

■ Sometimes All It Takes

Lakeisha had it under control. Her pregnancy was progressing smoothly, and though recently estranged from her husband, she maintained a stable home for her three school-aged children and loved her job as a home health aide. She enjoyed writing, and in her spare time had penned two novels, three cookbooks, and 25 screenplays over the years. She and the kids gave back to the community by cooking and delivering meals to homeless people in their community.

Then Lakeisha experienced a series of personal disasters in close succession. She developed gestational diabetes, and due to COVID-19, she lost her job. She now required intensive treatment for her diabetes and, unable to work, had no way to pay for household necessities, pay her rent or feed her children. She was hospitalized at Stanford Hospital in Palo Alto and feared that Child Protective Services would place her children in foster care. Back home in Stockton, the apartment manager assumed Lakeisha had abandoned her apartment. She terminated the lease and had the family's belongings hauled away.



*"I've worked my whole life,
so this situation turned my
world upside down.
I prayed a lot,"
said Lakeisha.*

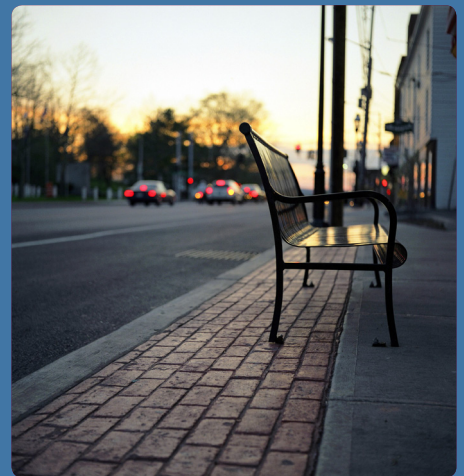
Her estranged husband and one of her grown sons, David, stepped in to help. The husband stayed with the children at the nearby Ronald McDonald House until the baby was born. Then the men pooled their limited resources to pay for a small hotel room in Palo Alto for Lakeisha and the children.

As she regained strength after the baby was born, Lakeisha sought guidance to get her family settled again. She needed good healthcare for her baby and wanted to be closer to son David, who lived in Sacramento. She was referred to LSS of Northern California, which sent a case worker to meet with Lakeisha.

The caseworker, Brenda, set about finding an apartment in a safe neighborhood in the tight Sacramento housing market. Then she helped the family create a place

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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.

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■ CEO Corner: Reaffirming Our Commitment



While LSS's mission has always placed us squarely in the intersection of poverty and racism, these past few months have been especially challenging. The disproportionate number of COVID-19 deaths among people of color have affected us deeply. We share the outrage over the murders of George Floyd, Breonna

Taylor and so many others.

Along with our board of directors, we join in solidarity with our brothers and sisters in affirming that racism and discrimination of all kinds must end. The LSS legacy is guided by a commitment to social justice, human rights, and caring compassion towards all, especially our neighbors who are marginalized and discriminated against for their race, religion, sexual orientation,

behavior or economic status. We are taking a long, hard look at our own policies and culture to ensure that we can continue our legacy.

We believe that people who have experienced homelessness can rebuild their lives if they have a safe and stable place to call home. With that belief in mind, and with you at our side, we're working harder than ever to ensure people can remain safely housed. And we are more committed than ever to advancing equity and social justice.

Your support these past few months has been a blessing. Working remotely and providing those we serve with the extra support needed during these times have significantly impacted our budget. We appreciate the extra support many of you have shown through additional donations or sharing a portion of your federal stimulus check with LSS. **Thank you and stay safe!**

—Carol Roberts, Ph.D., CEO

■ Sometimes All It Takes (continued)

to call home by arranging for clothing, furniture, new beds, and other essentials to replace many of the items Lakeisha's former landlord discarded. She connected Lakeisha and her children to relevant services, including food and healthcare. And she checks in regularly with the busy mother to ensure Lakeisha has the support she needs as she rebuilds her life.

Lakeisha gets emotional recounting those challenging months. "This is such an amazing program, and that Brenda is feisty! She has stood by me until I can get back on my feet."

Brenda, who has worked for LSS since 2002, takes great pride in her work and staying in touch with her clients, even after they leave LSS. She speaks enthusiastically about Lakeisha, "She is so focused, especially given she has a newborn, and really wanted stable housing. She is the most self-sufficient of my current clients."

Lakeisha will soon 'graduate' from the LSS program. She has received a Housing Choice Voucher from Sacramento County, which will provide rental assistance. In addition, the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency will offer her assistance in buying a home when she is ready to do so. Lakeisha counts her blessings, "Good people get in bad predicaments, and all they need is a little help to get their life together again."

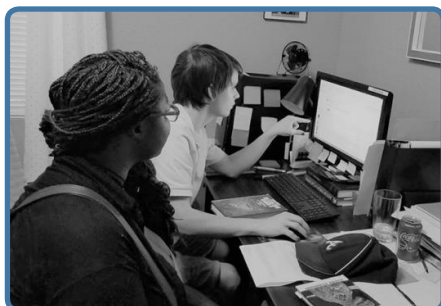


Brenda, a long-time LSS case manager, displays a plaque presented in appreciation from Lakeisha and her family.

■ Creating a Stronger Foundation for Youth Success

An estimated 4.2 million youth are homeless any given night in the United States, and about one-third of those youth are in California. Their experiences are shocking and their future prospects grim. They are more likely to drop out of high school, be unemployed, incarcerated and be dependent on public assistance.

For several years youth have arrived in LSS programs with less education and fewer of the skills needed to live independently and achieve lifetime self-sufficiency. This disturbing trend caused us to look at how we could better assist our youth clients in the achieving happy, healthy and productive lives they seek to create for themselves. We embarked on a redesign of our youth supportive housing programs, made possible by a generous grant from the Walter S. Johnson Foundation.



LSS youth client, Myisha, and staff member learn new software to catalogue used books for A Novel Idea (formerly Youth Simply Giving Back), a social enterprise to provide job readiness and skills training.

The result is the new **LSS Youth Education & Employment Initiative**, a structured yet supportive approach that offers achievable goals and a clear pathway for youth to build a happy, healthy and productive life. The pilot phase rolled out this spring in Sacramento and Stockton thanks to several insightful and generous individuals and funders: the Walter S. Johnson Foundation, Del E. Webb Foundation and Anthem Blue Cross.

Learn more about the LSS Youth Education & Employment Initiative by visiting www.LssNorCal.org/WhatWeDo or calling Stephanie Casenza, Development Director, at 925.825.1060 x15 or scasenza@lssnorcal.org.

BECAUSE OF YOU

Visit our website, www.lssnorcal.org/GetInvolved, to peruse our donor recognition pages and the LSS by the Numbers fact sheet for 2019-2020.

■ Doing What It takes

Both staff and clients alike donned protective gear to stay safe as the COVID-19 pandemic forced everyone to live differently and to do their jobs differently. Staff packaged paper goods, cleaning supplies, groceries and produce and delivered to the residents at our housing sites.



We continued to house clients, even during the toughest shelter-in-place months.



Staff created cost-effective plexiglass barriers to maintain everyone's safety on check disbursement days in the Money Management Program at 191 Golden Gate in San Francisco.



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Become a **Partner for Good**

Monthly donations are an easy way to help us end homelessness for good. A gift of \$15 per month helps to purchase everyday essentials like hygiene products, food, cleaning supplies, etc.

Become a **Partner for Good** today and we'll send you an insulated mug or all-purpose bag as a thank you!



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STAY CONNECTED



How the CARES Act Affects You

On March 27, 2020, the House and Senate passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. Here are three big changes that you should know.

- **Cash Gifts** – Individuals who do not itemize on the tax return **may deduct \$300** in cash donations above-the-line.
- **100% Charitable Deduction Limit** - For 2020, gifts of cash to charity are deductible to 100% of adjusted gross income. It does not have to be for Coronavirus relief and cannot be gifts to donor advised funds or supporting organizations.
- **Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) Waiver** – For 2020 only, you do not have to take the RMD, although you can still use IRA funds to make a qualified charitable distribution (gift) if you are at least 70 1/2 years old.

Check with your financial advisor for more information on these important tax benefits.

visit us on line at www.lssnorcal.org