“Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.” —LUKE 6:38

Inspired

Therapeutic Foster Care
Achieving Success

- In 2017, LSSI started its pilot Therapeutic Foster Care program to support children who have experienced severe trauma, and whose behavioral issues prevent them from being placed in traditional foster homes. With locations in Aurora, Chicago, and Rockford, the program is proving successful in equipping these children with skills to succeed.

“Kids are graduating from this program already... and there’s a difference,” said Marnie Jamison, a Therapeutic Foster Parent, who compared the program with her experience in traditional foster care. “I don’t see the same results. I see better results.”

“The evidence based program is important because it shows validity that this has worked,” said Maya Maclin, a Team Leader.

An example of one program strategy is a “school card,” where teachers record children’s behavior. With this added motivation, one child received the top score in his honors algebra class, and another received the “Most Improved Student” award at his school.

Therapeutic Foster Care is a team effort. The foster parents meet weekly with clinicians and caseworkers...
**VOLUNTEER/DONOR PROFILE: LINDA MILLER**

**Mission Affirms Personal Commitment**

Behold the power of the church bulletin board—it’s how Linda Miller first learned about LSSI over 20 years ago. Miller, of Rockford, served as Chair of LSSI’s Cornerstone Board until June 2019 and is a current member of LSSI’s Board of Directors.

Miller probably didn’t foresee the level of her involvement to LSSI then, but she was drawn to the mission. “My husband [Keith Syfert] and I liked what we read and wanted to support an organization that served our local area and state,” she said.

While it was specific programs in her community that drew Miller to support LSSI, as her involvement grew, she has witnessed the statewide impact of the organization on communities across Illinois.

“My desire to be part of LSSI is confirmed every time that I learn about the services they provide and the extent to which team members will go to ensure that the client’s whole person is being recognized,” Miller said. “Many people in our state have needs for healing, justice, and wholeness.” Whatever program LSSI is providing and wherever it’s located, people’s needs are being met by the organization, she added.

In addition to her volunteerism and current philanthropy, Miller and her husband have designated a legacy gift in their estate plan to benefit LSSI’s ministry. Of their overall support, Miller stated, “We believe this is our Christian duty.”
Celebrations and Milestones

Summer is a glorious time of fun and relaxation—end of school year celebrations, graduations, and vacations abound.

At LSSI, we have our own celebrations and milestones to celebrate. Our Therapeutic Foster Care Program is in its second year of a five-year pilot. As the cover story of this issue of Inspired shows, we’re seeing great success with this evidence-based program. Staff in Aurora, Chicago, and Rockford have enjoyed seeing children graduate from the Therapeutic Foster Care program, and more are on the horizon.

Part of the verse from Luke 6:38 featured on this newsletter’s cover seems so appropriate: “for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.” With our Therapeutic Foster Care Program, LSSI is intervening earlier with children to help them and their families develop the tools and skills needed to succeed and thrive.

LSSI is one the largest providers of foster care services in Illinois—we hope that our experience from the Therapeutic Foster Care pilot can influence new or different approaches to services for children in Illinois’ child welfare system.

Every day, LSSI is reminded of how giving back, whether as a church, through the dedication of our program staff, or as a donor/volunteer, results in success for the people we serve across Illinois. Thank you for your support that allows us to continue our 152-year-old mission!

Sincerely,

Ruth Jajko
Vice President, Children’s Community Services
Saturday, October 12, 2019
38th ANNUAL AMICUS CERTUS CELEBRATION
Union League Club of Chicago

LSSI will honor Eric and Jodie Draut with the True Friend Award. The event’s Keynote Speaker is award-winning television journalist Elizabeth Vargas, who The New York Times has praised for her “intellectually brave” reporting. Vargas’s 2016 memoir Between Breaths: A Memoir of Panic and Addiction details her struggles with anxiety and alcohol, and tells a powerful story of healing and coping.

For more information, including corporate sponsorship, please contact Mariah Heinz at (847) 635-4656 or Mariah.Heinz@LSSI.org

Family Mental Health Programs Supported

More than 200 guests enjoyed boutique shopping, lunch, and a rollicking performance by Felix and Fingers Dueling Pianos at the Women’s Network of LSSI’s Spring Fling held on April 27 at the Westin Chicago Northwest. Nearly $30,000 was raised for LSSI’s Family Mental Health Programs. Save the date for next year’s event, to be held on Saturday, May 2, 2020.

who provide training and support. They also receive daily check-in calls. The team is available 24/7 to talk to therapeutic foster parents if needed.

LSSI assesses the level of service children with psychiatric, substance use, medical and/or developmental concerns need on a six-point scale. Six indicates highest need, and the average score for children accepted into LSSI’s program is 5.1. The average score for children leaving the program is 2.5. To date, 83% of children have successfully exited the program.

Brenden’s* parents were arrested for drug use. He was nonresponsive even to his name and ate only off the floor. Through Therapeutic Foster Care, he developed the basic life skills he needed while his parents invested in the program’s family therapy components and other support resources. Ultimately, they were reunited as a family.

Such success stories inspire staff and foster parents alike, who experience them firsthand, and continue providing the time, effort, and unconditional love the children require. “When my child started, she was afraid,” said Jamison. “Through the program, she’s much more secure.”

*Name changed to protect confidentiality

Veronica Campbell, a 2019 Valparaiso University Calling and Purpose in Society (CAPS) Fellow, wrote this article.