CONSUMER CREDIT COUNSELING SERVICE
SAN FRANCISCO
2014
ANNUAL REPORT
45
YEARS

CEO REPORT

The quest for the American dream is as much alive today as it was 45 years ago, when Consumer Credit Counseling Service of San Francisco (CCCS-SF) first opened its tiny office on a San Francisco side street. Now at its downtown headquarters with over 100 employees, we serve the needs of families, individuals, and communities across the nation.

During this milestone year, the agency has continued its industry leadership, fielding nearly 230,000 consumer calls across the nation, helping consumers pay back more than $35M in debt, and assisting over 10,000 families find alternatives to foreclosure.

Much of the growth and success of CCCS-SF is attributed to our former CEO, Joanne Budde, who retired this past year after more than 20 years of service. Joanne was instrumental in establishing and shaping CCCS-SF into the agency that it is today.

In Spring of 2014, I took on the role of CEO—with big shoes to fill. I am thrilled to channel the passion I have for financial literacy to empower individuals and families across the nation with our services, support, and resources.

I invite you to review our accomplishments in 2014 as we look ahead to 2015 and beyond.

Kathryn J. Davis

Kathryn J. Davis
President & Chief Executive Officer

CONSUMER CREDIT COUNSELING SERVICE OF SAN FRANCISCO

For 45 years, CCCS-SF has consistently helped clients maneuver through life's personal finance challenges, from purchasing a home to planning retirement, overcoming debt, and developing smarter money habits. Many of our clients are able to secure a better future for themselves and their families utilizing our free and low-cost support services and resources.

OUR UNWAVERING MISSION

By providing comprehensive financial counseling and education, we will help consumers achieve financial independence through debt reduction, homeownership, and improved money management skills.

FUNDERS

The contributions we receive from funders are essential to provide our breadth of services. We are extremely grateful to the following organizations for the grants they awarded to CCCS-SF in 2014:

- Capital One
- Chase
- Citibank
- Homeownership SF
- LGBT Center
- Mission Economic Development Agency
- Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development
- The San Francisco Office of Financial Empowerment
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- Wells Fargo

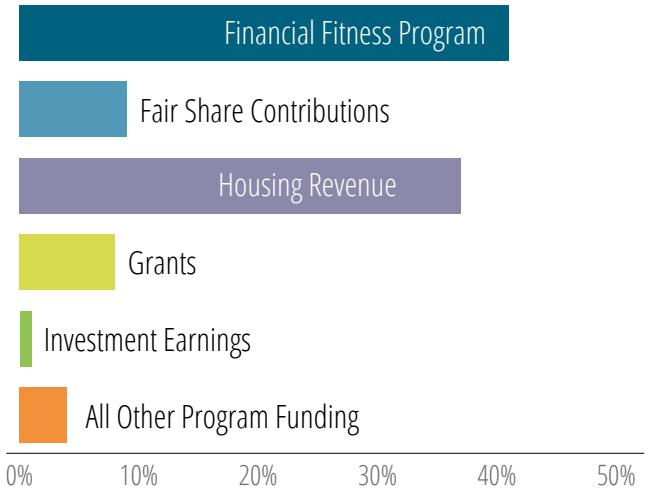
CREDENTIALS

Non-profit 501(c)3 organization

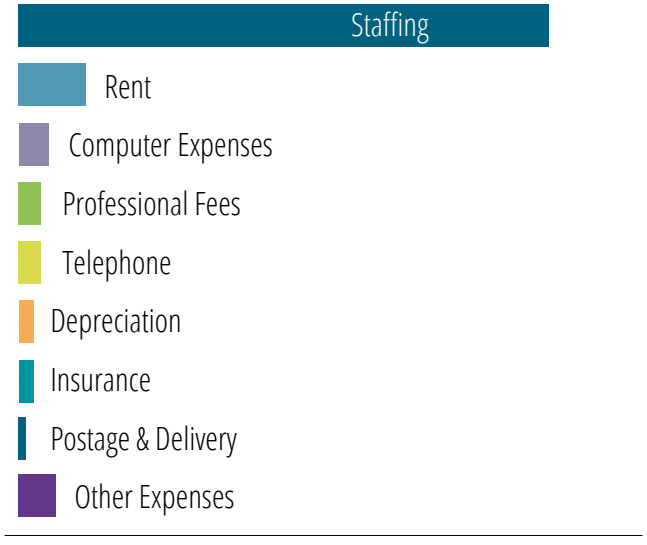
- Accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Services for Families and Children
- Approved by the Executive Office for U.S. Trustees to provide bankruptcy counseling
- Adopter of the National Industry Standards for Homeownership Education and Counseling
- Approved by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to provide housing counseling
- All counselors earn and maintain certifications:
  - Certified *Consumer Credit Counselor* from the National Foundation for Credit Counseling NFCC
  - Certified *Housing Counselor* from the National Foundation for Credit Counseling (NFCC)
- Certified *Consumer Interviewer* from the Consumer Data Industry Association
- Certified *Keep Your Home California* Counselor

FINANCIALS

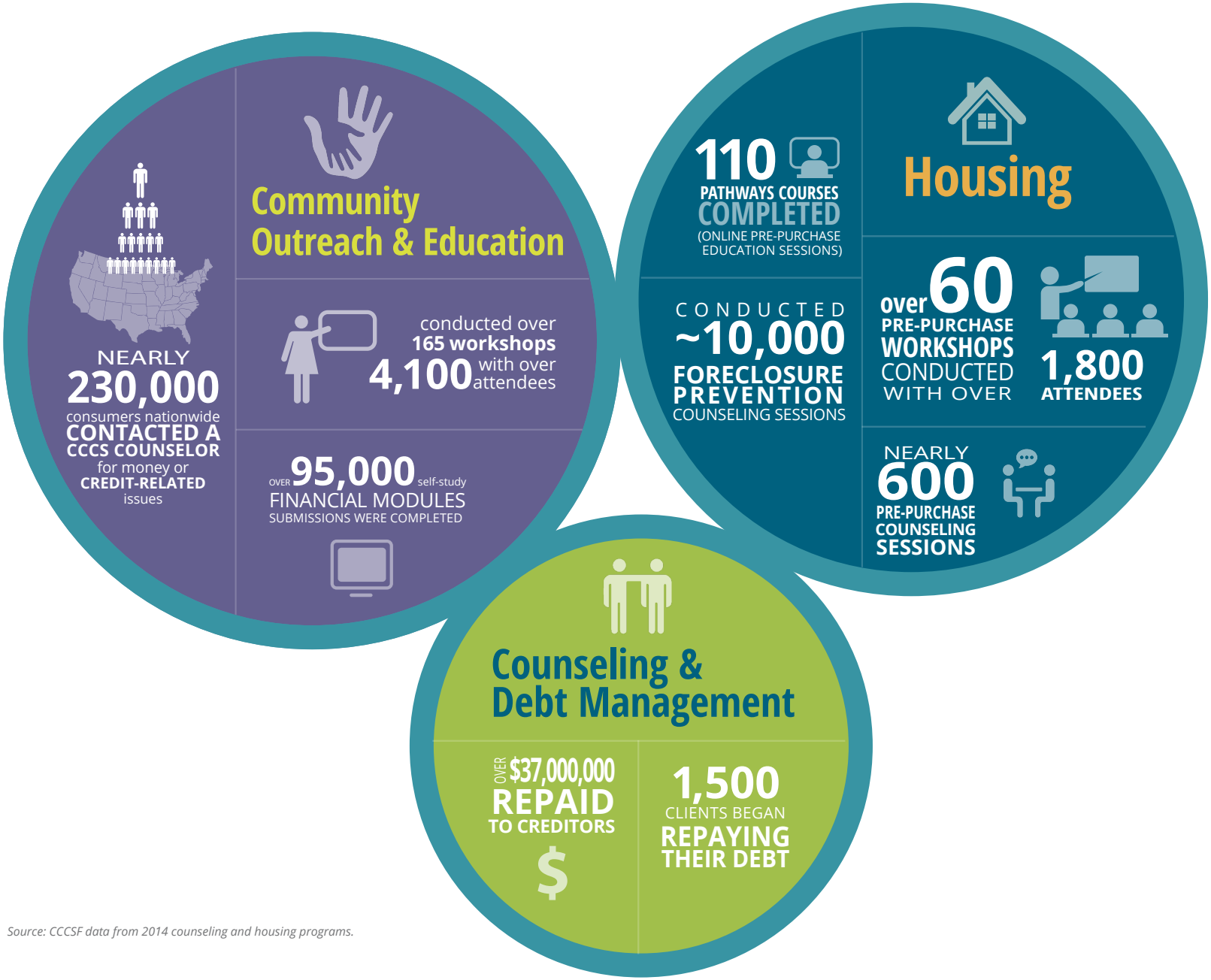
REVENUE SOURCES



EXPENSES



HELPING BY THE NUMBERS IN 2014



Source: CCCSF data from 2014 counseling and housing programs.

MONEY MANAGEMENT/ DEBT COUNSELING

Making a Difference...One Client at a Time

In 1969 our counseling services were held at our offices, but as we grew, so did our ability to expand our help across the nation through our phone counseling service. With close to 100 accredited, multilingual counselors, our call center provides counseling for money management, credit, and other personal finance concerns. In 2014, our phone counselors fielded almost 230,000 calls and counseled more than 18,000 families to take charge of their personal finances.

In 2014, nearly 1,500 clients began a Debt Management Plan with CCCS-SF and more than $37M was repaid to creditors through the program. The average amount of debt paid down per client in 2014 was $6,452.

Financial Education the Way Clients Want

Access to personal finance resources for all members of society is key to helping Americans build a better future for themselves—whether it's a young couple starting a family, seniors weighing the pros and cons of a reverse mortgage, or youth learning how to develop a budget. Over the years, CCCS-SF continues to deliver content in a variety of formats to achieve this goal, using workshops, events, online education, brochures, and other outreach methods.

Clients can also learn about personal finance through our content-rich website, utilizing budget-tracking tools, online calculators, podcasts, videos, and a financial education library covering hundreds of topics. In fact, almost 95,000 self-study financial module submissions were completed in 2014.

SUCCESS STORY

"Till Debt Do Us Part"

In 2014, Joe and his wife found themselves in a situation they never expected: $70K in debt, and nowhere to turn.

It began in the mid-2000s when the two teachers married later in life were overspending on vacations, shopping, and support of their local nonprofits. When the downturn hit, so did payback time. Even though the couple put the brakes on spending, it didn't stop the creditors they owed. "We knew about agencies that consolidated debt but also knew there were a lot of sharks out there," Joe said. "We had debt consolidators calling us all day, every day. We couldn't tell the difference from the ones looking to make money and the ones that were not."

In the midst of this financial difficulty, Joe's credit union gave him a brochure on our counseling services. "I had no idea that this service was even available. It was a life raft," he said. "Working with these counselors, there was no judgment and a lot of professionalism. They were able to negotiate my debt and consolidate from 12 lenders to one with better interest charges."

In October of 2014, after three and a half years, the couple was able to pay off their debt. "It was a priority and we made some sacrifices along the way, but as a result we feel a sense of accomplishment," Joe said. "We've also arrived at some new habits in the process and are very grateful. It's changed the way we see money and spending as part of our values."

Now that the couple is retired and living on a fixed income, planning and priorities are a key part of determining how they spend money. "Our future looks bright," he said.

HOME SWEET HOME

2014 was also a milestone for the CCCS-SF Housing Education Program—marking its 20th year of helping families attain the dream of owning a home and providing struggling homeowners with foreclosure options. Our housing organization offers four client services: affordable housing programs, foreclosure alternatives, reverse mortgage counseling, and comprehensive housing counseling. These services are provided through in-person meetings, phone counseling sessions, workshops, online educational tools, and partner programs. CCCS-SF is also honored to be one of only several agencies in the nation selected to participate in HOPE NOW and the Homeownership Preservation housing program.

Our affordable housing resources for low- and moderate-income individuals and families include rental assistance programs, community homebuyer programs, and other opportunities for clients who normally would not be able to purchase a home. Pre-ownership education is a qualification requirement for some government and affordable home loan programs. CCCS-SF conducted almost 600 pre-ownership counseling sessions in 2014.

CCCS-SF helps clients navigate through all of the pre-homeownership challenges—from understanding credit scores to the escrow process to household budgeting strategies.

Though years after the housing crisis of 2007-2009, thousands of homeowners still struggle to make their mortgage payment and seek support for early delinquency intervention or foreclosure options. CCCS-SF works with clients to help keep their homes through a variety of specialized programs, including refinancing, loan modification, and other alternatives. In 2014, CCCS-SF housing conducted over 10,000 foreclosure prevention counseling sessions to help them avoid foreclosure.

As an option to standard mortgages, senior populations sometimes consider reverse mortgages. Our specially trained reverse mortgage counselors ensure that our clients understand the pros and cons, and help them decide if it's the right choice for their financial situation.

SUCCESS STORY

Persistence Pays For House

"My housing counselor is my definition of Superman: He stands for truth, justice and the American dream of home ownership." These are the words of Jo, a housing client who lives in Detroit, Michigan.

It started 20 years ago when Jo bought her home. She had a solid payment record with her mortgage company, and even invested $100K in repairs and upgrades to her home. But in 2011 everything changed—she lost her job and the financial stability she once had disappeared. When she contacted the mortgage company to request assistance with a loan modification or forbearance on the mortgage, the company would not change the terms. She spent the next several years trying to hold off foreclosure efforts by invoking Michigan housing laws, going to court, and any other measure she could use.

By 2014, she was running out of legal options and it seemed inevitable that she would lose her home. Although she worked full time, she suffered a reduction in income and was in a desperate situation. Jo then found out about CCCS-SF housing services and connected with one of our counselors to explain her situation. The counselor worked with the mortgage company to develop a plan to help secure her loan modification request. In the end, he helped our client get the loan. "He was my secret weapon," she said. "He also kept me informed and encouraged me all along the way."

Even better, the housing counselor located a Freddie Mac loan modification package for her with more advantageous terms; the program was so new that it hadn't been introduced. "He hunted down that special program just for me. I am so glad that he took the time to stay up-to-date on everything that HUD, Freddie Mac, and Fannie Mae puts out there," the client said. "As a result of his diligence, I got a large reduction in my loan interest rate and I get to stay in my house."

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Reaching out to the Community

Since its beginning, CCCS-SF has committed to providing education and support for diverse community populations locally and across the nation, as well as to nonprofit local agencies and their clients. Educating the public is foundational to the CCCS-SF mission.

In 2014, CCCS reached almost 4,784 attendees through 129 free workshops and 21 webinars on money management and housing, and participated in 20 community events through partnerships with local businesses, financial institutions, and government agencies. Some examples include the U.S. Coast Guard, the Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment, the San Francisco Treasurer's Office, and local schools in San Francisco.

Our community outreach program also works with local agencies to offer their clients much-needed financial literacy education and support services. In 2014 these organizations included a diverse range of nonprofit organizations, including: ASIAN, Inc., Hamilton Family Center, La Casa de las Madres, San Francisco Suicide Prevention, and San Francisco Smart Money Network.

As part of our effort to support community volunteerism, our Employee Volunteering program with Paid Time Off lets employees give the gift of their time to the organizations they choose to support. In 2014, more than 20 organizations benefited from this program, including Habitat for Humanity, San Francisco Aids Foundation, Vietnamese Youth Development Center, Girl Scouts, Spiral Gardens, and local Bay Area schools.

In 2014, our executive staff volunteered on the Homeownership SF Board of Directors, Student Loan Alliance Board of Directors, and Financial Planning Day Steering Committee.

COMMUNITY STORY

CCCS-SF Partners With Domestic Violence Organization

LA CASA DE LAS MADRES — A Refuge. An Advocate. A Strong Voice Against Domestic Violence.

Since 1976, La Casa de las Madres has been a safe haven for women, children, and teens that are victims of domestic violence —24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The organization focuses on all aspects to help victims and survivors of domestic violence, including for crisis and support services, training, outreach, and education.

Many domestic violence victims are also subject to economic abuse by their partners. Some of these tactics include forcing the person to work, blocking them from working, and limiting their educational opportunities.

CCCS-SF began its partnership with Casa de las Madres in 2013 to provide clients with personal finance education. Through counseling on money management skills, credit report review, and other related topics, clients' economic self-sufficiency skills can be developed.

CCCS-SF provides individual counseling and coaching services at their location, our office, or by phone. These one-on-one meetings focus on the client's specific needs—from budgeting, fixing their credit report, or working towards home ownership.

Since the program began, CCCS-SF has provided 42 individual counseling or coaching sessions to La Casa de las Madres clients. The education partnership is expected to grow in 2015 with more workshops and counseling sessions.

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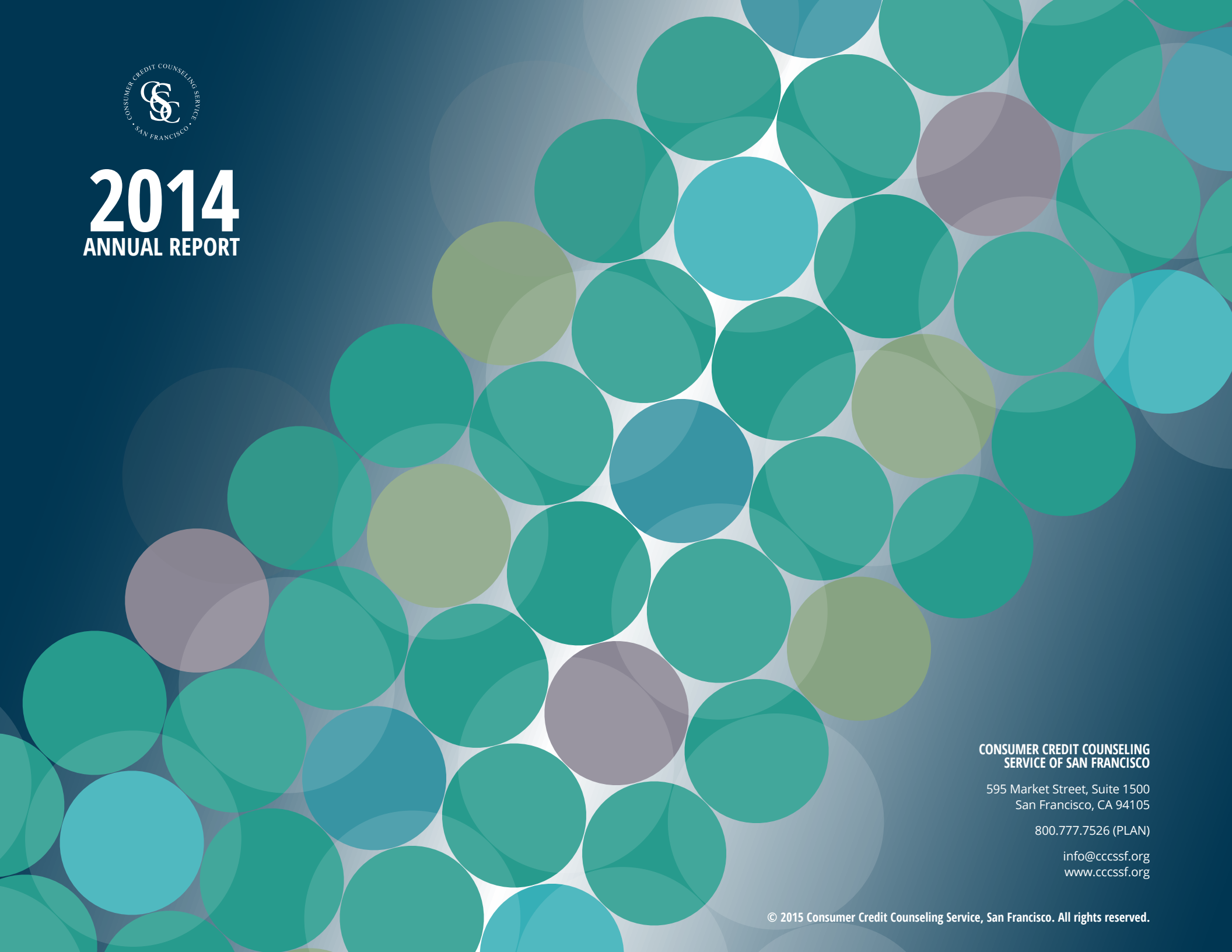

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