



CONSUMER CREDIT  
COUNSELING SERVICE  
OF THE SAVANNAH  
AREA, INC.

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## 2013 Annual Report



**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.**



# Letter from the President

Dear Colleagues:

With talk of economic recovery dominating 2013, many families still remained vulnerable to financial challenges and struggled with their day to day money management. Throughout the year, families continued to grapple with job loss, stagnant wages, increases in the cost of living, lack of savings, debt, and a difficulty in making rent and mortgage payments. Additionally this year, we observed record high student loan debt, a government shutdown, a tightening in the credit markets, and changes in the health care system; all of which are pointing to a slow recovery at best, with many families still trying to get back on solid ground.

No matter the economic forecast, CCCS is proud of its reputation as an innovative leader in financial education and quality counseling, and is dedicated to assisting families in achieving financial success. With a talented staff and a committed board of community volunteers, CCCS was able to support 7,280 individuals in becoming economically empowered in 2013. Valued partnerships were also instrumental in adding new quality programming for distressed homeowners through HomeSafe Georgia (GA) and South Carolina HELP (SC), which provided much needed mortgage assistance for those families who were unemployed or under-employed. In 2013, CCCS addressed the current financial needs of individuals and families in our community by assisting 485 clients in securing \$2,797,939 in mortgage assistance through HomeSafe GA and SC HELP.

By providing financial literacy classes and outreach, CCCS continued to develop key partnerships. CCCS worked closely with other non-profits, social services agencies, financial institutions, and local employers to reach over 5,000 individuals for the second year in a row. New programs included financial education for our youth, workforce development, and the expansion of homebuyer education.

Through partnerships, innovative financial literacy programs, and helping families rebuild their financial lives, CCCS hopes to continue its positive impact on the community.

With Regards,

John Wills  
President

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# CCCS Employees

Elaine Burnett - SC HELP/HomeSafe GA Processor

Theresa Devoe - Counselor

Shaquita Harris - Counselor

Barry Lubeck - SC HELP/HomeSafe GA Assistant

Katie Oglesby - Director of Operations

Richard Reeve - Director of Financial Education

Cindy Roy - Operations Assistant

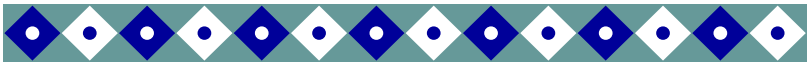
Jennifer Sikes - Director of Counseling

Karen Sims - Operations Assistant

Latrelle Williams - Operations Assistant

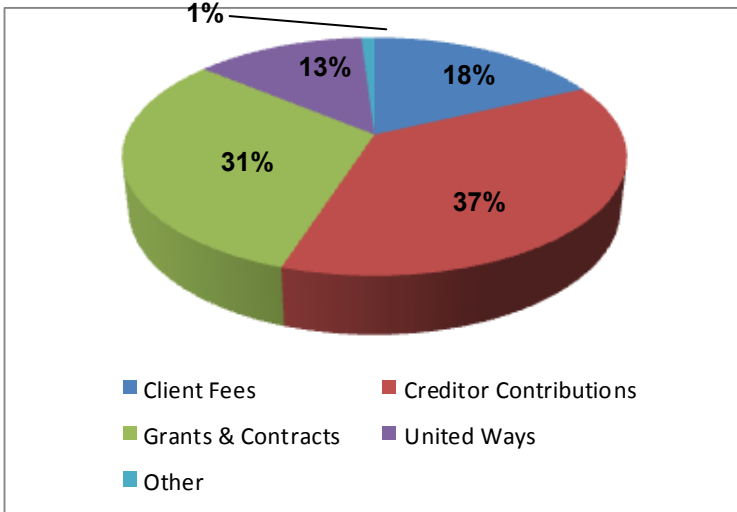
John Wills - President



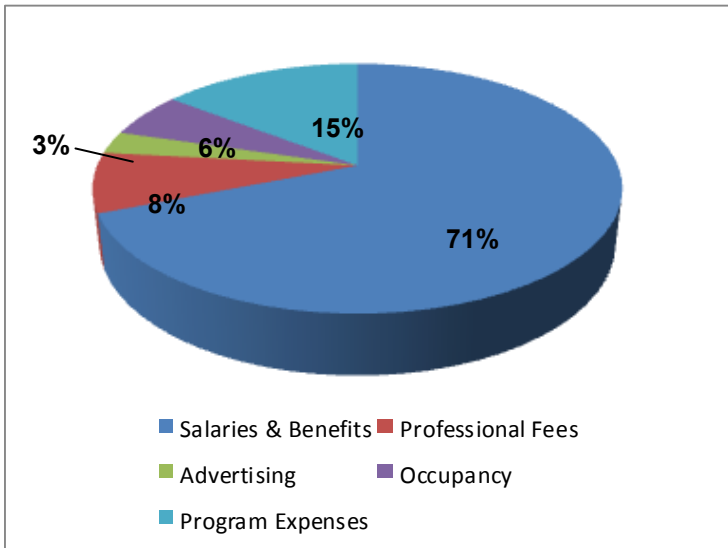


# 2013 Budget

## Revenues



## Expenses





# Board of Directors

Mary G. Bell  
Imperial Sugar

E. Ross Howard  
Former Executive

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

Terry L. Lemmons  
Willis Insurance Services

Dr. Sandra McCord Best  
Savannah State University

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

Joe R. Brannen  
Mayor of Statesboro, GA

Marsha D. Scott  
Savannah Schools Federal  
Credit Union

\*Thomas L. Cole  
Cole Fleming & Clark PC

Robert B. Whitmarsh  
City of Richmond Hill

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

Charlesetta E. Worlds  
First Chatham Bank

James P. English, III  
AVSX Technology

\*Ruth M. Foster  
City of Savannah

\*Judson L. Hendry  
Retired Hospice Administrator

Joan E. Hillman  
Franklin Funding Reverse  
Mortgages

No Board Member receives compensation for position held or has any percentage of ownership in CCCS.

\*Member of Executive Committee.

# Counseling Services



**Budget and Credit Counseling:** Assisting families in developing a budget, achieving their financial goals, and growing their savings. Instructing clients on understanding credit reports, credit scores, and how to use credit wisely.

**Housing Counseling:** Includes preparing a first time homebuyer in making the right decisions in purchasing their first home. Foreclosure prevention counseling assists homeowners in identifying options and resources to avoid foreclosure. CCCS further assists unemployed residents in applying for the HomeSafe GA and SC HELP mortgage assistance programs. Reverse mortgage counseling educates homeowners on the consequences and benefits of a Home Equity Conversion Mortgage.

## 2013 Counseling Outcomes

Surveys indicate that one year after receiving services:

- There was a 111% increase in the number of clients following a budget.
- There was a 190% increase in the number of clients who feel in control of their financial situation.
- There was a 64% increase in the number of clients saving money.

### Services Provided:

- 342 Foreclosure prevention sessions
- 38 First-time homebuyer sessions
- 104 Reverse mortgage sessions
- 485 Hardest Hit Fund applications processed
- \$2,787,939 in mortgage assistance secured for families





# Debt Management Solutions

**Debt Management Plan (DMP):** A DMP is a viable option to avoid bankruptcy and provide a consolidated way to repay debts. A DMP offers reduced/waived interest rates and the elimination of late/over the limit fees, thereby allowing clients to become debt free in four to five years and save thousands of dollars in unnecessary finance charges.

**Bankruptcy Services:** Provide counseling on the options, alternatives and consequences before filing bankruptcy and education is provided prior to being discharged to regain a sense of financial wellbeing.

## 2013 Debt Management Outcomes

Surveys indicate that one year after receiving services:

- There was a 124% increase in the number of clients who are reducing their debt levels.
- There was a 190% increase in the number of clients who felt that they have a manageable debt level.
- There was a 86% reduction in the number of clients who are paying fees on their bills each month.

Services Provided:

- 1,048 Budget/Credit sessions
- 194 Bankruptcy counseling sessions
- \$2,821,130 disbursed to creditors



# Education and Outreach

## Serving The Community in 2013

Consumer Credit Counseling Service of the Savannah Area, Inc. (CCCS) had a 2013 goal to impact 3,500 individuals through financial classes, outreach, and media interactions. CCCS exceeded this goal by reaching 5,069 individuals through 270 events over 750 hours.



CCCS held a monthly financial literacy series at the Chatham County Health Department. The results included a 102% increase in financial knowledge. Participants gained the most knowledge about fraud alerts, 529 plans, savings factors, periodic expenses, and emergency funds. 80% of participants attending the classes said it helped them become more financially secure. 89% of participants pulled their credit report by the end of the series. Class quotes included: “Simply knowing that there are so many resources available for us as GA residents, makes a world of difference. I’ve learned ways to gain more savings depending on what type of account I open. Thank you so much for the information!! Please know that you’ve all made a difference.”



CCCS conducted a pilot of six “Credit Clinics” at the Live Oak Public Libraries during 2013. The credit clinics allowed participants to learn about credit and print their credit report for free in the library computer lab.





Over the past year, CCCS conducted six cycles of the “Dollars to Dough” at the West Broad Street YMCA . CCCS achieved the following results: 52 graduates, 13% average reduction in expenses, a 400% increase in those with a budget, a 138% increase in those pulling their credit report in the last 12 months, a 525% increase in those with a written financial goal, a 362% increase in those feeling in control of their financial situation, and a 162% increase in those feeling knowledgeable about how they manage money. One participant said, “Attending this class was a major motivation for me paying off my vehicle quickly. I paid off a four year loan in five months. I also decided to refinance my home because of what I learned in this class. This will save me approximately \$35,000 over the next ten years. I am very thankful I was allowed to participate in this great class.”



### **2013 Education Outcomes**

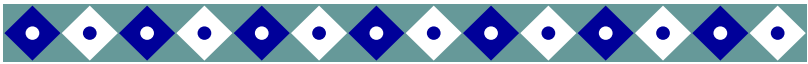
- Participants increased their financial knowledge by 74%.
- 99% approved of the overall program.
- 97% said they would use the information to change their financial habits.
- 100% felt the instructor was helpful.



## Community Partners

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Adventure Radio                         | Kresge Foundation  |
| Bank of America                         | Live Oak Public Libraries                                      |
| Better Business Bureau                  | Lowcountry Housing Trust                                       |
| Brand Mortgage                          | Military OneSource   |
| Capital City Bank and Trust Company     | Moses Jackson Advancement Center                               |
| Carver State Bank                       | National Foundation for Credit Counseling                      |
| Chase                                   | NeighborWorks America  |
| Chatham County Health Department        | PNC Bank   |
| Citibank                                | Savannah-Chatham Fair Housing Council                          |
| City of Savannah                        | Savannah Savvy Shopper   |
| Coastal Bank                            | Savannah State University                                      |
| Community Service Organizations (CSO)   | Savannah Technical College                                     |
| FINRA Foundation                        | St. Mary's Community Center                                    |
| Georgia Department of Community Affairs | Step Up Savannah   |
| Georgia Department of Labor             | South Carolina State Housing Finance and Development Authority |
| Georgia Southern University             | United Way of the Coastal Empire                               |
| Housing Authority of Savannah           | United Way of the Lowcountry, Inc                              |
| Hospice Savannah                        | Wells Fargo  |
| International Paper                     | West Broad Street YMCA   |

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## Photos





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OF THE SAVANNAH  
AREA, INC.

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135 E. MLK Blvd., Hinesville, GA 31313  
Phone: 912-370-2227

**Beaufort:**

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Beaufort, SC 29902  
Phone: 843-379-2227

**Brunswick:**

501 Gloucester Street Suite 202  
Brunswick, GA 31520  
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