



LSS LIVE



Lutheran Social Services of NE, www.lssne.org
Serving New Englanders in all six states
MMann@LSSNE.org Advent, Year C, 2009 Issue VIII

LSS NEWS: SOMETIMES, ADVOCACY REALLY DOES WORK!

Back in October, LSS and the New England Synod announced that the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) in Washington, D.C., had, without warning, terminated funding beyond age 18 for an especially vulnerable group of refugee children: undocumented youth who have been officially determined to be “abused, abandoned, and neglected.” And while we can’t know how many of you actually responded by contacting your congressional representatives and officials at ORR, we do know that we got great news on Oct. 22:

I just received the good news from ORR that they are planning to resume placing children with approved I-360s into URM programs if they are nearing their 18th birthday. This is really good news for these children and a huge relief to us. Olivia Faries, LIRS

Thanks to those of you who advocated on behalf of refugee children. This is a demonstration of the fact that our joint advocacy and public policy efforts are paying off! If you do not already receive the “DO JUSTICE!” newsletter of LSS and the New England Synod, please put yourself on the mailing list of this publication that will let you know how you can help us give voice to the voiceless! Email Bob Kay at bkay@lssne.org

LSS NEEDS: QUILTS & COMFORTERS FOR REFUGEES

Winter extends waaaay past Advent and Christmas, as we New Englanders know! This fact may not be as well known to the many newly arrived refugees whom LSS serves! The majority of them come from warmer climates in Africa or the Middle or Far East, and among the culture shocks they must endure is our weather! Nothing spells warmth and welcome like a handmade quilt! At the end of this year in which LSS has resettled thousands of refugees, we appeal to the many quilting groups in congregations (we know you’re out there!) to please think of the refugees in our own midst who long to be warm again, in both body and soul. Call **Marty Mann at 781.997.0814** for more information.



LSS NEED: DEAF CAMP FUNDING CUT IN MAINE

For several years, LSS in Maine has offered a wonderful summer experience at Camp Sign-A-Watha for 30 persons with developmental disabilities who are also deaf. Eight of those individuals are our own LSS residential clients. The State of Maine – coping no doubt with the same economic downturn that has affected all of us – has decided to cut its annual \$25,000 subsidy for Camp Sign-A-Watha, which means that our eight residents and the others won’t be able to enjoy this wonderful annual experience. If you would like to help, call or email Kirk Schroeder at the LSS Foundation: 781.997.0850 or kschroeder@lssne.org.

LSS STORIES: GRATEFUL FAMILIES RECEIVE CARS DONATED ON OPRAH WINFREY SHOW

You may remember that Rick Hendrick of NASCAR fame donated ten 2008 Chevy Impalas to Good News Garage on "The Oprah Winfrey Show" back in May, to be distributed, at GNG's discretion, to deserving families in New England. After a rigorous vetting process, which included selection committees in each state reviewing scores of applications, these cars are now in the process of being awarded to worthy recipients. Nancy Webster and Kim Yacobucci received the keys to their new cars from New Hampshire Gov. John Lynch. Said Webster, "Without a car to get my grandson to daycare, I will lose my daycare spot; without daycare, I will lose my job." In Burlington, Vt., Katie Carrol and Traci Wright proudly flanked their new cars, which, as one said, "Saved my life." Presentations are still pending in Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut. Stay tuned!

LSS STORIES: GOOD NEWS GARAGE OPENS IN RHODE ISLAND

In a great example of collaboration between LSS and congregations, Good News Garage has opened a program in Rhode Island at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Warwick. The project truly bubbled up from congregations, which identified low cost transportation as a serious need in their communities. The program was officially launched on Nov. 4 at St. Paul, with clergy and laity from several Rhode Island congregations participating. Bernadette Upshur, who had been the first recipient of a GNG car in the Ocean State, attended with her five children. She spoke movingly and humorously about trying to raise a family and do her visiting nursing job without an automobile. Her "new" Suzuki SUV has added hours to her day, hours that had been spent walking or taking public transportation. Parviz Abgarmi received his new car at the event. A former track and field champion athlete and refugee from Iran, Abgarmi and his family fled to Turkey to escape political persecution. He now works as a chef and, thanks to his only slightly dented 1999 Ford Escort, will no longer have to walk to work. And a good thing, too, as his wife is expecting a new baby any day.

LSS NEWS: ED PARKER JOINS LSS FOUNDATION STAFF

Ed Parker, regional Foundation officer, will have special responsibility for the Northern New England states. Parker calls himself a "ministry professional, who combines donor development, vision, leadership and financial skills." He is former president and CEO of the New England Fellowship of Evangelicals.

LSS NEWS: THE WORLD'S BEST POTLUCK! (Jan. 9, Christ Lutheran, Natick, Mass., 11 – 2 p.m.)

If you would like to sample some of the most exotic and delectable dishes of your life, join the LSS Unaccompanied Refugee Minors program for an international potluck on the above date – and bring along your own favorite ancestral food! Christ Lutheran in Natick is at 115 Union Street. Did you know that LSS has the only program in New England that serves refugee children exclusively? Join us to meet some of these remarkable kids and share lunch! For more information call Marty Mann at 781 997-0814 or email mmann@lssne.org.

Heather Feltman, LSS president and CEO, has a special Christmas message for all our friends at the lssne.org website and on YouTube

LSS would love to come to your church in the New Year for an LSS Sunday! Call or email Marty for more information. And may 2010 be for you a year of peace and joy!



To respond to any of these LSS stories, news items or needs, email mmann@lssne.org .

LSS Live is a regular publication of Lutheran Social Services

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