

## *Grace at Work* October 2022

### **CEO Corner** **LSS Staff Make All the Difference** Carol Roberts, PhD



In October of each year, LSS holds a Staff Appreciation Event. Before the rise of COVID-19, these events were held in person and included a particularly fun activity. (Not too long ago, we broke into small groups and participated in a scavenger hunt.) This year, we held our event via Zoom. For a growing regional organization like LSS, this actually is beneficial. It's more cost-effective, and we can all attend. And we do. It's also a lot of fun. In addition to ice breakers and updates from our program regions (Inland and San Francisco/Coastal), we also hosted CourseHorse, which challenged our individual and collective trivia knowledge with a little bit of fun and healthy competition.

The event welcomes new staff who started beginning last October (when we held our last event), and this year, we are celebrating 32 new staff. In fact, we have 9 new positions this year, staffing our new programs—from the new college initiative at both colleges of the Los Rios Community College District to our rapidly growing CalAIM program. We also honor those who have done the work of LSS for 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 17 and 20 years. We have five staff who have served the community from LSS for 20 years or longer—Brenda Santiago, Program Manager for Lavender Courtyard and Senior Connect; Sylvia Marquez, Senior Caseworker in Money Management; Glenn Gravlin, Information Systems Manager; John Paul (JP) Soto, Deputy Director of San Francisco Programming; and Amy Lawrence, Program Manager for Saybrook and Building Bridges. All these individuals are dedicated to the LSS mission of ending homelessness...for good, contributing their experience, wisdom and compassion in all that they do.

At LSS, we also encourage our staff to take care of themselves—take their vacation time, pursue their hobbies, laugh and enjoy themselves. In fact, our Housing Retention Specialist Trina Menses leads a monthly Zentangle session open to any staff member. The Zentangle Method is a guided meditative doodle of patterns that helps individuals relax and focus only on the art movements in front of them. Zentangles have been proven to be mentally therapeutic and can release stress and anxiety. Well-rested and refreshed staff make all the difference in how we serve our community.

Dedicated and skilled staff are vital for LSS to fulfill our mission, and we are truly blessed with those who join us. I am honored to work with them.



# Who's My Neighbor?

## Homelessness in California



LSS CEO Carol Roberts and Development Director Jerry Metzker are hosting a virtual workshop in partnership with the Sierra-Pacific Synod of the ELCA. ***Who's My Neighbor? - Homelessness in California*** will provide basic information about the history, causes and experiences of homelessness in Northern California. We will talk about: What is homelessness? Who is experiencing homelessness? How does this happen? How do people exit homelessness? How do people remain housed after they have experienced homelessness?

We also invite our workshop participants to share their experiences of homelessness, launching a conversation about what the Northern California community can do to end homelessness in our region...for good. The workshop takes place on Tuesday, October 18th from 6:30-7:30pm. The workshop will be hosted on Zoom:



### Who's My Neighbor? Zoom

Meeting ID: 840 4053 8448

Passcode: 360627

## LSS Staff and Administrators Are Sharing their Expertise

LSS of Northern California administrators and staff are frequent presenters and participants in a variety of panels and workshops, sharing their knowledge and expertise on homelessness and how LSS programs are successfully addressing this crisis in our region.



On September 29, LSS welcomed regional executives from partner Dignity Health and national executives from our CalAIM partner HealthNet at Lavender Courtyard in Sacramento, where Deputy Director Kate Hutchinson, CalAIM/Housing with Dignity Program Manager Samantha Earnshaw and Case Manager Jessica Hubbard-Volkman talked about the program and shared stories of successes. Only a week earlier, Samantha joined our CalAIM partners and California Health Care Foundation to provide information about the CalAIM program at the

Putting Care at the Center conference in Sacramento.

College Program Manager Jason Sitar and Case Manager Arianna Barajas participated on a panel and presented at the Blueprint for Success conference held on October 3-4. John Burton Advocates for Youth, an LSS partner, holds this conference for professionals with a passion and aptitude for supporting foster youth to achieve their higher education goals. Sandra Hamilton Sloane, LSS Board Vice-President and Dean of Student Services at Shasta College, also presented.



On October 11, Development Director Jerry Metzker presented at our Lutheran Church Missouri Synod partner's California-Nevada-Hawaii District's annual pastor's conference, and in the past months has been speaking to several churches to increase their engagement in serving our vulnerable neighbors.

And, as noted above, on October 18, CEO Carol Roberts and Development Director Jerry Metzker are leading a virtual workshop on homelessness in Northern California in collaboration with our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Sierra-Pacific Synod partner.

Each of these activities shows the great skill and dedication LSS staff have to the vulnerable people we serve, and to the mission we have of ending homelessness...for good.

## **LSS expands our college initiative in the Los Rios Community College District**

College students are considered some of the most hidden of all those experiencing homelessness and food insecurity. Most of them maneuver under the radar by couch-surfing, showering at the campus athletic center, spending hours in the library and often sleeping in their cars. This summer, The Los Rios Community College District reached out to LSS to address this unacceptable experience for their students and with four other college housing and supportive services programs currently running, LSS was happy to partner.



**LOS RIOS**  
**COMMUNITY**  
COLLEGE DISTRICT

Now, students at both American River College and Sacramento City College (in Sacramento) can access housing navigation services and housing case management, including connections to community resources, through this new community college housing services program.

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# *Help Make Your Neighbor's Holiday Special*



## **Join the LSS Holiday Gift Drive!**

**[www.lssnorcal.org/holidaygiftdrive](http://www.lssnorcal.org/holidaygiftdrive)**



**LSS**  
of Northern California

Ending Homelessness. For Good.



Please join us in making this year's holiday season a bright one for your vulnerable neighbors. We are looking for donations of gifts for children and adults, knitted scarves and hats, holiday candy, hygiene items, yo-yos, activity books for adults, wrapping paper and handmade holiday cards. Please contact us at [development@lssnorcal.org](mailto:development@lssnorcal.org).

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### **Our Mission**

To promote stability and honor the dignity of those we serve by providing supportive housing services that lead to self-sufficiency.

**DONATE**



Lutheran Social Services of Northern California | 1465 Civic Court, Suite 810, Concord, CA  
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