



Lutheran Social Services of Illinois

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 29, 2006

CONTACT: Jo Ann Dollard
847/390-1446
Carol VanderMey
847/635-4604

Golf Outing to Raise Funds for Substance Abuse Residential Treatment Program in Elgin

On Monday, September 18, the third annual Josh Sycks Golf Outing will tee off at the Calumet Country Club in Homewood, in memory of a young man who died of a heroin overdose before he could get treatment. The event will benefit the residential substance abuse treatment program at the Behavioral Health Center in Elgin, a program of Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI).

Over the past two years, the charity golf outing has raised a total of \$60,000 – which is nearly the cost of funding one bed at the treatment facility for one year. LSSI's Elgin-based program, known for its successful residential treatment services, is the “second step” (after detox) for people who wish to come to terms with their addiction. After completing residential treatment, individuals either return home, if it is an environment that is supportive to their recovery, or to a halfway house or recovery home. The Elgin Center also offers a men's halfway house on its premises.

“There is absolutely more need [for facilities like this one],” says Al Meginniss, director of the Elgin Center. He notes that for the past 15 years, programs such as this one have been disappearing. At the same time, the need for residential treatment centers has grown, fueled by the increasing use of drugs, particularly heroin.

In Illinois, an estimated 975,000 persons, age 18 and older, are directly affected by alcohol or another drug problem. Funding is available for only 8 percent of these persons. But treatment works! In a survey of clients who had been out of treatment a minimum of six months, LSSI found that 55 percent of its outpatient clients continued to be alcohol- and drug-free.

- more -

Today, a limited number of organizations provide residential treatment facilities. At one time, hospitals had their own treatment facilities, but in the 1980s, insurers decided they would no longer pay for treatment, and hospitals closed those units. Now, treatment centers are primarily funded by the state and Medicaid.

The outing is Josh Sycks's legacy. His parents, Randy and Sue of Geneva, wanted to find a way to help others avoid their son's fate. "There are a lot of kids who are looking for treatment and nothing is available," says Sue Sycks, who, with her husband Randy, helps to organize the event. "They die before a bed opens up." The annual charity golf outing, which generates funds for the Elgin Center, is one way they hope to help the situation.

The fee for one person to play at the golf outing is \$250, which includes 18 holes of golf with cart; beverages, lunch and dinner; a gift and prizes; locker room privileges; and a live and silent auction. Non-golfing guests may attend the dinner and auction for \$50. To register, visit www.LSSI.org/lssiPublic/publicSite/Downloads/BHSGolf_registration06.pdf.

For more information, contact Ed Newton at 847/635-4656, or by e-mail at Edward.Newton@LSSI.org; or go to www.LSSI.org.

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 (ELCA), as well as an agency of the United Way. LSSI serves people through an array of services at more than 89 program sites across Illinois. For more information, visit www.LSSI.org.

###