



Lutheran Social Services

OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA



Grace at Work

The LSS online newsletter

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Greetings!

Welcome to Grace at Work, our semi-monthly email newsletter, designed to keep you up to date on LSS news, events and service program highlights. We will continue to publish our print newsletter three times a year, in October, February and May. If you can't see the graphics in this email, please change your browser to HTML mode.



Rick Steves at St. John's in Sacramento: 'Travel as a Spiritual Act,' October 20

Don't miss guidebook author and PBS' "Europe Through the Back Door" host Rick Steves when he comes to St. John's Lutheran Church in Sacramento for a reception and lecture on "Travel as a Spiritual Act" Oct. 20.

The evening is a benefit for the Rwandan School Project and LSS of Northern California. [Click here](#) for information on how to get tickets to this not-miss event!

HUD Gives Award to LSS' 16th Street Housing Project in Sacramento

In July, the U.S. Housing and Urban Development Agency awarded LSS a two-year contract totaling \$628,059 for a new permanent housing project.



This new development was designed for 40 individuals who qualify as chronically homeless, meaning they have been homeless for at least one year, or four different times in three years, and they also have a disability. LSS partnered with Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee (SHOC) and Pacific Housing on project outreach and development/property management.

Case management services are to be provided by LSS' Building Bridges program, which provides supportive services for vulnerable communities when needs are identified.

LSS Welcomes Judith Parker,

New Director of Development



Judith Parker

Judith Parker has been appointed Development Director for Lutheran Social Services of Northern California. She started July 26, and will be responsible for all fund development activities for LSS, including annual campaign, major gifts, capital campaigns and planned giving.

She says her job is to focus on LSS programs-"how we make a difference"-and communicate that to donors and potential donors.

"My philosophy is every donor counts, whether it's \$25 or \$25,000, or whether someone donates backpacks to youth or donates a church," says Parker. "They all play a key role in sustaining and growing Lutheran Social Service Services."

One of her mandates is to diversify our funding base, since 90 percent of LSS of Northern California's funding comes from government, "and we're experiencing cutbacks." She plans to reach out to corporations and other organizations and build stronger relationships with all donors.

"Congregations and individuals in the Lutheran community are an important part of our support, but it's still important to reach out."

Parker has dedicated more than a decade to managing fundraising campaigns and major donor programs for nonprofits, including the Mt. Diablo Region YMCA, the California Symphony and The Wellness Community, which became the Cancer Support Community. She grew up in Minnesota and lives in Walnut Creek with her husband and two children. Her daughter is 18 and starting at Diablo Valley College. Her son is 19 and a sophomore at UC Berkeley.

Parker started out her career as a social worker, "so for me it is like coming full circle," she says, "and or it allows me to have an understanding and passion for the important work LSS does."

If you are interested in learning more about how you can help with LSS fund raising, please contact Parker at jparker@lssnorcal.org.

Saybrook Resident LaThomas Holmes Cooks Up a New Life Thanks to LSS

"Serving Inspiration" is the motto of Plates Cafe and Catering, where LaThomas Holmes works, and serving inspiration is something she does well.

LaThomas is an alumna of St. John's Shelter for Women in Sacramento, where the cafe is located. She became homeless after she was laid off in the fall of 2008 from her job as a nanny/personal chef and couldn't pay her bills. In February of this year, Holmes and her 4-year-old daughter, Morgen, came to live at Lutheran Social Services' Saybrook Apartments.



Chef LaThomas Holmes

While a resident at St. John's, LaThomas asked the onsite chef if she could volunteer in the kitchen. She graduated from the California Culinary Program in 2002 and had worked in several Bay Area restaurants and at the Edible Schoolyard, founded by renowned chef Alice Waters at Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School in Berkeley. It didn't take long for the St. John's chef to recognize her talents and excellent work ethic, and she soon was offered the paid position of sous chef. LaThomas helped open the cafe in late May and, while busy creating her culinary delights for the cafe and assisting with catering at many locations, she moved into a supervisory role.

Saybrook Permanent Supportive Housing Program provides a compassionate, integrative and comprehensive support system for families. Families can stay indefinitely, while the program emphasizes the goal of becoming independent. Families entering the program must be a family unit, with at least one child under the age of 18. As families enter the program, they are given case management services and assistance to purchase household necessities to give them a fresh start.

Case managers col



Holmes, left, prepares food with co-workers in the Plates Cafe kitchen.

laborate with public and community providers and advocate with and for their clients. Services are provided on-site, allowing case managers the opportunity to interact with families and to provide immediate crisis intervention and counseling. Additional services include family counseling and Employment Readiness

and Support Services. On-site childcare provides professional licensed daycare, kindergarten readiness, early literacy programs, and parent education. These services have helped 85 percent of Saybrook families to remain in housing six months or more, achieving stability and self-sufficiency.

LaThomas likes to share her good fortune, so she recruited six women from Saybrook for the cafe, four of whom she knew from her time at St. John's, and two recent acquaintances. She tells "her girls," as she calls them, that it is "a good chance to make connections for the future. You can get exposed to many different aspects of the

business and many different people and that makes it easier to get a job. But, you have to make a good impression and present yourself well."

LaThomas has lofty goals. "I want to continue in this position to gain more experience and make more connections. I plan to go on to be a head chef somewhere and eventually open my own bakery. But, I want to have plenty of experience first so that I can succeed on my own."

Her dream is to own and operate a cafe there with a primarily French theme, where she would offer cuisines of other cultures as well, and she has her sights set on a bakery in downtown Sacramento that has sat empty for more than a year. She is already putting together a business plan and wants to take business classes in the near future.

Homelessness Prevention Program Gets High Marks in Progress Report



The June 2010 Client Progress Report for the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) summarized the program's progress in assessing, enrolling and housing homeless and about-to-be homeless households throughout Sacramento County.

Three core HPRP providers-Lutheran Social Services, Volunteers of America and the Salvation Army-rapidly transition participants to long-term housing stability with short-term assistance. As the report shows, the program crossed the 1,000 client threshold in June.

Accomplishments cited in the report:

HPRP is expected to assist up to 1,800 families and individual households over a two-year period (ending September 2011). To date, 1,028 client households have received housing assistance since the start of the program in October 2009, with 368 households leaving homelessness and 660 stabilizing with prevention services. Of all clients assessed to date, 80 percent have been deemed eligible for the program, including 75 percent of homeless families with children; 66 percent of homeless households without children; 94 percent of prevention families with children; and 86 percent of prevention households without children.

Sacramento is also one of the communities featured in a new report from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, which highlights strategies for combining Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Emergency Funds with HPRP, as Sacramento is doing.

In addition to describing how LSS uses TANF funds in conjunction with HPRP, a section of the report titled "Working With Third Parties to Help Cover Added Costs" cites the One Day to Prevent Homelessness campaign (see the story about the campaign in the May 2010 issue of LSS' Ventures newsletter) as a good example of how to raise private donations as the local match for TANF funds.

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Or contact LSS Development Director Judith Parker at (925) 825-1060, x15 or jparker@lssnorcal.org.

CC Uniting!

Join us for a no-frills awareness and fundraising dinner for nonprofit food and housing providers in in Contra Costa County, **including LSS.**

Sunday, October 17
Creekside Church
444 Fig Tree Lane
Martinez, CA 94553

*The **KIWANIS CLUB OF WALNUT CREEK** is the sponsor of this event. To RSVP, or for more information, contact **Pete Schmitt**: akapete2@comcast.net.*

Wish List for LSS Housing Residents

New full-size sheet sets and comforters, pillows, sets of pots and pans, sets of bath towels, kitchen towels, knives, cutting boards, sponges, pairs of mugs, plates, cups, bowls, utensils, small microwave ovens

To donate, contact LSS Deputy Director Nancy Nielsen at (415) 581-0891 x123

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*Your gift today can help
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[Click here to support LSS now!](#)

Try phrases like: dramatic savings, clearance, overstocked, reduced r

Lutheran Social Services provides support services and compassionate guidance to people who are vulnerable because of homelessness, mental illness, drug addiction or disaster. We help individuals and families stabilize their lives and become self-sufficient.

LSS currently serves more than 2,575 clients in Sacramento, San Francisco, Contra Costa and San Joaquin Counties. Its programs include money management services, case management in transitional and permanent supportive housing sites, case management and housing services for emancipated former foster care youth, disaster preparedness training, and long-term disaster response services in the event of a local disaster.

LSS is a member of Lutheran Services of America, which has 300 membership organizations nationally.

Thank you for your generous support of LSS.

Sincerely,



Barbara Droher Kline, President and CEO
Lutheran Social Services of Northern California