



American Foundation of Counseling Services director Bob Johnson at his office on the seventh floor of the Bellin Building in downtown Green Bay. **Corey Wilson/Press-Gazette**

Counseling center grows to meet needs of today

Nominations under way for Ethics in Business Awards

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The Green Bay Press-Gazette talks to community members in its weekly Saturday conversation. This week, Bob Johnson, executive director of the American Foundation of Counseling Services, which has its offices in the Bellin Building in downtown Green Bay, talks about his organization and its annual Ethics in Business Awards.

Q. What is American Foundation of Counseling Services? How many employees? What is your geographic service area? Who are your clients?

A. American Foundation of Counseling Services was established in 1965 by George Kress, founder of Green Bay Packaging, and Norman Vincent Peale with the original goal of providing training and counseling education to clergy and congregations in Northeastern Wisconsin.

Today, AFCS provides outpatient counseling to children, families, couples and individuals which emphasizes integrating mental, physical and spiritual health. The center provides a community supported sliding fee scale for those who have a limited ability to pay for their counseling. The organization is also a state-licensed child placing agency, providing intensive out-of-home placement (treatment foster care) for more than 30 children who have been victims of abuse or neglect or who have delinquency issues.

Throughout its 45-year history, AFCS has worked closely with the faith community in the area

Bob Johnson

- **Title:** Executive director
- **Company:** American Foundation of Counseling Services
- **City of residence:** De Pere
- **Background:** Campion Jesuit High School; St. Norbert College; master's degree clinical psychology, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh; 32 years of experience in the field of mental health treatment in Northeastern Wisconsin; executive director of American Foundation of Counseling Services since 1997.
- **Best business advice received or given:** "Surround yourself with talented people, give them clear instructions, provide them the resources they need to be successful and as much as possible, stay out of their way."

by providing pastor leadership groups, premarital counseling workshops, marriage enrichment seminars and individual consultation to clergy and church leadership teams.

AFCS is affiliated with The Samaritan Institute of Denver, Colo., a network of 95 counseling centers around the country which as a group provide over 500,000 hours of counseling and consultation a year and are dedicated to the integration of mental, physical and spiritual health.

We have 29 employees and more than 40 foster parents. Our service area is Northeastern Wisconsin.

Q. How did the Ethics in Business Awards come about?

A. In 2006, the percentage of our counseling clients who were either uninsured or underinsured averaged more than 40

percent, and some years approached 50 percent. Our board of directors came to the conclusion that if we were going to continue our tradition of providing a subsidized fee program for our neighbors in need, then we needed to embark on the first large-scale public fundraising campaign in our history. At the same time, the board established the requirement that to meet their approval any new fundraising effort had to both raise funds for our mission and add value to the community. They called the concept "Value Added Fundraising."

In a nationwide search we discovered the Ethics in Business Awards program of the Samaritan Counseling Center of Albuquerque, N.M. The 8-year-old program is dedicated to the awareness, education and recognition of ethical business practices in their community. The community support for the program has continued to grow in both attendance and financial contributions. We found our "valued added" fundraising event, and the board and staff were excited to bring it to Green Bay.

Q. What are the qualifications for award recipients?

A. Each year we seek nominations for individuals, companies and not-for-profit organizations which serve the Brown County community and stand apart in their dedication to employees, civic activities, and environmental concerns and exhibit the highest standards of ethical conduct, even in the face of adversity.

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