.
- **Empowerment:** Support groups can empower women by helping them realize their strengths, build confidence, and take control of their lives.
- **Social Connection:** These groups help women build meaningful connections and friendships with others who understand their experiences.
- **Skill Development:** Many support groups offer workshops and training sessions to help women develop new skills and improve their personal and professional lives.

WHY HERS?

The HERS Program recognizes the critical need for mental health programs, particularly for minority and low-income women. Mental health issues are a significant concern, affecting more than 1 in 5 US adults. However, access to mental health care is not equitable. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, ethnic minorities are less likely to receive needed mental health care than White Americans. Moreover, the American Psychological Association reports that people with low incomes and racial/ethnic minority populations experience greater levels of stress than their more affluent, white counterparts.

This can lead to significant disparities in both mental and physical health that ultimately affect life expectancy. In the Fox Valley region of Wisconsin, a report by the Northeast Wisconsin (NEW) Mental Health Connection highlighted health equity gaps across three counties — Winnebago, Outagamie, and Calumet. The suicide rate increased by 66% in the Fox Valley between 2010 and 2018. Financial strain was identified as a significant factor affecting mental health outcomes. A significant percentage of households in the tri-county area make less than \$50,000 annually, and nearly half of people with annual household incomes of \$50,000 or less report having a higher prevalence of depression and anxiety.

The HERS Program addresses these disparities and provides much-needed resources and support, helping these individuals lead healthier, happier lives. By promoting mental health equity, reducing health disparities, and providing coping mechanisms and stress management techniques, the HERS Program plays a crucial role in improving the overall well-being of minority and low-income women. Our mission is to ensure that everyone, regardless of their socio-economic status or ethnic background, has access to quality mental health care. HERS is an innovative initiative meticulously crafted to address the pressing mental health needs of women in the Fox Valley region of Wisconsin. With a keen understanding of the critical gaps in existing mental health services, HERS stands as a beacon of hope,

offering a comprehensive and culturally competent program to provide accessible support to underserved populations.

At the core of HERS is the understanding that mental health extends beyond the mere absence of illness; it encompasses emotional, psychological, and social well-being. The HERS Program will operate bi-weekly, ensuring consistent and ongoing support for women in the Fox Valley region. With a focus on healing, empowerment, and resilience, HERS equips women with the essential tools to navigate life's challenges with strength and confidence. Central to the efficacy of HERS is its multifaceted interventions, meticulously designed to cater to the diverse needs of participants.

The impact of HERS extends far beyond individual participants, resonating deeply within the community. By investing in HERS, donors and stakeholders not only foster individual healing but also contribute to the larger tapestry of communal wellness. By championing mental health initiatives like HERS, we collectively endeavor to dismantle barriers, bridge disparities, and sculpt a more compassionate, resilient, and inclusive community for all. Together, we can transform women's lives in the Fox Valley region and beyond.

In addition to the core components of our mental health program outlined in the grant request, several essential aspects contribute to the effectiveness and inclusivity of our initiative:

1. **Professional Training:** Our staff at Pointters Community Initiatives (PCI) undergo comprehensive training accredited by the State of Wisconsin to ensure they have the necessary skills and knowledge to provide effective peer support work. This professional development ensures that our team is well-prepared to deliver high-quality care and support to the women we serve.
2. **Cultural Competency:** HERS is deeply committed to providing culturally competent care, recognizing and honoring our participants' diverse backgrounds, experiences, and identities. Our program integrates culturally relevant practices, language services, and sensitivity training to create an environment where every woman feels valued, respected, and understood.
3. **Accessibility:** We understand the importance of accessibility in mental health care and strive to remove barriers to access and participation for women from minority backgrounds. This includes flexible scheduling options, transportation assistance, childcare services, and remote participation options to ensure that all women can engage in our program regardless of their circumstances.
4. **Trauma-Informed Approach:** HERS operates from a trauma-informed framework, acknowledging the prevalence and impact of trauma on mental health and well-being. Our program prioritizes safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration, and empowerment, fostering an environment that supports healing and resilience for trauma survivors.
5. **Continuum of Care:** Our commitment to providing a continuum of care ensures that we meet the evolving needs of women throughout their mental health journey. In addition to support groups, TEA Talks, and Zumba Fitness sessions, we offer referrals to additional resources and services, including individual therapy, psychiatric care, case management, and social services, to ensure comprehensive support.

6. **Evaluation and Quality Improvement:** HERS is dedicated to ongoing evaluation and quality improvement to ensure that our program remains responsive, effective, and impactful. We systematically collect data, gather participant feedback, and conduct programmatic assessments and evaluations to inform decision-making, identify areas for improvement, and measure outcomes accurately.