



Lutheran Social Services of Illinois

# NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**CONTACT:** Jo Ann Dollard  
847/390-1446  
Carol VanderMey  
847/635-4604

## **Sycks Memorial Golf Outing Helps People on Course to Live Sober**

Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI) will host its Fifth Annual Josh Sycks Memorial Golf Classic at the Orchard Valley Golf Course in Aurora on September 22nd. Launched by Randy and Sue Sycks of Geneva after their teenage son died in 2003 of an untreated heroin addiction, the tournament benefits the residential substance abuse treatment programs at the Behavioral Health Services (BHS) Center in Elgin.

After their son's death, the Sycks wanted to find a way to help other substance abusers obtain what Josh could not — a safe, secure place for treatment and rehabilitation — so others could avoid their son's fate.

“After Josh died, I knew I couldn't ignore the fact that there are other sons, daughters, parents, friends and loved ones suffering from this dreadful disease,” says Randy Sycks.

The highly successful LSSI program offers a place for people wanting to reclaim their lives from the grip of addiction. After completing a four-week residential treatment program, individuals either return home, if it is an environment that is supportive to their recovery, or go to live at a halfway house or recovery home. The Elgin site also offers a men's halfway house on its premises.

Nearly 1 million Illinois adults are addicted to drugs or alcohol. Unfortunately, there are a limited number treatment programs today, and funding for those programs is being threatened. Until the 1980s, hospitals had their own treatment facilities, but when insurance companies eliminated coverage for drug and alcohol treatment, hospitals closed their units. Since then, treatment centers have primarily been funded by the state and federal government through

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Medicaid, in addition to other state programs. Recently, Governor Blagojevich vetoed \$55 million in funding for state drug treatment and prevention programs.

Those cuts are forcing the BHS Center and other providers to turn away patients and scale back programs, despite their success. LSSI's own studies show that more than 55 percent of its patients remain alcohol and drug-free, helping them to become full and productive family members and members of society. And a survey by the University of Chicago found that every \$1 spent on drug treatment programs saves taxpayers \$7 down the road, including costs for prisons and police, unemployment and welfare benefits, and health care and HIV/AIDS treatment.

“In our programs we offer hope: hope for freedom from addiction, hope for healing, hope for wholeness, hope for families and communities,” says Joseph Paul, director of the BHS Center in Elgin. “From this hope, change begins, and we see the marginalized of society rejoin their families and communities and enjoy lives of new purpose and direction free from alcohol and drugs.”

The tournament includes lunch, 18 holes of golf, dinner and auctions for \$250; non-golfing guests may attend the cocktail reception, dinner and auction for \$60. In addition to other sponsorship opportunities, this year LSSI is recruiting One Day of Treatment sponsors for each of the 30 days in September, which is National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month. The estimated cost of one day of treatment at the BHS Center is \$200. For more information on the September campaign, contact Mara McClellan at 847/635-4617 or [Mara.McClellan@LSSI.org](mailto:Mara.McClellan@LSSI.org). To register or get more information on the golf outing, contact Ed Newton at 847/635-4656, or at [Edward.Newton@LSSI.org](mailto:Edward.Newton@LSSI.org).

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**About Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI):**

Founded in October 1867, Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI) is a statewide, not-for-profit social service agency of the three Illinois synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. LSSI serves people through an array of services at 89 sites across Illinois.