



Lutheran Social Services of Illinois

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **LSSI to Honor Basketball Coaches Bruce Weber and Homer Drew with 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Amicus Certus ('True Friend') Award**

On October 28, Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI) will honor Bruce Weber, men's head basketball coach of the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, and Homer Drew, men's head basketball coach at Valparaiso University, at this year's Amicus Certus Award Dinner. The event — entitled "A Masked Ball" — is hosted by the Women's Network of LSSI and will take place at the Westin Chicago River North Hotel, 320 N. Dearborn, in Chicago. Johnny "Red" Kerr, of Chicago Bulls and broadcasting fame, will serve as master of ceremonies. The reception will be held at 6:00 p.m. with dinner following at 7:30 p.m.

The Amicus Certus (or "True Friend") Award is given to individuals or organizations that have made significant contributions to the human community. Drew and Weber are being honored for their commitment to their players, which they've demonstrated by serving as mentors and encouraging them to complete their college educations and pursue meaningful and productive lives after graduation.

"We are honored to present our Amicus Certus Award to two men who are, indeed, 'true friends' and mentors to young people at a crucial time in their lives," says the Rev. Dr. Frederick Aigner, LSSI president. "We are all aware of the great value of education in the world in terms of helping people to lead proactive, satisfying lives. So, gathering to honor two individuals who advocate a long-range look toward the future with our supporters, volunteers, staff and other colleagues is particularly gratifying."

This is the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Amicus Certus Award Dinner. "Amicus Certus has provided our agency with important opportunities, all of which focus on the idea of doing good in our community and world. Through Amicus Certus, we celebrate that good, along with those 'True Friends' who are catalysts of it," says Aigner. The event has given LSSI — an agency that serves the common good in Illinois — a forum to honor those who have also served the common good in some important way.

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In addition, during the event's first 24 years, Amicus Certus has raised \$1.4 million, providing crucial support, as well as seed money for a variety of LSSI programs, strengthening their ability to continue serving people in need, often in innovative, unique ways.

Former Amicus Certus honorees include the late Paul Simon, U.S. Senator from Illinois; Anne M. Burke, Chicago Special Olympics founder; The Retirement Research Foundation; and The Erickson Institute. Last year, Rotary International received the award for its efforts in eradicating polio worldwide.

Proceeds from this year's event will benefit two of LSSI's programs for youth. Steps to Life readies foster teens for independent living through a program that encourages life planning as well as personal and social development. H.O.P.E. (Health, Opportunities, Planning, Empowerment) is a new LSSI program that helps to prepare teens with serious emotional problems for their transition to adulthood and independent living.

Amicus Certus tickets are \$275 per person or \$2,750 for a table for 10, and may be obtained by advance reservation. Sponsorships are also available.

Founded in 1867, Lutheran Social Services of Illinois is a statewide, not-for-profit social service agency of the three Illinois synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. LSSI's services include counseling, mental health programs, substance abuse treatment, residential treatment for children and adolescents, early childhood education and child care services, programs for adults and children with developmental disabilities, foster care and adoption, pregnancy counseling, housing and services for older adults and individuals with disabilities, nursing care, and programs for prisoners and their families.

*For more information about Amicus Certus or to make reservations, contact Ed Newton at 847/635-4656, or Edward.Newton@LSSI.org. Or visit [www.LSSI.org](http://www.LSSI.org).*

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