



# *A Look Back*

## 2016 Annual Report



CONSUMER CREDIT  
COUNSELING SERVICE

*Making sense of finances for over 50 years*

# Our Mission

To provide the best non-profit community service, dedicated to delivering professional and confidential counseling, debt management, housing counseling and consumer education to all segments of the community regardless of ability to pay.



*Richard Reeve, Richard Cordray (CFPB Director) , and John Wills at the CFED Conference in DC*

# Letter from the President

Dear Colleagues:

Looking back on 2016, so many moments served as reminders of the financial challenges families in coastal Georgia and South Carolina face, as well as the power we have as a collective force to improve financial wellness in our community.

In 2016, our organization had to adjust to reduced housing funding, software changes, and a conversion to a new payment processor. But the strength of our we also saw our community came together to deal with after effects of Hurricane Matthew.



Consequently with all that happening, we saw an increase in demand for services, which has required us to adapt to doing more with less. We studied the success of our virtual financial coaching model that proved more clients can get debt free with more support. We were honored to share our innovations in credit counseling at the CFED conference in Washington, D.C. In December, we cohosted the Financial Wellness at Work in Savannah for 15 organizations from around the country.

Thank you to our staff and volunteers, board of directors, our generous funders and local community partners for helping us serve our community in 2016.

With Regards,

John Wills



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# CCCS Staff

Shaquita Harris | *Certified Counselor*

Catrice Hellen | *AmeriCorps VISTA*

Karen Lavery | *Financial Capability Coordinator*

Quenton Linyear | *Certified Counselor*

Katie Oglesby | *Director of Operations*

Richard Reeve | *Director of Financial Education*

Janae Robinson | *AmeriCorps VISTA*

Cindy Roy | *Operations Assistant*

Bethany Rushing | *Operations Assistant*

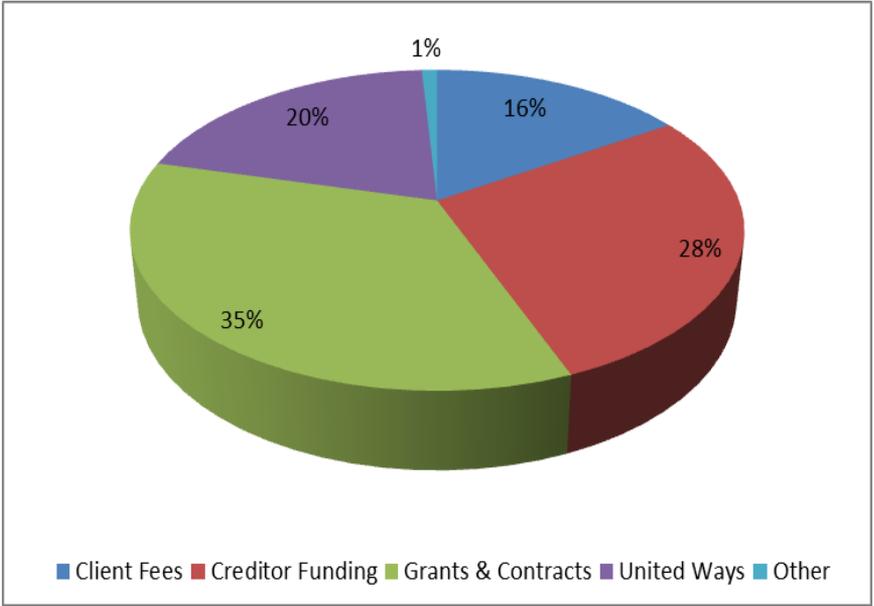
Jennifer Sikes | *Director of Counseling*

John Wills | *President*

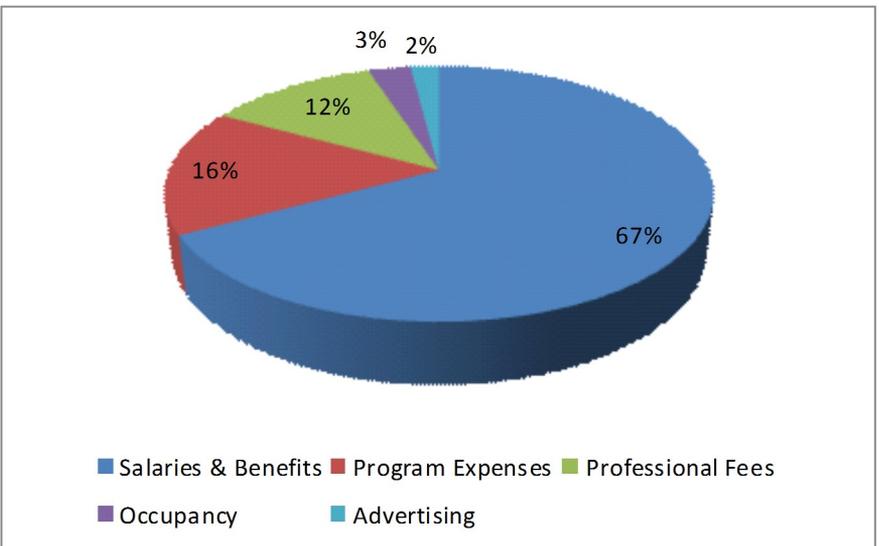


# 2016 Budget

## Revenues



## Expenses



# Board of Directors

Mary G. Bell-Fuller  
*Imperial Sugar*

\*J. Keith Berry, Jr  
*Law office of J. Keith Berry Jr.*

Dr. Sandra McCord Best  
*Savannah State University*

Joe R. Brannen  
*Retired - City of Statesboro*

Judge Thomas L. Cole  
*Chatham County Juvenile Court*

Edward Cox III  
*Commercial Lender*

\*James E. Davis, Jr.  
*Georgia Southern University*

Ruth M.. Foster  
*LCSW, CEAP*

Judson L. Hendry  
*Retired - Hospice Savannah*

\*Alfreda J. Goldwire  
*Retired - Savannah Federation of Teachers*

\*Terry L. Lemmons  
*Optim Healthcare*

Olga L. Lopez  
*Wells Fargo & Co.*

\*Chris A. Miltiades  
*Workmen's Circle Credit Union*

Marsha D. Scott  
*Savannah Schools Federal Credit Union*

Robert B. Whitmarsh  
*City of Richmond Hill*



First Time Homebuyers Saturday Workshop

\*Member of the Executive Committee

# Counseling Services

CCCS has been making sense of finances in the community for over 50 years. Counselors provide professional advice on money management, building a household spending plan, improving credit scores, establishing credit, disputing credit report errors, shopping for credit, and developing savings plan. As a HUD-approved housing agency, CCCS assists families in achieving successful homeownership through home buying, foreclosure prevention, and reverse mortgage sessions. In the Year od 2016 CCCS of Savannah conducted 235 Foreclosure Prevention Sessions, 96 First-time Homebuyer Sessions, 96 Reverse Mortgage Sessions, 138 Hardest Hit Fund Applications , and processed, \$1,249,012 in mortgage assistance for families

## 2016 Counseling Outcomes

*Surveys show that one year after receiving services:*

- There was a 102% increase in the number of clients following a budget.
- There was a 93% increase in the number of clients feeling in control of their finances.
- There was a 122% increase in the number of clients saving money.



*“Thank you so much Mrs. Harris! You don’t know how much of a relief it is to be able to add a member to our family, be on track to purchase a home with more space, and resolve my student loans to get my credit back on track! Thank you!” - CCCS Client*

# Debt Management

CCCS helps clients become debt free within three to five years by working with clients and creditors to establish a debt repayment plan that provides a consolidated way to repay debt. The benefits include lowered monthly payments, reduced interest rates, and waived fees.



Katie and John at the United Way celebration

CCCS also provides counseling on the options, alternatives and consequences before filing for bankruptcy and education is provided before bankruptcy discharge so that individual can regain a sense of financial well-being. During 2016 CCCS conducted 1,167 Budget/Credit sessions,, 66 Bankruptcy counseling sessions, and distributed \$2,032,295 to creditors

## 2016 Debt Management Outcomes

Surveys show that one year after receiving services:

- There was a 102% increase in the number of clients who are reducing their debt levels.
- There was a 67% reduction in clients receiving phone calls from creditors or collectors.
- There was a 66% increase in clients who are current on their bills.

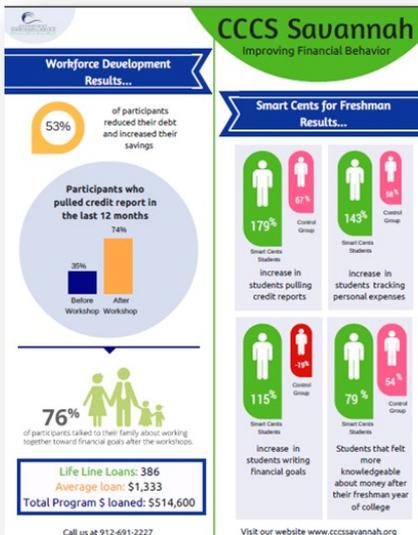
# Education and Outreach

CCCS had a goal in 2016 to educate 3,500 individuals through financial workshops, outreach, and media interactions. CCCS exceeded this goal by educating 5,437 individuals through 286 events over 793 hours. Participants gained knowledge about pulling a free credit report, creating a household spending plan, setting financial goals, maximizing income, prioritizing expenses, and options for debt repayment.

“Richard Reeve taught this class and it was great. I wish some of my college teachers had as much energy and knowledge as he did. He is very informative and entertaining. You need that when teaching.” - Mr. Gardenhire

## 2016 Education Outcomes

- Participants increased their financial knowledge by 137%
- 99% approved of CCCS educational programs
- 31% purchased a home within a year of the home buyer workshop
- 68% of participants reported increasing their credit score
- 45% of participants reported increasing savings



Richard teaching CAP participants

# Banking Access



Cindy Roy surveying rural clients on their bank usage.

During the first two months of 2016, CCCS conducted a rural technology survey sponsored by Capital One. The study's purpose was to gauge the use of technology and mobile banking in the rural areas that CCCS serves. CCCS surveyed 202 call-in clients. (more findings located on next page )

Overall, Age was the most important indicator of whether clients used mobile banking, followed by whether they lived in a rural or urban area, and income was the third most important factor. Surveyed participants reported convenience as the reason they used electronic banking and security was the reason why participants did not use it. The sponsoring financial institution will now compile these findings with the other CCCS that conducted the survey to improve banking outreach in rural communities. CCCS will use the findings to tailor its counseling and education sessions to better serve its rural clients.

# CCCS Savannah

Programs in Rural Communities

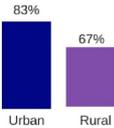
Bank On Rural findings.....

In 2015, CCCS of Savannah launched Bank On Rural and conducted a Capital One Rural Technology Survey with the goal of increasing banking access to rural communities in SE Georgia and South Carolina.

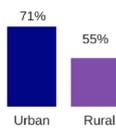
## Capital One Technology Survey findings...



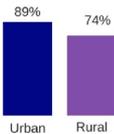
### Access to Home Internet Service



### Access to Smartphone Banking



### Cell Phone Coverage at Work



### Largest Indicators in Mobile Banking Usage

- #1 Age #2 Location (Rural vs. Urban) #3 Income



### Clients Priorities when selecting accounts...

- #1 Name Recognition
- #2 Customer Service
- #3 Location
- #4 Low Minimum Balances
- #5 Low Opening Deposit

### After implementing Bank On Rural



of unbanked or underbanked clients opened new accounts



of unbanked or underbanked clients have reduced their bank fees

*"It has changed my counseling sessions, because it opens up the discussion for how clients are spending/allocating their funds. We discuss changing financial institutions (if fees are associated) and we also discuss the benefits of banking."*

- CCCS Counselor

Contact us:

912-691-2227 | [www.cccsavannah.org](http://www.cccsavannah.org)

Graphic used to explain CCCS Banking Access findings at the 2016 Asset Learning Conference in Washington DC.

# Financial Coaching

Thanks to funding from the FINRA Foundation and a partnership with Step Up Savannah, from December 2014 through April 2016 CCCS conducted a financial coaching pilot for its Debt Management Plan (DMP) clients. CCCS delivered “virtual” coaching by sending monthly emails and letters to clients to encourage them, provide accountability, deliver financial tips, link them to resources, and let them know who to contact if they have questions/concerns.

CCCS aimed to coach 50 DMP clients over the one year period. CCCS exceeded this goal by coaching 55 participants. During the one year pilot, 93% of clients stayed on the plan for six months (compared to 83% retention without coaching) and 76% remained on the plan after one year (compared to 62% without coaching). This increase in retention proved to the organization that financial coaching works and CCCS will continue using this model for its DMP clients. Virtual coaching is something CCCS can integrate into its existing processes and staffing configuration, while adding volunteer or paid coaches would need a significant increase in resources.

On average, clients began their plan with \$12,747 in debt and reduced it by 12% within the first six months and 26% after one year. The average DMP client started their plan with a credit score of 560 and after six months of debt reduction and financial coaching the average credit score is 567. This finding is significant because many clients do not join the plan because they are afraid that their score will decrease.

In a follow up survey, 72% of clients found the coaching helpful and 58% achieved a financial goal during the time. Clients stated they liked the “guidance with a budget, reasonable payments, and encouragement” and it was an “easy program, only have to focus on living on a budget. Haven't had any creditors call or contact me.”



Quenton hosted a booth with a community partner

# Community Partners

- AmeriCorps VISTA
- Capital One
- Chase Card Services
- Citibank
- Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund
- City of Savannah
- Community Service Organization
- Corporation for Enterprise Development
- Credit Builders Alliance
- Family Promise of Greater Savannah
- The FINRA Foundation
- Georgia Department of Community Affairs
- Georgia Heritage Federal Credit Union
- Horizons Savannah
- Hospice Savannah
- Live Oak Public Libraries
- National Foundation for Credit Counseling
- NeighborWorks America
- Salvation Army
- Savannah Latina, Inc.
- South State Bank
- St. Joseph's/Candler Hospital
- Step Up Savannah
- SC Housing
- United Way of the Coastal Empire
- United Way of the Lowcountry, Inc.
- Wells Fargo
- WJCL
- WSAV
- WTOC

# Financial Literacy for Students

For the third summer in a row, CCCS partnered with Horizons Savannah to build the financial knowledge of 51 middle school campers. Horizons works with students during the school year to provide after school tutoring. During the summer, their middle school students take part in a camp with subjects including reading, math, STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math), robotics, art, and financial literacy.



Highlights of the Horizons summer financial literacy program

CCCS provides nine sessions during June and July. CCCS covers topics including insurance, comparison shopping, career selection, income, budgeting, savings, and banking. CCCS makes financial literacy interactive by playing VISA's financial football, conducting CUNA's Mad City Money budget simulation, tracking four blue chip stocks, shopping for a college, calculating income, and setting SMART goals.



Richard working with Horizon middle school students

# Volunteers

CCCS continued to partner with the AmeriCorps VISTA program in 2016. In February, our second VISTA, Catrice Hellen, ended her service after making a positive impact on our agency. Our new VISTA, Janae Robinson joined our team and further helped build our capacity to serve the community. CCCS VISTAs manage the volunteer program, social media, and financial coaching. They also host booths in the community to spread the word about CCCS services.



AmeriCorps VISTA Janae Robinson



CCCS Volunteer Ms. Jackie

CCCS volunteers help us conduct surveys, doing outreach, updating our databases, and managing special projects. The VISTAs and community volunteers logged 1,828 volunteer hours which was a value of \$42,172 to our agency.

Thank you to Barry, Catrice, Miss Jackie, and Janae who dedicated their time, effort, and experience to serve our community!

# CCCS En Español

CCCS received funding from Wells Fargo to provide translation of materials and interpretation services into Spanish. CCCS was pleased to partner with Araceli Harper's organization, Savannah Latina, to provide Spanish counseling interpretation. Ms. Harper translated CCCS materials into Spanish. She also provides outreach on behalf of CCCS. CCCS is thrilled to be able to offer its services to the local Latino community in their native language.

**Sobre Nosotros**  
 Servicio de Consejería de Crédito del Consumidor de la zona de Savannah, Inc. (CCCS) es una organización sin fines de lucro que ha estado proporcionando soluciones de administración de dinero desde 1965.

Nuestro propósito es aumentar los conocimientos financieros, ayudar a las familias a solucionar los problemas financieros actuales y alcanzar sus objetivos futuros.

Nuestra misión es ofrecer el mejor servicio de la comunidad sin fines de lucro, dedicado a ofrecer asesoramiento profesional y confidencial, gestión de la deuda, asesoramiento de vivienda y educación de crédito al consumidor de todos los segmentos de la comunidad sin importar la capacidad de pago.

**Savannah**  
 Park South Office Center  
 7505 Waters Avenue, Suite C-11  
 Savannah, GA 31406  
 Phone: (912) 691-2227  
 Fax: (912) 691-2290

**Statesboro**  
 615 Denmark Street, Suite 700  
 Statesboro, GA 30458  
 Phone: (912) 489-2227

**Hinesville**  
 Bradley Building, Suite E  
 135 E. MLK Drive  
 Hinesville, GA 31313  
 Phone: (912) 970-2227

**Beaufort, SC**  
 69 Robert Smalls Parkway, Suite 3E  
 Beaufort, SC 29902  
 Phone: (843) 379-2227

Toll Free: 1-800-821-4040  
 Email: [cccs@cccssav.com](mailto:cccs@cccssav.com)  
[www.cccsavannah.org](http://www.cccsavannah.org)

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**Dando Sentido A las Finanzas.**

## IS THIS YOUR YEAR TO BUY A HOME?

Sign up for a Home Buying Workshop today  
**(912) 691-2227**

Don't miss out on:

- A guide to homeownership.
- A certificate for down payment assistance.
- Meeting with local experts in various fields of homeownership.



Visit us at [www.cccsavannah.org](http://www.cccsavannah.org)

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## IS THIS YOUR YEAR TO BUY A HOME? ¿ES TU AÑO PARA COMPRAR UNA CASA?

Sign up for a Home Buying Workshop today  
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**(912) 691-2227**

Don't miss out on:  
 No se pierda de:

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- Un certificado de asistencia de pago inicial
- Reunión con expertos en diversos campos de la propiedad de vivienda



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Translation by Savannah Latina Inc.

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- Reunión con expertos en diversos campos de la propiedad de vivienda



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CCCS of the Savannah Area, Inc.  
7505 Waters Avenue Suite C-11  
Savannah, Georgia 31406  
[cccs@cccssav.com](mailto:cccs@cccssav.com)

Phone: (912) 691-2227  
Toll Free: 800-821-4040  
Fax: (912) 691-2290  
[www.cccsavannah.org](http://www.cccsavannah.org)

