



**Deb Cervantes, Counselor/Case Manager (left) and Skip Dettman, Director of Outpatient Services.**



**“Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.”**

MATTHEW 25:40, NRSV

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

## **Sterling Addiction Treatment: Serving the Whole Community**

A lot of positive energy radiates from behind the doors of LSSI's Addiction Treatment Center-Sterling, where staff focus on the whole person and not just a client's addiction. LSSI's whole-person approach has resulted in new services being added, such as a substance use treatment program with the Whiteside County Jail as well as new mental health services, including individual counseling and at-risk counseling at five area high schools.

Positive energy is needed to provide the many services available at the Sterling office. Programs serve six counties and include: outpatient substance use treatment; mental health services; partnerships with the federal probation office, Whiteside County Jail, and the Whiteside County State's Attorney's Deferred Prosecution Program; counseling and educational services at five area high schools; Narcotics Anonymous (NA) and Alcoholics Anonymous; and internships for Sauk Valley Community College's Nursing Program to name a few.

Skip Dettman, Director of Outpatient Services, said part of the expansion of programs is the result of being in tune

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# True Friend Honorees Invest in Human Potential

Through volunteerism and philanthropic support, Beverly Moody, and her late husband, Richard, have been involved with Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI) for 35 years. LSSI's 2021 True Friend Award will honor Beverly and the life of Richard at the 40th True Friend Celebration on Thursday, Oct. 7.

Beverly joined the LSSI Board of Directors in 1986. Board members were encouraged to attend the True Friend Celebration (then called Amicus Certus Gala). Richard attended with her, and it was the start of their commitment. Richard joined the Cornerstone Trustee Board in the 1990s. Their involvement gave them an up-close look at how LSSI serves people across Illinois.

"LSSI's multifaceted programs fulfill for us the teaching of Jesus from Matthew 25:40," Beverly said. "Although we may

not personally be feeding the hungry, welcoming strangers, or visiting prisoners, we share our abundance with an organization that does many of these things."

The Moodys were particularly passionate about several of the organization's programs, including Children's Community Services and Prisoner and Family Ministry. They've supported other Lutheran nonprofit initiatives locally and worldwide through the ELCA.

Beverly is a member of the Women's Network of LSSI, which has been fulfilling on many levels. "Lasting friendships have been formed with caring women interested in learning about LSSI, supporting its programs, and advocating its mission," she said. "LSSI is a ministry that invests in human potential. Does not everyone hope to help with this goal for humankind?"

## BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

### Comfort Bags Provide Caring First Step

When considering the complex and multi-level process of recovery, staff at LSSI's Addiction Treatment Center-Sterling know firsthand that people often start recovery with little more than a resolve to find sobriety. This is especially true for adults leaving jail for residential treatment. To assist, the office provides comfort backpacks to individuals seeking treatment. The bags include sweats, underwear, personal care items, Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Narcotics

Anonymous (NA) references, and a journal. This simple gesture demonstrates committed support.

"When people come to seek help or are exiting jail, they most likely have nothing," said Skip Dettman, Program Director at LSSI's Addiction Treatment Center-Sterling. "When we provide them with the backpacks, even though it feels small, they're so grateful."

In distributing the comfort bags, LSSI collaborates with

*"Even though it feels small, they're so grateful."*

—SKIP DETTMAN, PROGRAM DIRECTOR

local law enforcement and Sauk Valley Voices of Recovery. Philanthropic contributions from Trinity Lutheran Church, Lanark, and others, help with funding to purchase the bags and contents.

LSSI's consistent initiative to fill needs in the community is not only a service, but gives individuals the chance to put their lives back together with support by their side. "At LSSI, we treat the whole person," said Deb Cervantes, Case Manager/Counselor at Sterling. "I think it's important to treat the community as a whole, too."

**Case Manager/Counselor Deb Cervantes with a comfort backpack given to clients starting treatment following time in jail.**





Beverly and Richard Moody, 2017



## TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, LANARK

### Historic Connection to LSSI

Over the years, Trinity Lutheran Church, Lanark, has contributed to Lutheran Social Services of Illinois, supporting its programming and the people it serves.

Not surprising for a Lutheran church, the congregation learned about LSSI at a potluck dinner presentation about the organization's children's services in the community. Since 1980, Trinity Lutheran has expressed confidence in

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

### • Building Community

LSSI has a commitment to treat the whole person. It's an approach that is embedded into all of our services, and this issue of *Inspired* truly highlights that dedication.

When we consider the needs of the whole person, we need to look at the community at large. LSSI has strong partnerships with a wide variety of community organizations to support the needs of our clients. Whether it's referring people to other highly regarded programs, creating our own, or partnering with another provider to help residents of our communities, LSSI has the needs of each individual we serve as a priority.



Our behavioral health services in Sterling show our whole-person care model in action. Neighbors recovering from substance use needed a Narcotics Anonymous program; they suggested it, and LSSI provided the space for this client-run support. How can an individual start a treatment program if they don't have clothes to wear or the dignity of freshly brushed teeth? The comfort bags we distribute provide that caring first step.

In Chicago, we're partnering with Aunt Martha's Health & Wellness to provide primary health care services at one of our sites currently offering mental health services. This approach will provide whole-person, whole-family care.

Behind many of LSSI's programs are volunteers and donors like Beverly Moody and her late husband, Richard, whose steadfast dedication helps support our commitment to whole-person care.

We remain grateful for all that you do to help fuel the success of the children, adults, and seniors we're privileged to serve across Illinois.

Sincerely,

Ruth Jajko  
Vice President,  
Network Performance and Growth

*Emily Gaus, a 2021 Valparaiso University Calling and Purpose in Society (CAPS) Fellow interning at LSSI, contributed content to this issue.*

# Partnership Increases Access to Primary Care and Behavioral Health Services

LSSI, one of the largest statewide providers of social services, and Aunt Martha's Health & Wellness, one of Illinois' largest Federally Qualified Health Centers, are collaborating to increase community access to primary care and behavioral health services in Chicago's Portage Park and Belmont Cragin neighborhoods.



LSSI to seamlessly connect its behavioral health clients to Aunt Martha's primary medical care, nursing, and psychiatric services onsite. The partnership further offers community residents expanded options for primary health care and behavioral health services in one location.

"Through our evidence-based approach to whole-person care, coupled with our shared mission to build well-being of individuals and communities, we are confident our partnership will impact the community positively," said

Aunt Martha's staff will provide services for youth and adults at LSSI's Portage Cragin Counseling Center on Chicago's northwest side.

This will allow

Raul Garza, President & CEO of Aunt Martha's.

"Health and human service providers have a responsibility to improve the health and well-being of their community," said Mark A. Stutrud, President and CEO of LSSI. "This integrated approach provides whole-person, whole-family care."

*As of this writing, renovations to add the primary health care offices at the Portage Cragin Counseling Center were being completed.*

[STERLING SERVICES, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1]

with the community, including various partnerships like the Partnership for a Healthy Lee County, and listening to the clients themselves. "Clients came to us saying 'Do you think you could help us with this?'" she said. "The director of our local homeless shelter called to tell me there were women in need of mental health services. That's how it evolves."

Dettman is particularly proud of LSSI's Substance Use Treatment Program at the Whiteside County Jail. "They get started with their treatment, and by the time they get to parole, they're ahead of the game," she said, adding many of these clients begin using outpatient treatment.

"People underestimate the population with drug and alcohol problems in this area," said Deb Cervantes, Counselor/Case Manager. "We have the opportunity to create a foundation of support."

[CHURCH PROFILE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3]

LSSI's programs through individual philanthropic support from congregation members and the church itself.

Trinity Lutheran's support and volunteer efforts have funded LSSI's Addiction Treatment Center-Sterling, purchasing comfort bags for clients (see story, pg. 2). These provide individuals being released from jail and starting treatment with basic-need items, and are distributed in partnership with local law enforcement agencies.

Some of the church's deepest connections with LSSI involve the historic Nachusa Lutheran Home, located southeast of Trinity Lutheran, where the organization still has offices.

"We like giving back to LSSI because they put the money back into the clients and the services," said Dave Shaulis, current treasurer of Trinity Lutheran Church. "Our congregation is small, but made up of really good givers."

Thursday, Oct. 7, 2021

## 40th Annual True Friend Celebration: Traveling Route LSSI

This year's statewide celebration will feature a conversation with travel author and TV personality **Rick Steves**, who will explore the idea of travel as a spiritual act. The True Friend Award will honor **Beverly Moody and the life of Richard Moody**. Event proceeds benefit Children's Community Services at LSSI. Virtual and in-person opportunities for participation will be available.

For questions or sponsorship opportunities, please contact Mariah Heinz at 847.635.4656, Mariah.Heinz@LSSI.org, or visit [LSSI.org/Friend](http://LSSI.org/Friend)

