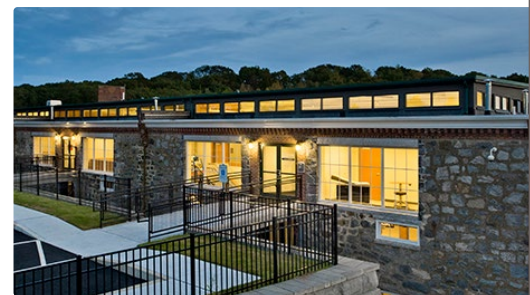


# Thundermist!

HEALTH CENTER



## 2024 Impact Report

# A Message from Our President & CEO

Many of you may remember me from my previous tenure at Thundermist, where I started my work in community health in 2008 and served as president and CEO from 2011 to 2017. It was a privilege to return this past December to lead this incredible organization through a new set of challenges.

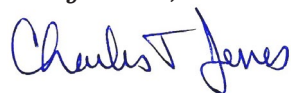
Following a difficult fiscal period that led to a major staff reduction, the team launched additional efforts to stabilize our finances while maintaining access to the essential services that Rhode Islanders—and especially the residents of Woonsocket, West Warwick, and South County—have come to rely on. I am grateful to our board, Interim CEO Maria Montanaro, and especially Thundermist's staff for their efforts to ensure the more than 63,000 people who receive care each year could continue to receive affordable, high-quality medical, dental, and behavioral healthcare.

Despite continuing financial challenges from reduced 340B drug rebate revenue, inadequate Medicaid reimbursement rates, and other factors, our collaborative efforts have put Thundermist back on track. We are now operating more efficiently and expect to be in a stronger position by the end of 2025.

This year's impact report showcases inspiring stories of how the Thundermist team has collaborated with partners locally, statewide, and nationally to better serve our communities. Even with the challenges we faced last year, Thundermist provided care to more individuals and had more patient visits than ever before. What you read in the following pages highlights how that was possible.

Thank you to our dedicated staff, board of directors, generous donors, and supporters. We are energized and ready for what lies ahead.

With gratitude,



Chuck Jones  
President/Chief Executive Officer

Chuck (far right) meeting with staff from our West Warwick Dental location.







# When Joel Got His Smile Back

How one Thundermist dental patient received the care he needed to keep doing the things he loves

Going to the dentist usually doesn't put people at ease—especially when you know you need to have a lot of work done over the next few months.

Meet Joel, a Thundermist dental patient. Joel had an exciting life in Los Angeles as a set designer and prop manager, and you could find him belting out the national anthem at Lakers and Dodgers games as a featured vocalist. After a long career working on sets for popular movies and TV shows like “The Nutty Professor,” “Sister, Sister,” and “The Drew Carey Show,” Joel came back home to Rhode Island.

*Joel and Dr. Lagina Bickham pictured at our West Warwick Dental office.*

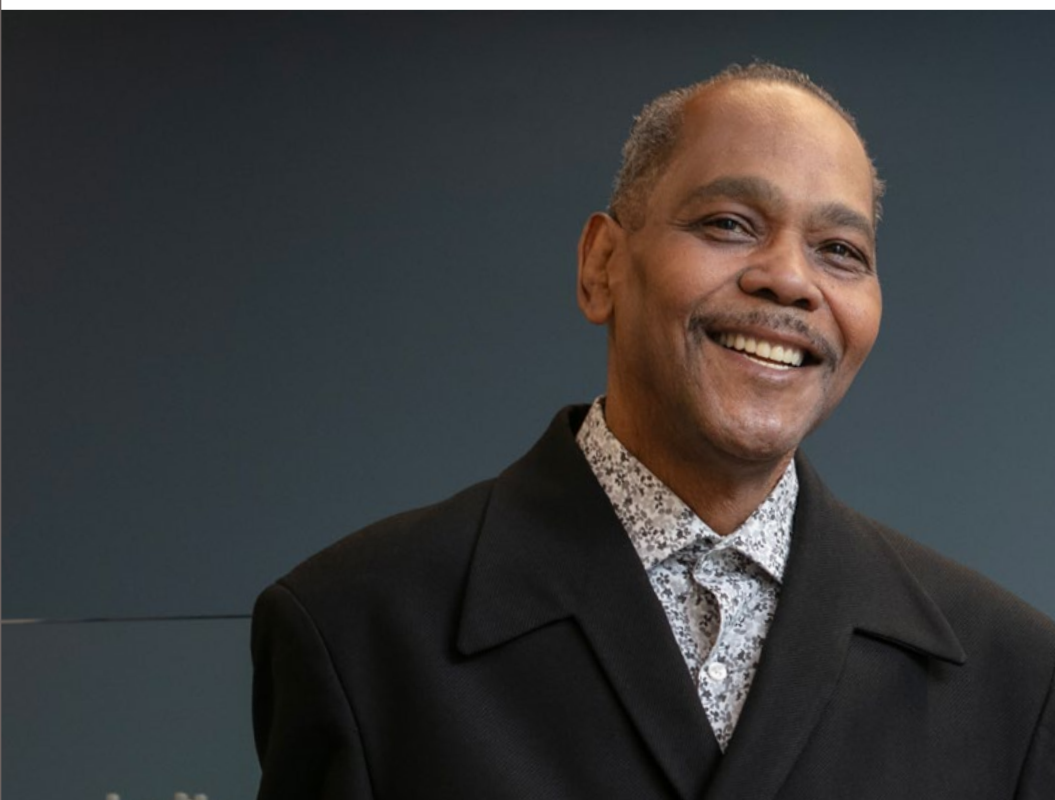
*Photos courtesy of Duffy & Shanley*



After moving back, he learned he had periodontal disease and needed all his teeth extracted. After talking with his family, it became clear this was a genetic disease, as many other family members—including his father and sister—had the same condition. He was so nervous he wasn't going to be able to sing anymore.

Joel began looking for a dentist to do the work. "Everywhere I went, I felt like a number," he shares. Finally, his family suggested he reach out to Dr. Lagina Bickham, a Thundermist dentist and Joel's childhood friend.

Joel reached out to Dr. Bickham to share what he was experiencing. She knew she could help, so she had Joel make an appointment at Thundermist to see her. "Providing essential dental treatment regardless of the ability to pay gives me great pleasure in the work I do," Dr. Bickham shares. "Offering free or



**"Everywhere I went, I felt like a number," Joel shares. Finally, his family suggested he reach out to Dr. Bickham, a Thundermist dentist and Joel's childhood friend.**



low-cost dental services addresses health disparities and promotes healthy smiles.”

At each appointment, Joel was impressed by the short wait times and friendly service from every person he met, even before getting into the operatory. Once in the operatory, he had his blood pressure taken (like all Thundermist dental patients). There were several times when it was too high to begin working. Dr. Bickham helped reassure Joel and played relaxing music for him until they were able to begin. After extractions, pain, and periods of not being able to eat, the time came for Joel’s smile to be restored.

After months of work, Joel was ready to be fitted for his dentures. One of his biggest concerns was: Can you sing with dentures? He was assured by fellow family members and Dr. Bickham that he would be able to sing without any concerns very soon. After a few minor adjustments, not only was Joel able to sing, he could also finally return to eating his favorite foods, which he had gone so long without.

Soon enough, Joel had the confidence to get back behind the microphone as the official anthem singer at Providence College Friars basketball games. He loves showing off his smile—and was even part of a special dental campaign with Dr. Bickham, “Meet the People Behind the Smiles,” launched by Delta Dental in 2024. The photos were featured on the Delta Dental website and a local billboard. Check them out! 📸

*Your support is restoring smiles and bringing bright melodies to so many Rhode Islanders. If you would like to continue to support access to dental care for everyone, [click here](#).*



*Joel and Dr. Bickham review his treatment plan.*

**“Providing essential dental treatment regardless of the ability to pay gives me great pleasure in the work I do. Offering free or low-cost dental services addresses health disparities and promotes healthy smiles.”**

**—DR. BICKHAM**



# Highlights

## from a Year of Dedication

*Thundermist's WIC staff (left to right): Audrey Hall, LDN; Lesly Estano, breastfeeding peer counselor and support staff; Dennis Horta, WIC manager and nutritionist; Susan Sheehan, LDN and certified lactation counselor; Maria Molina, support staff; and Christian Muñoz, MS, ScM, RD.*

## Commemorating 50 Years of WIC

**2024 marked the** 50th anniversary of WIC (also known as Women, Infants, and Children). WIC is a federally funded program that provides nutrition support to income-eligible people who are pregnant, postpartum, and/or breastfeeding, and for children up to age 5. WIC also offers referrals to healthcare and social services. It's an important addition to the circle of care for these families.

Thundermist provides services to 2,000 WIC clients from its downtown Woonsocket location. They have seven staff including licensed nutritionists, dieticians, and lactation counselors. Most WIC clients live locally, but Thundermist sees participants from other towns and cities, as well.

"I continue to come to this location because it is a welcoming office," says Briana, a current WIC participant. "Everything is really streamlined. Now that my son is older, the extra food WIC provides really helps."

One initiative for the WIC team this anniversary year was to expand communication to the communities it

serves about the program's benefits. Thanks to a grant from the state of Rhode Island's Department of Health, this included launching social media accounts.

"This is a more relaxed, fun way to reach people in the community who may not know they qualify for WIC or may have forgotten what WIC can do for their families," Thundermist WIC Manager Dennis Horta says. Online content supplements the outreach WIC does with community partners and includes things such as easy-to-make, nutritious recipes, food-cooking demos, and more.

"WIC has many positive impacts, including ensuring healthier pregnancies and children being connected to medical care, and having access to nutritious foods," adds Christian Muñoz, MS, ScM, RD, WIC's registered dietician. "It's great that with WIC celebrating its 50th anniversary we can find ways to continue engaging participants and teach them about how they can benefit from it."

**You can follow the Thundermist WIC on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) @thundermistwic.**





## Highlights

From a Year of Dedication



## Improving Access to Care for Students in West Warwick & Woonsocket

**As a core piece of our mission,** Thundermist is committed to removing barriers to healthcare. For families in Woonsocket and West Warwick, barriers have often included transportation and time off work for parents to get school-age kids to appointments. To help with this, Thundermist partnered with schools in both communities to create school-based health centers (SBHCs), also known as “Health Huts.”

The first Health Hut opened in Woonsocket in the late 1990s. West Warwick’s opened in 2003. In 2024, the Health Hut at John Deering Middle School in West Warwick—which is also open to students at West Warwick High School—served 415 individuals. The Health Huts at Villa Nova Middle School and Woonsocket High School served 558 students.

“I think there’s no other place quite like this. We are these kids’ medical home. And we can help their parents or siblings get connected to care at our other locations if they need it. It really is a win-win.”

—LISA ZERDELIAN, CPNP

**Left photo:** Woonsocket SBHC Middle School Team (left to right): Maleny Fitzpatrick, FNP, and Sabrina Lopez, Medical Assistant. (Not pictured: Crystal Souza, NP) **Right photo:** Woonsocket SBHC High School Team (left to right): Tara Hagopian, MSW, LICSW; Becky Hall, Medical Assistant; Lisa Zerdelian, CPNP (Not pictured: Chistine Omerhi, NP, and Beth Cleary, PMHNP)

Services at each school-based health center are the same as the services found at Thundermist's stand-alone medical and behavioral health centers, including primary care, preventative care such as immunizations, therapy, sexual health counseling and care, medication management, and much more. Students are seen

regardless of their insurance status or their family's ability to pay. "The Health

## Highlights

From a Year of Dedication


Hut is all-encompassing," Jaimie Borden, a nurse practitioner at the West Warwick location, says. "We can provide care to both Thundermist and non-Thundermist patients during the school day. There is no copay, and no need to worry if you don't have insurance. And because we are in the school it's easy for the kids to come in."

One important aspect in the success of the Health Huts is the relationship between Thundermist and the schools. "We have an amazing relationship with the schools we work with," Lisa Zerdelian, a pediatric nurse practitioner who has been at Thundermist for more than 15 years and oversees the Woonsocket Health Huts, notes.

"Oftentimes, the school nurse in both the middle school and high school are able to quickly triage students and see if they would benefit from higher level of care and being evaluated by our family medicine team," Borden adds. "Other times, it's a weekly communication between our therapist and school guidance counselors to help streamline who may find our services beneficial."

Schools allocate space in their buildings for the Health Huts but do not pay to have Thundermist staff and supplies on site. At a time when school districts have fewer resources available, the health centers help improve attendance and kids' overall well-being.

"I think there's no other place quite like this," Zerdelian says. "We are always active in the schools,

with our medical assistants doing outreach and us calling parents and kids dropping by. We are these kids' medical home. They're connected to us. And we can help their parents or siblings get connected to care at our other locations if they need it. It really is a win-win." 



**West Warwick SBHC Team (left to right):**  
Leanne Myatt FNP-BC; Jaimie Borden FNP-C, PMHNP-BC;  
Liz Hernandez, Medical Assistant; Allison Parkhurst, LMFT

**"The Health Hut is all-encompassing. We can provide care to both Thundermist and non-Thundermist patients during the school day. There is no copay, and no need to worry if you don't have insurance. And because we are in the school it's easy for the kids to come in."**

—JAIMIE BORDEN, FNP-C, PMHNP-BC



## Highlights

From a Year of Dedication



Award winners: (at left) Dr. Cara Zimmerman; (upper right) Dr. Meghan Grant; (lower right) Karen Mazzola, RN, MSN, NEA-BC

# Congratulations!

**Thundermist is proud** to have had two physicians named “Top Doctors” by *Rhode Island Monthly* magazine in 2024: Cara Zimmerman, MD, MBA, who is based in our Woonsocket health center, and Meghan Grant, DO, who works in West Warwick. Every year, *Rhode Island Monthly* asks licensed MDs and DOs to vote for providers they would trust to care for their family and friends in a range of specialties. The results are tallied and

announced in the magazine’s May issue.

In addition, every September, *Rhode Island Monthly* announces its Excellence in Nursing awards. Nominations for these awards are solicited in partnership with the Rhode Island State Nurses Association. In 2024, our Chief of Clinical Operations Karen Mazzola, RN, MSN, NEA-BC, was named outstanding nurse executive. 🏆





Family medicine and psychiatric nurse practitioner fellows from 2024 gather at their graduation. (Olivia Gaudette pictured second from the right.)

## Training the Next Generation of Providers to Integrate Substance Use Treatment Into Primary Care

**In 2023, Thundermist** was awarded a five-year grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration to create an Integrated Substance Use Disorder Treatment Program (ISTP). ISTP is designed to teach both family medicine and psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner fellows at Thundermist about integrating substance use disorder treatment with primary care.

Cara Zimmerman MD, MBA, Thundermist's medical director of primary care-based substance use disorder treatment, oversees the ISTP curriculum. It covers common substance use disorders, such as alcohol, opioids, and stimulants—which can be contributors to chronic disease—and includes lectures

taught by her, as well as Brown University addiction medicine faculty. In addition, fellows do rotations with community partners including CODAC Behavioral Healthcare. Fellows see patients who are seeking addiction treatment and have access to support from clinical social workers that will facilitate warm hand-offs to the behavioral health team as needed.

The fellows often have limited experience caring for patients with substance use disorder when they start at Thundermist. But after the year-long curriculum and hands-on training, they are more comfortable with understanding substance use, harm reduction, and other related topics on a much deeper level.

“As a new practitioner, having the ISTP program was



an incredible resource to provide comprehensive addiction treatment confidently,” says Olivia Gaudette, RN, MSN, FNP-BC, who graduated from the fellowship in spring 2024. “Learning the concepts of addiction and treatment in school is one thing, but applying it to practice made that

## Highlights

From a Year of Dedication

care convenient and successful for a lot of patients. My patients can trust me and the rest of the team with such a delicate aspect of their life, and I feel more confident caring for this patient population knowing there is so much organizational support.”

“I feel very well-prepared to deliver this needed service,” adds current NP fellow Jesse Logan, MSN, APRN, FNP-C. “I love being able to build my skills and knowledge each week in didactic training with Dr. Zimmerman and her colleagues. I feel even

**“I feel more confident caring for this patient population knowing there is so much organizational support.”**

—OLIVIA GAUDETTE, RN, MSN, FNP-BC

more confident in providing competent and high-quality care thanks to this specialized training.”

“Addiction is, in the broadest sense, harmful behavior or negative habit loops and it affects all walks of life,” Zimmerman notes. “It is important for primary care providers to learn about this, as they are often some of the few healthcare professionals people who use substances see.”

Nearly a dozen fellows have completed or will soon complete the ISTP program. This means as they move into primary care practice, they have knowledge about how to make a more effective impact on the health of their patients who use substances. It is another example of how Thundermist continues to blaze trails in the way it delivers exceptional care to our patients. 🔊

## Bringing Behavioral Health Services to Narragansett Schools

**For students** living outside major cities in Rhode Island, lack of access to healthcare services is a concern. That’s why it is important for health centers to collaborate with community partners to ensure better care delivery.

In 2023, Thundermist partnered with the Washington County Coalition for Children to launch a program in the Narragansett school district to create better access to behavioral health services for students at Narragansett Middle School and High School. The telehealth program allows students to meet virtually with a Thundermist clinician and provides additional support from a community health worker, such as connections to other services and types of care.

“The program supports students the school has struggled to get engaged in care,” Deborah Doran, LICSW, explains. “Oftentimes, parents and students cannot get in with a therapist or they have constraints due to work commitments. This program removes those barriers.”

Thanks to funding from the Rhode Island Parent Information Network, the program has proven successful and has secured additional funding from the van Beuren Charitable Foundation, which will allow it to run through the 2026-27 school year. In 2024, the program served 30 students.

“We know someone’s overall health is not just about getting medical care or only seeing a therapist,” Doran says. “It’s a combination of things. That’s why it’s so important to lower barriers to provide better access to the things students and their families may need. We’re thankful we can do that through this program.” 🔊

4

family medicine  
physician residents  
graduate from  
our residency  
partnership with  
Kent Hospital and  
Brown University

2

family medicine  
physicians complete  
maternal child health  
fellowships in Woonsocket

3

family  
medicine nurse  
practitioners  
complete our  
nationally  
accredited  
fellowship

4

social workers  
complete  
clinical rotations  
through a  
partnership  
with Rhode  
Island College

2

psychiatric mental health nurse practitioners complete  
our nationally accredited fellowship

## Solving the Healthcare Workforce Shortage

Every year Thundermist trains  
healthcare professionals  
in multiple desperately needed areas

We understand the important  
role Thundermist plays in  
addressing the current and  
future healthcare needs  
of all Rhode Islanders.  
We believe the best way to  
do that is to provide local  
training opportunities for  
professionals most likely to  
remain in Rhode Island.



# Thundermist's Annual Golf Tournament

Monday, June 2, 2025

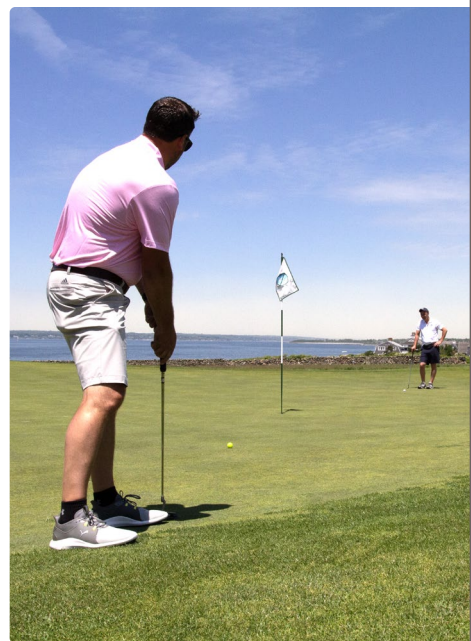
Sakonnet Golf Club, Little Compton, RI

10:30 a.m. Registration

11:30 a.m. Shotgun start

Thundermist Health Center's Annual Golf Tournament is hosted at the beautiful Sakonnet Golf Club in Little Compton, RI. Last year, 100 attendees enjoyed a day of golf overlooking the water, all to support high-quality healthcare for our communities.

For more information on sponsorship opportunities for this year's tournament, contact Jess Null at [jessicanu@thundermisthealth.org](mailto:jessicanu@thundermisthealth.org).



# Save the Dates!

Your generosity will bring healthcare to people who need it most



## Moonlight at the Garden

Wednesday, October 22, 2025

Roger Williams Park Botanical Center,  
Providence, RI • 6 - 9 p.m.

Moonlight at the Garden is Thundermist's largest fundraising event of the year, raising nearly \$100,000 to support patient care. Attendees will hear directly from a Thundermist patient whose life has been impacted by the care your generosity enables.

For more information on sponsorship opportunities for Moonlight at the Garden, contact Jess Null at [jessicanu@thundermisthealth.org](mailto:jessicanu@thundermisthealth.org).

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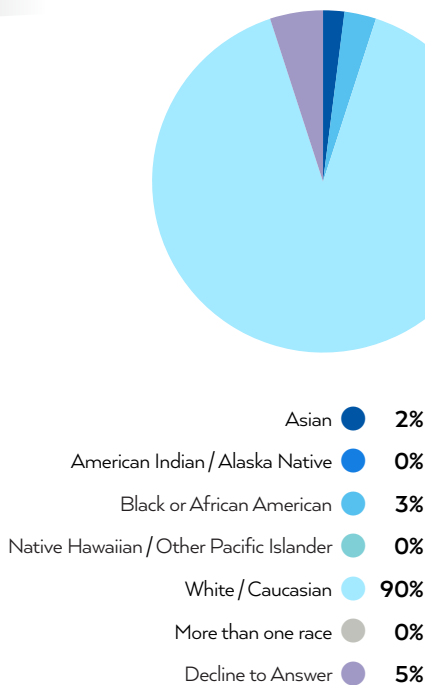
# 2024 Staff Demographics / Patient Volume

## Total Number of Employees

734

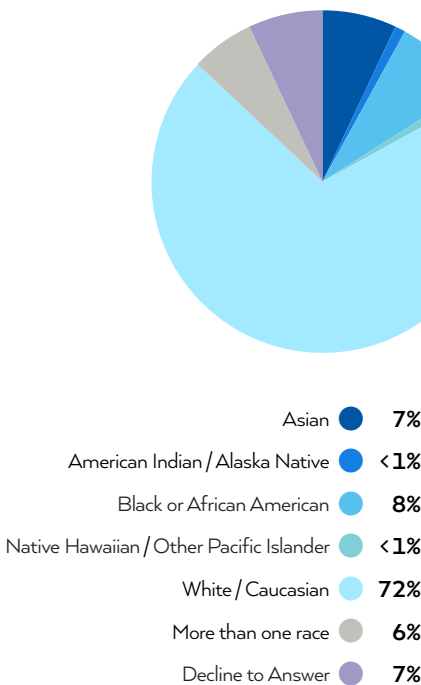
\*Chart percentages rounded to nearest whole numbers; total may not equal 100%

## Race of Leaders\*



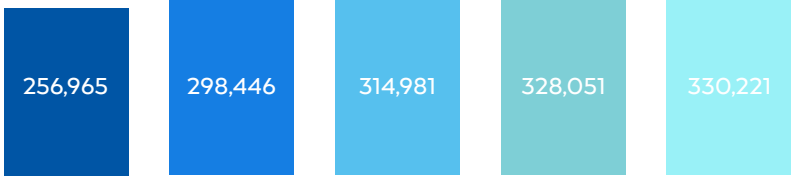
\*18% of Thundermist leaders identify as Hispanic or Latino.

## Race of Non-Leaders\*\*



\*\*21% of Thundermist non-leaders identify as Hispanic or Latino.

## Total Visits



29.4% increase over 5 years

## Unique Patients



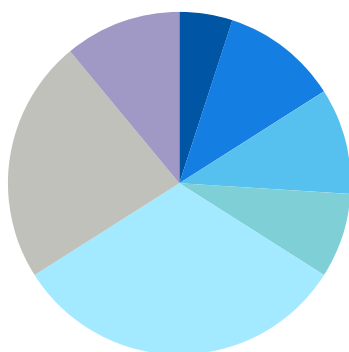
28.5% increase over 5 years



# 2024 Patient Demographics

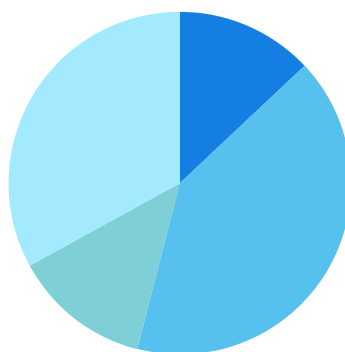
Here is a snapshot of the patients you helped care for in 2024

## Patient Age\*



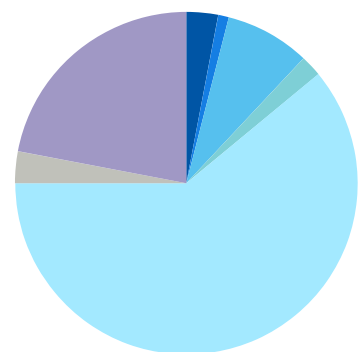
0-4 ● 5%  
 5-12 ● 11%  
 13-19 ● 10%  
 20-24 ● 8%  
 25-44 ● 32%  
 45-64 ● 23%  
 65+ ● 11%

## Patient Insurance\*



Uninsured ● 13%  
 Medicaid ● 42%  
 Medicare ● 13%  
 Private Insurance ● 33%

## Patient Race\*

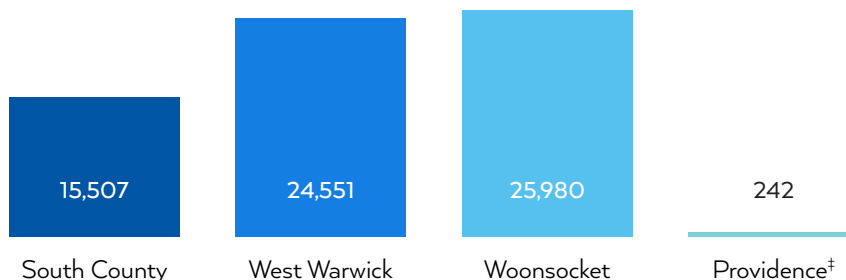


Asian ● 3%  
 American Indian / Alaska Native ● 1%  
 Black or African American ● 8%  
 Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander ● 2%  
 White / Caucasian ● 61%  
 More than one race ● 3%  
 Decline to Answer ● 22%

\*Chart percentages rounded to nearest whole numbers; total may not equal 100%

20% of Thundermist patients identify as Hispanic or Latino.

## Where Patients Were Served by Site†



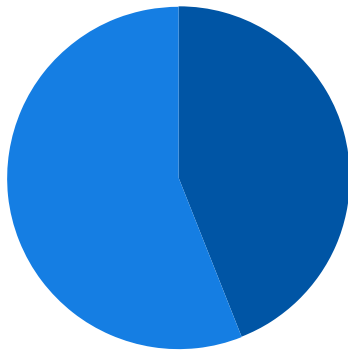
† Some patients are seen at more than one site

‡ The Providence location serves a limited scope and special populations

# 2024 Funding Sources

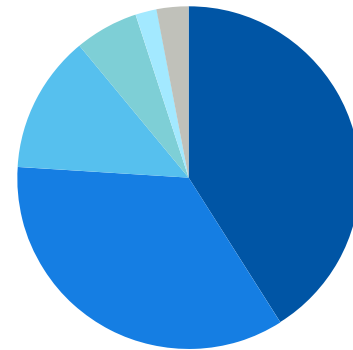
Total Revenue: **\$92,346,186**

**\$70,873,163**  
**Patient  
Service Revenue\***



Fee for Service Insurance Payments ● **44%**  
PPS/ Capitation/Incentives ● **56%**

**\$21,473,023**  
**340B, Grants, Contracts, Gifts,  
and Other Revenue\***



340B ● **40%**  
Federal Grants ● **35%**  
State Grants ● **13%**  
Other Grants ● **6%**  
Fundraising ● **2%**  
Other ● **3%**

\*Chart percentages rounded to nearest whole numbers; total may not equal 100%

In 2024, Thundermist underwent significant financial hardship, resulting in a reduction in force in September that impacted 125 people. Major reductions in 340 B prescription drug rebate revenue, the end of American Rescue Plan Act funding, and low Medicaid reimbursement rates all contributed to this loss. With

support from community partners, Thundermist was able to weather the storm. As we look to the future, we have made significant improvements to our revenue cycle, found ways to recoup some of the 340B program losses (and continue to advocate at the state level), and developed other guardrails to ensure financial stability for the future.



Thundermist strives to recruit board members that are representative of the patients and communities we serve. As a federally qualified community health center, at least 51% of our board must be patients. Our latest board demographics survey was completed in January 2025. Following the fiscal challenges in 2024, it was clear

that the board needed to expand and include a variety of other areas of expertise. In January 2025, Thundermist welcomed six new board members to the team. In addition, the board recently updated Thundermist's bylaws to include term limits, ensuring continued growth and development of the board of directors.

## Current Board of Directors

**Erin M. Cooney**  
Chairperson

**Victoria St. Germain**  
Vice Chairperson

**Michael R. Souza**  
Treasurer

**Linda M. Cannistra**  
Secretary

**Mary Ellen Caniglia**

**Todd Conklin**

**Sara Delaporta, MD**

**Timothy Henry, PhD**

**Mark Knott**

**Christopher Koller**

**Ivonne Rodriguez**

**Andrea S. Rollin**

**Deb Ruggiero**

**Lawrence P. Trim**

**David Valois**

**Daniel Warner**



## Current Senior Staff

**Chuck Jones**  
President and Chief Executive Officer

**Addy Kane, CPA, MBA**  
Chief Financial Officer

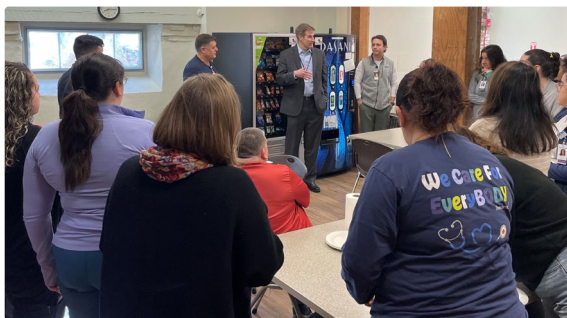
**David Bourassa, MD**  
Chief Medical Officer

**Eric Prosseda, DMD**  
Chief Dental Officer

**Matthew Roman, MBA, LICSW**  
Chief Operating Officer

**Karen Mazzola, MSN, RN, NEA-BC**  
Chief of Clinical Operations

**Elizabeth Lynch, LICSW**  
Chief of Behavioral Health and Social Services



## Our Mission

To improve the health of our patients and communities by delivering exceptional health care, removing barriers to that care, and advancing healthy lifestyles.

## Our Vision

Every member of the Thundermist community can lead a healthy life.

## Our Values

### Caring

We bring passion and commitment to serve our diverse communities, patients and each other in a safe environment.

### Community

We respect the knowledge and skills of our local partners, patients, and employees. We support, create, and lead opportunities for growth and development.

### Innovation

We develop, adopt, and contribute to advancements for improved health. We share knowledge openly with our staff, partners, patients, and communities.

### Excellence

We maintain high standards and deliver exceptional results.

### Integrity

We are champions and advocates for our patients, communities, and each other. We stay true to our mission, vision, and values.

### Diversity

We are committed to building and fostering a team that is representative of the communities we serve, to ensure that all our patients, staff, and community members are seen, heard, and valued.

Thundermist!  
H E A L T H C E N T E R



# Thundermist!

H E A L T H C E N T E R

## West Warwick

**Medical, Behavioral Health,  
Convenient Care**

186 Providence Street  
West Warwick, RI 02893  
**401-615-2800**

**Dental**

5 Washington Street  
West Warwick, RI 02893  
**401-615-2804**

## Providence

**Limited scope,  
special populations**

557 Broad Street  
Providence, RI 02907  
**401-235-6838**

## Woonsocket

**Medical,  
Behavioral Health,  
Convenient Care**

450 Clinton Street  
Woonsocket, RI 02895  
**401-767-4100**

**Dental, WIC**

25 John A. Cummings Way  
Woonsocket, RI 02895

**Dental 401-767-4161**  
**WIC 401-767-4109**

## South County

**Medical, Dental,  
Behavioral Health,  
Convenient Care**

1 River Street  
Wakefield, RI 02879

**Medical 401-783-0523**

**Dental 401-783-5646**

**Pediatrics**

360 Kingstown Road, Suite 101  
Narragansett, RI 02882  
**401-789-6492**



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