

# Grace AT WORK



**Lutheran  
Social Services**  
OF NORTHERN  
CALIFORNIA

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

## Our Mission

Responding to the biblical mandates of compassion and justice, Lutheran Social Services of Northern California affirms the inherent worth of all people and strives to prevent and alleviate human suffering.

August 2014

## I Can Do This!

As Courtney explains, her parents were “in the life” and that led her and her twin brother to foster care when they were six months old because their drug addict parents could no longer provide care. An uncle, who was a pastor, became a foster father when she turned four. Courtney stayed with him until he passed away. At seventeen, she found herself depressed and struggling to graduate high school. She was also homeless.

Courtney bounced around among friends; however, they often had sinister motives. The friends who offered help coerced her into selling herself to pay her way – and, sometimes, theirs. One day she woke up and said, “Enough!” That is when she reached out to a high school counselor she trusted. Today, she volunteers to speak out against human trafficking, sharing her story with law enforcement, hospital staff and other youth. Courtney is also a college student.

Courtney became a client of LSS in the fall of 2013. She was already employed and on her way to success. She had been living in a shelter but found it difficult because of the shelter’s rules. Having her own apartment has strengthened her independence. The social workers who referred Courtney to LSS didn’t judge her.



LSS Case Manager Jonathan and Courtney

They saw her talent, even when she couldn’t. They told her, “You can do this!” And she believed them.

Courtney’s case manager, Jonathan, says, “Courtney only leaned on the program for as long as she needed to. She’s a go-getter and I see a bright future for her.”

Jonathan is right about that. Courtney is taking the next step in her journey and has accepted a paid position to continue the work she currently volunteers for. Community outreach and organizing and public speaking are skills that she is blessed with and she plans to continue to use them to change the world. Go get them, Courtney!

## Book Drive!

Our Youth Simply Giving Back (YSGB) program, developed and run by our former foster youth, is running out of books. We are asking our community partners to collect books in their organizations or congregations.

For help in organizing a book drive, please contact Julie at [jkennedy@lssnorcal.org](mailto:jkennedy@lssnorcal.org) or 916.453.2900 x 105.

Let's work together to empower our youth to 'simply give back' to their community!



## SAVE THE DATE: Phoneathon 2014 is Coming Up!

On Wednesday evening, September 17<sup>th</sup>, LSS will be conducting our annual phoneathon between 5:30-8 PM. Our board of directors, staff and volunteers will be calling to thank you for your past support and to ask you to pledge your support for 2014. We hope you'll be home to take the call and that you'll consider making a gift.

*Together, we are changing lives!*



### Friends and Supporters –

Fall is proving to be busy for LSS! One of our clients, Courtney, is moving on to a new city, job and college. In spite of her rough beginning and rebellious teenage years, Courtney's future is looking up. She has overcome human trafficking and now stands up for others who still struggle. LSS case managers see the strength in those we serve. We also help them see it within themselves. Courtney has always shone from within but now others see her bright future too!

There are a variety of ways you can support LSS this fall. Our youth-led *Youth Simply Giving Back* social enterprise is picking up steam. That is the good news! However, our inventory of books is running low. An easy way to help is to

organize a book drive in your congregation or organization. Our youth and staff would sure appreciate it!

On page three, you'll read about our *Artists in Residence* program. Located at our Folsom Dore site, the Artists in Residence group has spruced up the common areas with their works of art. They have also created miracles by sharing their talents with one another. It is a sight to behold. We invite you to join this mission!

Finally, we ask you to Save the Date to receive a special call of gratitude from an LSS board or staff member on Wednesday, September 17<sup>th</sup>. Mark your calendar and answer the phone so we can say "Thank you for your support."

## A message from the CEO...



LSS Housing Services Program Manager, Kimberly, enjoying art.



The Garden Mural began as a patchwork quilt of ideas from the Artists in Residence and is representative of the new life of the community.

## Artists in Residence

Residents wanted to feel more at home in the public spaces at Folsom Dore so they began decorating on a whim. What started as an interior decorating project took on a life of its own and morphed into a resident run art gallery. Several residents regularly get together to keep the 'Artists in Residence' project going. It has blossomed because of the ownership and motivations of our residents!

The creations are transitioning into mixed media, including sewing, knitting, painting – and everything in between. Clients are developing leadership skills at the same time they are honing their creativity because they are sharing what they know with other clients.

Please consider supporting the Artists in Residence. See our wish list and contact Julie at 916-453-2900 x 105 to help our clients continue to inspire one another!

### Artists in Residence Wish List

- Fabric Glue
- Buckles
- Zippers (metal not plastic)
- Cotton canvas panels - size 8x10
- Transfer paper (for printing on fabric)
- Thread
- Buttons
- Socks
- Felt
- Gift cards for staff to purchase supplies



Residents prepared their own hors d'oeuvres for the Artists in Residence Gallery opening.





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Social Services

**OF NORTHERN  
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## Your Choice dollars make a difference at LSS!

### *What are Thrivent Choice dollars?*

Choice Dollars is a part of Thrivent Choice. What's that? It's a grant program that lets Thrivent members recommend where Thrivent Financial distributes some of its charitable outreach funds.

Eligible Thrivent benefit members are designated Thrivent Choice Dollars based on their qualifying insurance premiums, contract values and Thrivent Financial volunteer leadership. Those members can then direct Thrivent Choice Dollars to organizations enrolled in the program. Members eligible to participate in Choice Dollars receive a letter in the mail.

Learn more about Thrivent Choice at Thrivent.com/ThriventChoice or contact LSS at (916) 453-2900 x 105.