

Partnerships Make All the Difference

LSS is blessed to serve our community in collaboration with others—individuals, churches, government agencies, companies and community organizations that align themselves with our mission to house and serve the most vulnerable in our community—those who have experienced homelessness or are at risk of homelessness. Annually, monthly, weekly, for special events, and as often as is feasible, these partners give of their time, their funds and their hearts. With deep gratitude, LSS salutes the following:

In partnership with the **Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center and Housing Corporation**, LSS provides community activities and supportive services for the residents of Bernal Gateway, an affordable housing residence for 55 families in San Francisco. This partnership launched in 2002, and together, LSS and the Center coordinate several community-building activities including a recent SPAM sushi-making event.



Our SPAM sushi event in SF



Deputy Director Kate Hutchinson & Agency on Aging leads

Agency on Aging Area 4 in Sacramento has taken the lead on the residents' garden at Lavender Courtyard by Mutual Housing, our downtown affordable housing residence for seniors. With a service constituency of individuals aged 60 and older, this organization's employees and volunteers work side-by-side with program residents to raise produce and participate in events.

Every year, **Urban Angels SF** donates backpacks filled with school supplies to our San Francisco students for Back to School and joins LSS and our San Francisco housing partners when we hold special events for our residents, including this year's Father's Day Celebration at LaFenix. Urban Angels SF has a mission to alleviate the tensions of families experiencing homelessness and income instability.



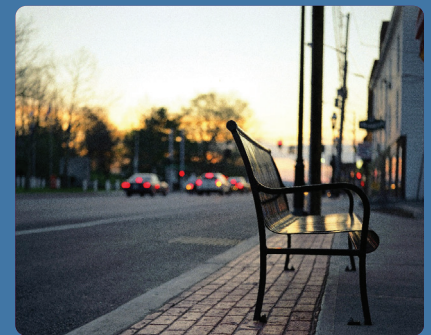
Urban Angels vests for children

LSS also partners with a network of churches (Lutheran and others) in a variety of ways—from conducting drives of move-in or cleaning kits for new residents, holding fundraisers for LSS and sending groups of volunteers to hold events at our supportive housing residences.

These are only a few of the many organizations that partner with LSS to provide those we serve with activities, necessities and comforts that remind them that they are dignified people of value. We honor and salute these amazing partners, which are listed on our website: <https://www.lssnorcal.org/get-involved/partners.html>. ■

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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.

John Burton Advocates for Youth - Emergency Youth Fund



In 2022, John Burton Advocates for Youth (JBAY) launched the Burton Critical Needs and Opportunity Fund and invited LSS to be a partner. This special fund provides emergency grants to vulnerable youth who find themselves in situations that can be detrimental to them, their housing and/or their livelihoods. Emilia (pictured) is a formerly homeless college student at Sacramento State who found herself halted in her ambition to become a photographer. She could not afford her expenses and the equipment necessary for her photography. An award from the Fund enabled her to move forward on her career path in photography and public relations. ■

CEO Corner: State of Homelessness



There is no question that the homelessness crisis in California (and around the country) is not only continuing but is actually growing. All of us can see it—in our cities, along our streets and in our communities and neighborhoods. The most recent Point-in-Time count of individuals and families experiencing homelessness (from 2022) confirmed this by reporting an increase in numbers over the previous count (taken in 2019). Recent studies in California provide even more detail on who is experiencing homelessness and why.

A study of individuals experiencing homelessness conducted by UC San Francisco (released June 20, 2023) revealed that the median age of those experiencing homelessness was 47 years old and the median length of time they were unhoused was 22 months (nearly two years!), with 61% of the individuals surveyed reporting that they experienced homelessness more than once.

More tellingly, the primary cause of homelessness was poverty, a lack of the financial capability to sustain themselves in a home. Housing, the basis of good health (mental and physical), stability and security, was not possible for many families and individuals because it was too expensive. In fact, the National Low Income Housing Coalition reports that California has only 24 affordable and available homes for every 100 extremely low-income households.

Ironically, the UC San Francisco study revealed that 75% of the people surveyed said they live in the same county as where they lost their housing. The people living in our parks, in tents, in boxes or small communities in unused parking lots were our neighbors and remain our neighbors.

Amidst all this, there is hope. LSS of Northern California continues to grow to address the needs of the unhoused in our region. We have started our FY2023-2024 with new funding to provide more housing and more services. This Fall, we will be expanding our services for youth and college students. Over the next few months, we will be a part of opening more supportive housing residences. We are expanding our commitment to housing and serving at-risk, foster and other vulnerable youth.

In fact, the growth has finally reached a point where a third Deputy Director position was necessary, and I am pleased to announce that Jason Sitar has been promoted to the position of Deputy Director of Inland Youth Programs. Kate Hutchinson will continue to oversee our adult programs in Sacramento and Solano counties, as well as programs in Redding, Stockton and CalAIM, and JP Soto remains at the helm of our San Francisco programs. You can read more about Jason elsewhere in the newsletter. Please join me in welcoming him into his new role.

Thank you for all you do to make LSS of Northern California serve our community better and more richly. We look forward to sharing with you how we will continue to address the needs of your vulnerable neighbors until we do, in actuality, end homelessness...for good. ■

Project Glimmer

Founded in 2010 in San Francisco, **Project Glimmer** focuses on providing self-care items for women, from their teenaged years on up. The women LSS serves don't often get the opportunity or items to pamper themselves. Project Glimmer provides kits of skin and hair care products, cosmetics and other treats for women, as well as offers classes and workshops for women of all ages to build their self-esteem. With the partnership of Project Glimmer, LSS is able to provide Mother's Day gifts and other treats to the mothers, aunts and grandmothers we serve. ■



Emeritus Board

LSS is pleased to announce the formation of an **Emeritus Board**. This new body is comprised of former board members and staff who have made significant contributions to the growth and mission of LSS.

"We created the Emeritus Board to provide the opportunity for those who love LSS to continue to serve after they have left the Board of Directors," says CEO Carol Roberts. Our initial Emeritus Board members are Becky Burad, Chrislyn Carson, V-Anne Chernock, Joan Hilse, Nancy Nielsen, Lois Peacock, Crystle Vitari and Mary Wolkenhauer. They held their first meeting in July and are already strategizing on how they can best use their experience and talents to serve the LSS mission. "The energy and excitement of these wonderful people is going to enhance all that we do to serve our community," adds Roberts.

Over the next several months, watch our social media and E-newsletters for introductions to each of these remarkable and dedicated people. ■

The role of the Emeritus Board is to share their knowledge and experience with the Board as well as create team projects that serve our participants.

Jason Sitar – Our New Deputy Director

Carol Roberts, President and CEO of LSS of Northern California is pleased to announce that **Jason Sitar** is our new Deputy Director of Inland Youth Programming.

"The time had come for LSS to have a third Deputy Director," says Roberts, "and with his knowledge and experience, Jason was the perfect choice to take on the direction of our multi-faceted youth programs."

Jason joined LSS of Northern California in 2008 as a Case Manager in the transition aged youth supportive housing program. Through his personal connection with the youth and his expertise, he became the LSS Employment Specialist for four years. During this time, he was instrumental in launching what is now A Novel Idea, the social enterprise online bookstore. In 2013, he was promoted to Program Coordinator, and in 2017, he became the Program Manger overseeing several LSS youth programs in the Sacramento area, including Fostering Future Success (for emancipating foster youth), our growing college initiative, vocational programs and the Prevention & Intervention/Supervised Independent Living Program.

Prior to joining LSS, Jason worked as first a Case Manager and then an Employment Training Specialist at the La Verne Adolfo Housing Program, helping individuals with developmental disabilities obtain work and more satisfying lives. He earned his BA in Ethnic Studies from California State University of Sacramento. Initially, Jason planned to be a special education teacher, but when he started working with the youth vocationally, he realized that this was a better calling and shifted his focus.

"I love working with individuals and teams, seeing their goals formulate and being part of the journey of them accomplishing their goals," he explains. "I love seeing individuals thrive. As Deputy Director of Inland Youth Programs, I hope to continue with providing quality services to the individuals we serve, I hope that we can continue to grow, address new avenues of need and provide services in a way that is authentic to our agency and ourselves."

"The most important thing I want people to know is how proud I am of working at LSS," he concludes, "of the work we do daily, of our staff, our participants and just being a small part of what we do at LSS."

Jason and his wife Meroe are the parents of two boys. He is passionate about soccer - watching, playing and coaching his kids. He also enjoys surfing and music. Jason commenced his new role on July 1, 2023. ■



Learn more on our website:
www.lssnorcal.org/volunteer



Volunteer with LSS

LSS has multiple opportunities for volunteers, including sorting and packing food in our San Francisco food pantries, teaching a craft or activity, cutting hair, helping during Bingo/game night or polishing nails. Small groups of individuals and church groups can assist by collecting bathroom items, cleaning items or making bagged lunches. ■





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Benefit Concert!

September 30 @6:30

Bethel Lutheran Church
1050 Douglas Blvd., Roseville

Free Admission

Donations will be collected to support Lutheran
Social Services of Northern California

Made possible by a grant from Lutheran
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PRESIDENT/CEO

Carol Roberts, Ph.D.

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