How does God’s love abide in anyone who has the world’s goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?

—1 JOHN 3:17

Developing Every Child’s Potential for Success

In the classrooms of LSSI’s Head Start Programs, the curiosity of young learners is palpable, whether it’s children sharing at circle time, engrossed in play, or one-on-one interactions with a teacher.

Created 50 years ago, Head Start programs are designed to serve families with annual incomes at the poverty level—$23,050 for a family of four—and prepare pre-school aged children for academic and social readiness in kindergarten and beyond. LSSI operates three Head Start child care centers in Chicago’s Austin, Rogers Park, and Uptown neighborhoods. Additionally, the Winthrop Child Care Center in Uptown cares for children aged 15 months to three years.

LSSI takes a holistic approach to its Head Start programs by involving parents as much as children. A Parents as Partners focus encourages parents to be more knowledgeable about child development, community resources, wellness, and financial literacy. Workshops are held for parents, who are encouraged to volunteer, and staff supports parents in their own endeavors.

Shamika Heard served as Austin Town Hall’s Parent Policy

Inspired

Responding to the Gospel, Lutheran Social Services of Illinois brings healing, justice, and wholeness to people and communities.
LSSI Helping Veterans

Veterans Day on Nov. 11 provides time for reflection on the service and sacrifice of those in the armed forces. LSSI is honored to give back to veterans through its programs.

Legacy Corps is a flagship program for veterans, run in partnership with AmeriCorps. It began as respite care services for veterans and their families, growing to include community education, peer support groups for veterans and caregivers, partnerships with other veteran organizations, and a new program—Junior Corps.

“Junior Corps will train the next generation of volunteers,” said Peg Saintcross, Legacy Corps Program Manager. “By learning now, they will serve for their lifetime in Legacy Corps or other organizations.”

At LSSI’s Intouch Adult Day program in Moline, a group called United Veterans of Intouch has formed. Run by Vietnam-era veteran Mike Johnson, they hold weekly meetings and events. They receive speakers, discuss military experiences and hold what Johnson calls a “Situation Report.” Each member updates the group on themselves or speaks about anything from current events, to memories of combat, to grandchildren.

“Everybody has a story to share,” Johnson said.

The group takes a trip outside of the program each month. They have visited a rifle range, gone fishing, and planted flags at the Rock Island Arsenal. The group recently began a program where children interview members and write a story about veterans’ experiences.

LSSI also assists veterans indirectly through various programs in place for those with mental health problems, substance abuse issues, or returning from prison.

Mission Work Close to Home

Five years ago, St. John’s Lutheran Church-Somonauk faced a challenge—they wanted to actively engage in mission work, but had no avenue to do so. They formed a Mission Committee, and under the guidance of congregant Tom Martin, their programs are thriving, with LSSI as a key beneficiary of their efforts.

After several projects, the group’s passion was truly sparked following a tour of LSSI’s Nachusa campus. Members used their individual talents to do hands-on work at Nachusa, including painting and building. They hold offerings for the site and run drives for household items children on campus need.

“We came to appreciate how much LSSI does from the tour,” Martin said. “When it comes to children, there’s certainly a connection there [with St. John’s].”

St. John’s also has begun partnering with Redeemer Lutheran Church-Park Ridge to provide ministry to inmates at Stateville prison and participating in LSSI’s Storybook Project, collecting books and recording incarcerated fathers reading to their children.

St. John’s members now contribute to over 15 mission projects with time or tithing. When a large project is underway, nearly half of the congregation is playing a role.

“Inside every one of us there is a spirit that wants to help people,” Martin said. “I believe that we have helped change some lives out there, and that’s rewarding in itself.”

If your congregation is interested in providing mission work with LSSI, please contact Susan Greeley at Susan.Greeley@LSSI.org or 847.635.4617.
Dear Friends,

Although not officially the New Year, late August and September often feel like the start of a new beginning. Kids are returning to school, and colleagues have taken their summer vacations, returning to work with renewed energy.

You’ll find an abundance of energy in the classrooms of LSSI’s three Head Start programs located across Chicago that are profiled in this issue of Inspired. Research shows that Head Start and Early Head Start programs offer a wealth of educational, economic, and health benefits. Our programs help put children and families on paths to success.

With Veterans Day in November and the 148th anniversary of LSSI’s founding in October, we pause to think of the service, dedication, and sacrifice that help make our organization and our country stronger. We’ve profiled LSSI programs that support veterans. And as we do in every issue, we highlight special volunteers and congregations who are integral to LSSI, like St. John’s-Somonauk, which has become a steadfast partner in our mission.

We’re pleased to recognize John and Mary Satter, who have been true, longtime friends to LSSI. Once you read about their commitment, I’m sure you’ll agree they are deserving of LSSI’s 2015 Amicus Certus—True Friend—Award. John served on the LSSI Board from 1977 to 1980 before becoming LSSI General Counsel for 21 years. From his years of serving his home church—St. Peter’s, Dwight—as well as the Central/Southern Synod, John brought a keen legal mind and a Lutheran perspective to his work.

“One of the highlights of my career was being general counsel for LSSI,” he said. “It was only about 10 to 15 percent of my legal practice, but I really felt like I was doing something for other people.”

“It was easy to get swept up in the mission,” Mary said. Along with a core group of other volunteers, she was a founding member of the Women’s Network of LSSI in 1982, co-chairing the group’s first fashion show in 1985. The Women’s Network has raised more than $3.3 million for LSSI programs and services.

In addition to their contributions of time and talent, the Satters have been steadfastly generous with their philanthropic support to LSSI.

“I am enamored of LSSI,” said Mary, who is impressed by the organization’s staff and their love of the work they do. “A lot of people have stepped up to the plate to help quite a few people.”

LSSI owes its history—and sustainability—to countless individuals whose generosity and commitment have enabled the organization to meet the changing needs of the people it serves. John and Mary Satter exemplify this dedication and will be honored on Nov. 21 with LSSI’s 2015 Amicus Certus—True Friend—Award.

As always, we remain grateful for your partnership. Through your generosity and commitment, you help us initiate many new beginnings for the children and adults LSSI serves.

In Faith,

Mark A. Stutrud
President and Chief Executive Officer
David Novak Named Vice President of Advancement

LSSI is pleased to welcome David Novak, JD, as its new Vice President of Advancement and Executive Director of the Cornerstone Foundation. Novak is an accomplished fundraising leader with over 25 years of professional experience in the field. He worked at LSSI from 1999 to 2004, serving as the Cornerstone Foundation Executive Director. He has extensive experience in the Lutheran community as well, serving in senior leadership roles with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) Foundation. Most recently, Novak was Director of Gift Planning at Valparaiso University. He is a member of the Illinois Bar with specialization in estate planning, trusts, and wills.

EVENTS...

Saturday, Nov. 21, 2015
34th Annual Amicus Certus Celebration
“A Harvest of Blessings”
Honoring John and Mary Satter
Cocktails at 6 p.m. and Dinner at 7 p.m.
Union League Club of Chicago, 65 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago
For more information, call 847.635.4600 or email Barb.Hailey@LSSI.org.

Join the Good Shepherd Society

LSSI is a constant, stable presence in the lives of our clients. By joining the Good Shepherd Society, a group of donors who give to LSSI monthly, you can be a constant, stable presence in LSSI’s mission.

It’s easy to join the Good Shepherd Society and become an automatic monthly donor. Simply visit LSSI.org and click on “donate now” at the top of the page. There you can elect to have automatic payments made by credit card. You may stop these automatic payments at any time you choose.

You can also arrange to have your monthly gift deducted from a savings or checking account. For more information contact Linda Wilberg at 847.635.4638 or Linda.Wilberg@LSSI.org.

(continued from page 1)

Chairperson. She benefited from classes offered there as well as taking two child development classes for free at a local community college that were made available to interested parents.

“They get an A+ for working with parents,” said Heard. “They make you feel like you have a voice.” She credits the Austin Town Hall Head Start program for preparing her son for kindergarten this fall and fueling his excitement for learning.

LSSI’s Head Start Child Care Centers also are designed to meet specific needs of children and families. For example, at the Rogers Park Child Care Center, staff support parents from the multicultural neighborhood in which it sits, including residents of Indian, Pakistani, and Latino backgrounds, as well as a large Muslim community.

“We serve Halal food so that the children can have nutritious meals that support their culture,” said Kim Shelton, Director for LSSI’s Head Start programs. “We also have bilingual staff who speak Urdu and Spanish.”

All of LSSI’s Head Start programs are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.