



FRONT LINE HEROES

FALL 2020





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TACOMA LUTHERAN RETIREMENT COMMUNITY

November 20, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Tacoma Lutheran Retirement Community (TLRC), a Lutheran Services in America member organization that provides independent and assisted living; short-term stays and rehabilitation; and long-term and memory care for seniors in Tacoma, Washington. The TLRC team has been doubling down on their efforts to sustain a safe, comforting, and supportive environment for all in their care during the pandemic. The staff has also been highly innovative with their use of technology.

Noting a need for clear and consistent communication while social distancing measures are in place, TLRC configured the settings of their Situational Awareness and Response Assistant (SARA), to not only precisely locate residents when they need assistance from trained staff, but also automate alerts to family members in real time. Bingo, a very popular game among TLRC residents, has moved to be virtual.

Staff have also worked with residents to ensure they have access to video calls and window visits, and even held a wedding on-site, allowing a resident to see her granddaughter get married from a safe distance.

Staff have also developed nontechnical solutions for enhancing residents' wellbeing. TLRC was recently featured in Showcase Magazine for its partnership with Forefront Healthcare, which provides delicious, healthy food and dining services to residents. Last month, they put on an event, "Dining Under the Stars," and served residents a four-course meal paired with wine in an outdoor setting. And a few weeks ago, TLRC worked with Eldergrow to bring nature indoors with fall-themed creative therapeutic programming. Residents put together collages of fall leaves, which now hang on the walls within the community.

Lutheran Services in America recently featured TLRC's president and CEO Kevin McFeely in a webinar to discuss ways they have embraced technology during the pandemic to better engage residents and staff. Hats off to Kevin and everyone at TLRC for their incredible work.

LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF WISCONSIN AND UPPER MICHIGAN



Today's Front Line Hero is Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan for their dedication to providing foster children with safe and loving homes.

NOVEMBER 19, 2020

Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan has been serving its community for almost 140 years, growing from a single orphanage in Wittenberg, Wisconsin, into one of the largest health and human services organizations in the Midwest. LSS offers a number of programs and services, including refugee resettlement, housing programs and eviction support, and addiction services, to help families and individuals live a safe and healthy life, regardless of the challenges they face.

Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan is one of the largest non-profit adoption agencies in Wisconsin. Knowing that adoption is a time of major transition, LSS provides counseling services to both children and parents as they prepare to enter a new phase of life. In order to best support both foster children and families, LSS offers training for prospective foster parents and ongoing support and assistance to make the transition as easy as possible. In addition to foster care services, LSS also offers a respite program, which allows families or individuals to provide short term care for children in foster care, ranging from a few hours to a whole weekend.

As we near the end of National Adoption Month, we thank Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan for their dedication to providing loving families for children!

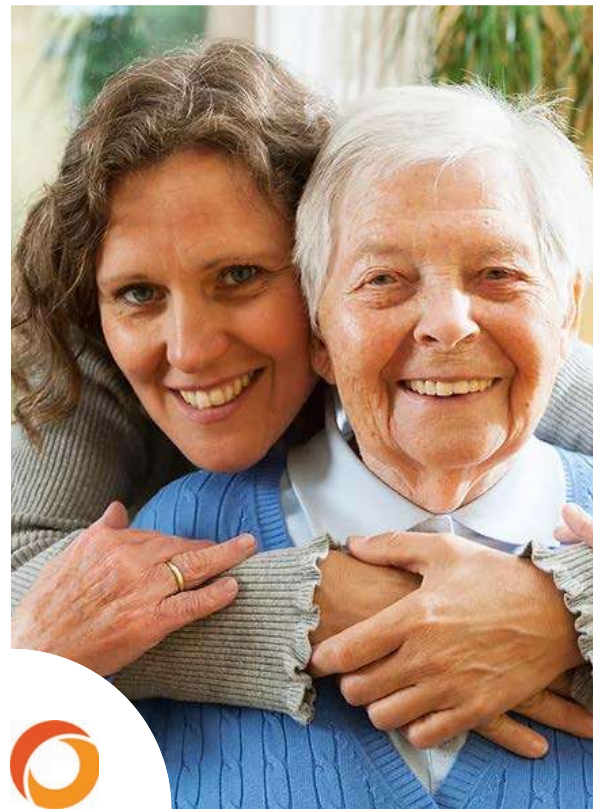
LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF NORTH DAKOTA

NOVEMBER 18, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota for providing support and relief to some of the millions of Americans who assume the overwhelming responsibilities of providing care for others.

LSS North Dakota has served communities statewide for more than a century. Following its mission to bring healing, hope and help to those in need, the organization offers support services focused on family, mental health, and youth, including adoption, family coaching, counseling, domestic violence interventions, and juvenile court diversion.

The Lutheran Services in America network proudly recognizes November as National Family Caregivers Month. LSS North Dakota is helping to provide caregivers with the critical support they need, especially in this challenging era of COVID-19, with its Aging Life Care programs, such as HCBS Respite, and home- and community-based services (HCBS), such as ALC Connect (Remote Technology). HCBS Respite assists family members of those receiving care by providing short-term service in order to deliver temporary relief to the primary caregiver from the stress and demands associated with care. ALC Connect offers support, resources and assistance through the use of SMART technology to reduce isolation and loneliness experienced by older adults and caregivers – a huge benefit for individuals in rural communities.



This month is the time to recognize and honor family caregivers across the United States. Thank you to all caregivers for your commitment to others, and to LSS North Dakota for helping to lift the countless spouses, parents, adult children, friends, and others who take on this meaningful role.

LSS NORTH DAKOTA IS HELPING TO PROVIDE CAREGIVERS WITH THE CRITICAL SUPPORT THEY NEED WITH ITS AGING LIFE CARE PROGRAMS AND HOME- AND COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES.

LTC BOB WORTHINGTON (RET.)



NOVEMBER 17, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Bob Worthington, retired Army officer, Vietnam War veteran, and resident of The Evangelical Good Samaritan Society's Las Cruces Village in New Mexico. LTC Worthington (RET.) received seven decorations for valor, a Purple Heart, and many more awards over his 30 years of military service.

Now an accomplished author, Worthington was recently recognized by The Military Writers Society of America, receiving a Gold Medal for Excellence in Literature for his work, "Under Fire with ARVN Infantry." In his book, Worthington details experiences from his first tour in Vietnam. During 1966-1967, the heart of the Vietnam War, Worthington served as combat advisor to Vietnamese infantry units, and was closely connected to the everyday lives of infantry members, often dining with them and spending time with their families. Remembering his time in Vietnam, Worthington describes it as a "beautiful country" with "beautiful people."

After two tours in Vietnam, Worthington went on to earn an MA in Counseling and Psychology from Northern Arizona University, an MBA from Webster University, and a PhD in Counseling Psychology from the University of Utah. He has served as a clinical psychologist and consultant for the U.S. Army; led research projects on post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD); owned several small businesses; and worked as a tenured professor of psychology, business, journalism, advertising, and writing.

Worthington says he and his wife Anita love living at Las Cruces Village and he is in the middle of writing another book covering his second tour in Vietnam, which he anticipates publishing in 2021.

Thank you for your service, LTC Worthington!

LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF ALASKA

November 16, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Lutheran Social Services of Alaska for offering a helping hand to tens of thousands of Alaskans amid a resurgent COVID-19 pandemic.

The Anchorage-based LSSA provides hope to low-income individuals and families across Alaska, many of whom have to choose between heating their homes, purchasing enough food, or paying for life-sustaining medications. LSSA's goal is to respond to human need through services that sustain and transform lives. The nonprofit distributes more than 700,000 pounds of food annually and logs about 7,000 volunteer hours, allowing it to make a difference in the lives of 40,000 people every year.

As cases of COVID-19 continue to surge nationwide, LSSA is fighting to alleviate the pain many Alaskans are feeling.

With resources running low and debts steadily rising, LSSA is helping those feeling the crunch by providing support with car payments, food for families, and other forms of assistance. The incoming winter has also pressed the need for heating, the costs of which are expected to skyrocket. "The longer we go into this pandemic, the more people are hurting," LSSA executive director Alan Budahl told the Anchorage Daily News. LSSA's Food Pantry offers emergency food items – perishable, non-perishable, and frozen – to individuals and families in need. Additional government commodity boxes are available to older adults who meet age and income guidelines.

Thank you to Lutheran Social Services of Alaska for providing essential resources and comfort to so many people during these challenging times.

LSSA is helping those feeling the crunch by providing support with car payments, food for families, and other forms of assistance.





BEVERLY JONES

NOVEMBER 13, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Beverly Jones, VP and Chief Operating Officer at Lutheran Child and Family Services of Illinois!

Beverly was recently appointed co-chair of the Illinois Department of Child and Family Services' Child Welfare Advisory Committee (CWAC) and will have a leading role advising government officials on programs and policies affecting child welfare across the state. The CWAC also has nine subcommittees that focus on specific outcomes, including child well-being, foster care, LGBTQI diversity and inclusion, and systems of care for families, children, adolescents, and emerging adults.

With decades of experience in social services, Beverly has dedicated the last eight years of her career helping LCFS of Illinois fulfill its mission to nurture and strengthen children and families in need.

With her leadership, LCFS of Illinois impacts the lives of thousands of individuals each year through programs supporting adoption services, foster care, family counseling, adolescent outreach, and extended family care.

Beverly is also an active contributor in Lutheran Services in America's Results Innovation Lab, a cohort of Lutheran Services in America member organizations working together to empower providers with a wider variety of partners in their communities, eliminate silos in service systems and programs, and improve the trajectory of 20,000 vulnerable children in America by 2024.

We are privileged to have Beverly as part of the Lutheran Services in America network working as a front-line advocate for children, youth, and families in Illinois.



Beverly has dedicated the last eight years of her career helping LCFS of Illinois fulfill its mission to nurture and strengthen children and families in need.



PAUL'S RUN

NOVEMBER 12, 2020



Strong interpersonal relationships between residents and staff inspired the tagline “Friends, Family, Neighbors.”

Today's Front Line Hero is Paul's Run, a member of the Liberty Lutheran family of services, for their dedication to keeping seniors safe through the pandemic.

Paul's Run, based in Philadelphia, is a continued care retirement community that offers independent living, personal care, and a team of skilled nurses available to help whenever needed. Residents and staff at Paul's Run enjoy strong interpersonal relationships, so much so that they've inspired the tagline “Friends, Family, Neighbors.”

The coronavirus pandemic hit retirement communities especially hard, and like organizations around the country, Paul's Run was forced to adapt in order to continue providing high-quality care in the safest way possible. Community activities are offered that engage, empower, and entertain participants while maintaining social distancing requirements. In order to minimize residents' need to put themselves at risk, Paul's Run offers an on-site country store, door-to-door meal deliveries, and package deliveries.

Thank you to Paul's Run for your hard work and continued commitment to keeping your residents safe!

LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICE OF MINNESOTA

NOVEMBER 11, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota for its steadfast support for family caregivers and military veterans.

LSS has a proud tradition of providing opportunity to the people of Minnesota. LSS traces its founding to the Civil War and has since become a leading advocate for children and families, people with disabilities, and older adults. Today, LSS serves one in 65 Minnesotans by providing health, safety, and housing support.

As we celebrate Veterans Day, LSS Minnesota offers a broad range of confidential services to members of the armed forces, veterans, and their families, and is a certified Veteran Ready organization. LSS' behavioral health services are committed to providing men and women who serve in uniform effective care for post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety and other challenges. For the past 12 years, LSS has partnered with the state Department of Veterans Affairs to serve veterans through its Casework, Outreach, Referral and Education (C.O.R.E.) program – a first-of-its-kind service that provides free, confidential services statewide.

LSS is also commemorating National Family Caregivers Month, which recognizes the estimated one in five Americans who care for family across the country. LSS' Caregiver Support & Respite services are designed to support both caregiver and family member, allowing the caregiver to recharge while ensuring that older adults remain as active and healthy in their own home as long as possible.



The organization offers coaching and counseling to help caregivers develop their skills, a support network to share experiences, and uses a technology program to help alleviate stress and solve problems.

Thank you to LSS Minnesota for your tireless efforts to serve those who sacrifice so much to serve others!

FOR THE PAST 12 YEARS, LSS HAS SERVED VETERANS THROUGH ITS C.O.R.E. PROGRAM – A FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND SERVICE THAT PROVIDES FREE, CONFIDENTIAL SERVICES STATEWIDE.



SHEPHERD OF THE VALLEY LUTHERAN RETIREMENT SERVICES

November 9, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Retirement Services!

Shepherd has served the Mahoning Valley, OH area for nearly 50 years and offers a continuum of care through independent and assisted living, skilled nursing, rehabilitation, and its "At Home With Shepherd" home health care program. Throughout the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, Shepherd's staff in Boardman, Howland, Warren, Poland, and Liberty, OH have come up with creative ways to help those they serve feel more connected.

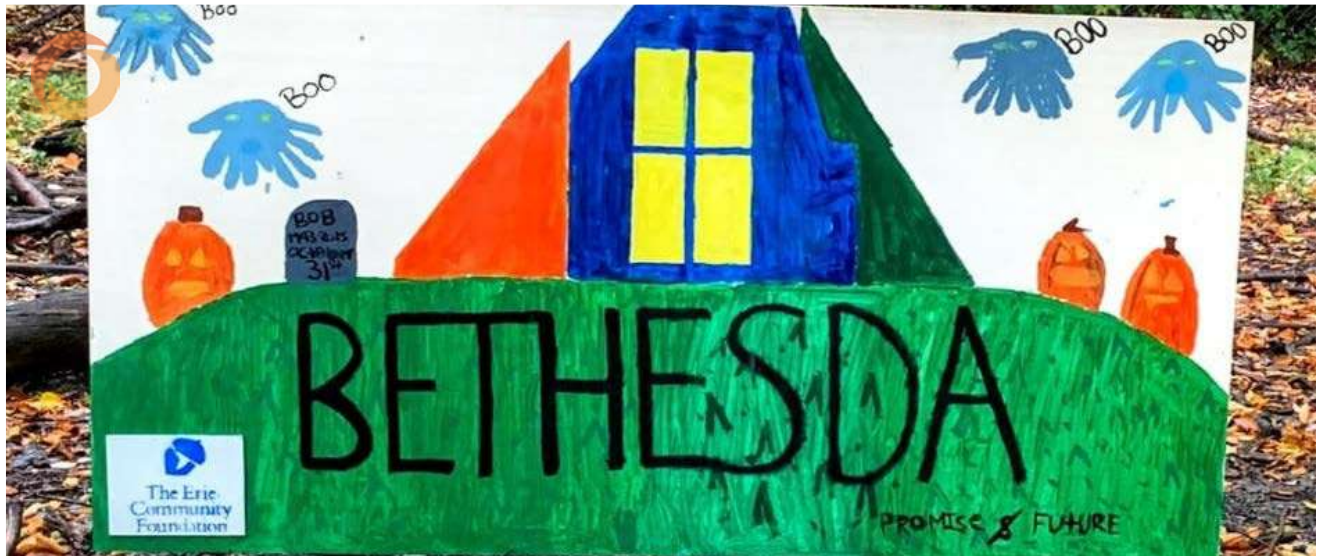
**Shepherd's staff have come up
with creative ways to help
those they serve feel more
connected.**

At the end of September, Shepherd engaged the broader community in a virtual Walk to End Alzheimer's, where participants walked in their own neighborhoods to support loved ones, caregivers, and those fighting the disease. Shepherd has also expanded its reach in recent months to serve more seniors, opening a brand new, state-of-the-art facility that boasts independent living apartments, assisted living and memory care suites, and skilled nursing.

Recently, "At Home with Shepherd"'s staff held "Taco Tuesday," in which they delivered tacos and margaritas for residents to enjoy in their own independent homes. Shepherd has also ensured safe celebration of residents' birthdays throughout the pandemic, recently honoring one of their Howland residents, Jane, on her 100th birthday this September!

All of us at Lutheran Services in America are touched by Shepherd of the Valley's continued commitment to the seniors in their care. Keep up the great work, team!

BETHESDA LUTHERAN SERVICES



Today's Front Line Hero is Bethesda Lutheran Services for their commitment to helping and housing the next generation.

NOVEMBER 6, 2020

Bethesda Lutheran Services, based in Meadville, Pennsylvania, has been dedicated to helping children, youth and families by providing an individualized approach to mental and behavioral health services in residential, educational, and community-based settings for over 100 years.

November is National Adoption Month, and in celebration, Lutheran Services in America will be highlighting members dedicated to foster care and permanency services.



Bethesda's Foster Care & Permanency program aims to provide a safe and supportive environment for some of the over 14,000 children currently in Pennsylvania's foster care system. Bethesda operates a number group and foster care homes and a network of private foster families, all dedicated to providing children with a safe and loving home.

Thank you to Bethesda for their dedication to the children and youth of their community!

LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF NORTHEAST FLORIDA



NOVEMBER 5, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Lutheran Social Services of Northeast Florida, which is working overtime to address food insecurity in Jacksonville.

Lutheran Social Services of Northeast Florida is a trusted pillar in Jacksonville, and has served the community for more than 40 years, motivated and guided by the compassion of Christ to “serve and care for people in need.” One of the ways LSS demonstrates that compassion is through the Hunger Relief program, which was the first initiative operated by the non-profit. Additionally, LSS serves refugees, and provides programming that offers employment services designed to foster self-sufficiency, as well as comprehensive care for individuals living with HIV/AIDS. LSS’s thoughtful programming offers wraparound services to its more than 1,200 clients, including lifesaving medications and care.

Through the COVID-19 pandemic, LSS has adapted its programming to continue to serve the community. The economic downturn has increased the need for food pantry services, so LSS is now offering a mobile food pantry on select days. The mobile food pantry serves individuals in their cars to help prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus, and serves more than 200 households each time. LSS continues to offer its regular food pantry Monday through Friday, and is feeding 10,000 individuals per month.

LSS Executive Director Bill Brim was recently recognized for his important role in the community in the October issue of Riverside Avondale Neighbors. Thank you to Lutheran Social Services of Northeast Florida for your ongoing commitment to serving your community!



CASSIA

November 4, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Cassia for their creativity in using cutting-edge technology to keep families connected during the pandemic.

Cassia provides services geared toward older adults across five states. The Edina, Minnesota-based organization offers independent senior living, assisted living, memory care, skilled nursing care, short-term transitional rehabilitation, adult day programs, and several community-based services.

The COVID-19 pandemic thrust video calls to the forefront of social interaction, especially for residents at senior living facilities such as Cassia's. Cassia, however, decided to up the ante by turning to robotics. Cassia is using a robot nicknamed Beam, which is built with two HDR cameras and an audio system, to take family members of residents on virtual tours of their facilities.

Family members and caregivers have the ability to control the robot remotely, allowing them to visit residents without the danger of exposure.

Thank you to Cassia for helping residents stay in touch with loved ones in a safe setting during the pandemic!

Cassia is upping the ante by turning to a robot nicknamed Beam to allow family members to visit residents without the danger of exposure.





LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

NOVEMBER 3, 2020



Staff boxed items from their local food bank while others packed their cars with supplies and met halfway between Sacramento and Redding – a total distance of more than 150 miles – to distribute essential items.

Today's Front Line Hero is Lutheran Social Services of Northern California!

Since 1992, LSS has helped individuals and families rebuild their lives after experiencing homelessness. Communities of color continue to contend with the ripple effects of systemic racism, and LSS in particular has seen discriminatory housing policies contribute to COVID-19's disproportionate impact on the health, safety, and employment of those they serve. In response, staff have been ramping up their services. The team currently assists 4,000 clients through 30 supportive housing programs across seven counties. Recently, staff in Sacramento boxed items from their local food bank and delivered them to clients, many of whom are highly vulnerable to the virus. More staff packed their cars with supplies and met halfway between Sacramento and Redding – a total distance of more than 150 miles – to distribute essential items such as food, toilet paper, disinfecting wipes, and hand sanitizer.

LSS is also actively collecting and distributing batches of homemade masks to staff and clients, all lovingly crafted by supporters to keep safe employees and those they serve. What's more, the broader team at LSS is now driving donations towards the purchase and delivery of food and essentials – including take-out meals from local businesses – directly to people in need of assistance as they shelter in place.

We applaud LSS' steadfast commitment and wish the team continued success in driving support to communities throughout northern California.



GLADE RUN LUTHERAN SERVICES

November 2, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Glade Run Lutheran Services in Zelienople, Pennsylvania, for reopening in-person services for its Acute Partial Hospitalization program.

With history dating back more than 160 years, Glade Run has evolved to meet the needs of individuals and families across western Pennsylvania with a specific focus on education, mental health, autism, and other unique therapeutic offerings. Last year, Glade Run served more than 4,300 individuals in school, home, and community settings.

Glade Run recently announced it was accepting referrals for its youth Acute Partial Hospitalization program, which is designed to stabilize children experiencing significant psychiatric challenges with the goal of deterring inpatient hospitalization. While the COVID-19 pandemic has forced many providers to offer services virtually for the foreseeable future, Glade Run was pleased to offer a limited number of spaces for in-person services. Children who participate in the program are assigned a teacher who coordinates with the child's home district to gather information about the child's needs, inform the home district of the child's progress in treatment, and develop a plan for transitioning the child back to the home school district.

Thank you to Glade Run for offering this critical service to children and youth!

With history dating back more than 160 years, Glade Run has evolved to meet the needs of individuals and families across western Pennsylvania.



LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF THE SOUTHWEST

OCTOBER 30, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest! LSS-SW gained widespread recognition in 2020 for its innovative Refugee Youth Mentor Program (RYMP). With offices in Phoenix and Tucson, LSS-SW offers robust services for refugees settling in Arizona. RYMP is unique in its focus on the personal and professional development of young people under the age of 25, many of whom are in the U.S. by themselves. The premise is that by pairing young refugees with a mentor to meet one or more self-defined goals, such as learning about a particular line of work or mastering a new skill, LSS-SW helps young refugees grow confident and feel more connected to their community.

In making direct, one-on-one matches, RYMP coordinators ensure each young person gets strong commitment from their mentor.

LSS-SW currently has 70 young people paired in their program and encourages connections to continue even after the mentorship officially ends. The program also continues with proper safety protocols in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. This September, RYMP mentor Erica Prather and her mentee Nazaneen visited the Tucson Museum of Art, snapping the above photo in one of the exhibits.

Nazaneen resettled in southern Arizona after fleeing Afghanistan, and Erica is helping her meet goals to be more involved in the Tucson art community and improve her English. Erica has also been helping Nazaneen learn to drive, something Nazaneen would not have had the opportunity to do in Afghanistan. We are so proud of all of the work Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest is doing to help refugees feel welcome and engaged!





As the fall weather gets colder, refugee and immigrant families are in need of warm clothing. In response to this need, LSSNCA has held cold-weather clothing drives across the D.C. metro area to give to newly-arrived families.

Thank you LSSNCA for your commitment to some of the most vulnerable in our communities!

LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA

October 29, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area for their dedication to helping refugees build a new life here in the United States!

Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area, based in the nation's capital, strives to provide people the chance to have healthy and self-sufficient livelihoods. By providing refugee and immigrant resettlement, workforce development, and migrant support services, LSSNCA provides necessary aid and hope to those looking to rebuild their lives.

By providing refugee and immigrant resettlement, workforce development, and migrant support services, LSSNCA provides necessary aid and hope to those looking to rebuild their lives.

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN COMMUNITIES



Today's Front Line Hero is Immanuel Lutheran Communities, which continues to take steps to expand its reach while maintaining a safe environment for residents during the pandemic.

OCTOBER 28, 2020

Immanuel Lutheran Communities, which is based in Kalispell, Montana, offers a diverse set of services for older adults in need of assistance. From assisted living and memory care to adult day care and hospice, Immanuel Lutheran is committed to creating an extraordinary aging experience for residents and respecting their personal goals.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, Immanuel Lutheran has taken steps to protect residents and staff. Staff members are required to social distance and limit time amongst other staff members to 15 minutes when possible. All staff are required to wear personal protective equipment and are screened before each shift.

Immanuel Lutheran isn't letting the pandemic slow its plans to accommodate Montana's growing older adult population, which increased 40 percent between 2007 and 2017. It broke ground on a collection of cottages for adults age 55 and older in August, and is launching a company to form partnerships and manage communities across the western part of the state. In addition, Immanuel Lutheran is developing home health care services for older adults who are unable to transition to senior housing.

Thank you to Immanuel Lutheran for advancing plans for serving more adults in the future and to its hardworking staff members for keeping residents safe today.

IMMANUEL

OCTOBER 27, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Immanuel, a Lutheran Services in America member organization and retirement solutions provider that empowers seniors throughout Omaha and Lincoln, NE, as well as Des Moines and Council Bluffs, IA. Founded in 1887, this month marks an incredible 133 years of service for the organization!

Evolving over time to address different needs in the greater Omaha, Lincoln, and Des Moines communities, Immanuel now provides care for more than 2,000 seniors through independent and assisted living, long-term and at-home care. In 2020, Immanuel staff have worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic to ensure the wellbeing of seniors in their care, following through on the organization's six CHRIST promises – Compassion, Honesty, Relationships, Integrity, Serve and Teamwork – to develop creative new initiatives that help seniors thrive. Employees at Immanuel work together to combat COVID-19 with activities that address both physical and emotional wellness, including: virtual chats with family members, balcony exercises, outdoor musical concerts, virtual scavenger hunts, door-to-door packages, social clubs via phone, and virtual pastoral care.

This past September, leadership presented Awards of Excellence to six employees for embodying one or more of Immanuel's CHRIST promises and Immanuel's mission of "Christ-Centered Service to Seniors, Each Other and the Community."

All of us at Lutheran Services in America send our heartfelt congratulations on 133 years to Immanuel's talented staff and board. Happy birthday, Immanuel!



IMMANUEL STAFF HAVE WORKED TIRELESSLY TO ENSURE THE WELLBEING OF SENIORS, FOLLOWING THE ORGANIZATION'S SIX CHRIST PROMISES TO DEVELOP CREATIVE NEW INITIATIVES THAT HELP SENIORS THRIVE.

LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF CENTRAL OHIO



OCTOBER 26, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Lutheran Social Services of Central Ohio for spreading awareness about domestic violence throughout the month of October.

LSS Central Ohio serves thousands of people daily across 27 counties in Ohio, providing necessary services to address challenges surrounding food, shelter, safety, and healing. Amongst LSS Central Ohio's offerings are domestic violence services through LSS CHOICES for Victims of Domestic Violence, as well as senior living and health care, housing services through LSS Faith Mission, and its LSS Food Pantries service.

LSS Central Ohio has been active throughout Domestic Violence Awareness Month in making sure men and women suffering from abuse are able to receive the support they need. Its CHOICES domestic violence shelter and hotline recently announced a \$1.5 million, 24-bed expansion of the shelter that opened just last year. The organization recently aired a half-hour "Choose Hope" television program to help people understand intimate partner violence, hear stories from survivors, and learn about the shelter and services offered at CHOICES. LSS Central Ohio also partnered with community leaders to speak out against domestic violence, including Ohio state senator Stephanie Kunze, Columbus City Council president Shannon Hardin, and WBNS television news anchor Angela An. In addition, the organization created a promotional card with information on how you can show your support for survivors and help spread awareness. Thank you LSS Central Ohio for your support of survivors of domestic violence over the past month and for standing against abusive behavior in all its forms.



BETHANY VILLAGE

October 23, 2020

Formerly known as Bethany Home Association, today's Front Line Hero is Bethany Village, a social ministry and Lutheran Services in America member organization that provides long-term care and rehabilitation, full-service apartments, and independent living for seniors in Lindsborg, Kansas. The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically altered day-to-day operations of senior care facilities across the nation, with many families having to forgo in-person visits in order to keep loved ones safe. No stranger to the challenges brought, Bethany Village staff have come up with innovative ways to stem the virus while continuing to provide excellent care.

Under CEO Kris Erickson's leadership, the organization has not only put in place new screening and sanitation procedures to keep residents safe, but also implemented a new resident care assistant (RCA) program, hiring dozens of new employees alongside licensed staff to help with tasks that do not

require professional certification, such as making beds, delivering meals, and escorting residents to and from meals and activities.

To combat isolation, gatherings among residents are restricted, but still permitted with appropriate safety measures in place. Church services continue in the dining room, games and social activities have moved to the hallways, and staff have held several parades where family drive past with greeting signs and words of encouragement, expressing their love from a safe distance. Bethany Village has also enabled friends and family to communicate with residents via video chat and "window visits," where they can see loved ones through the window and chat with them on the phone.

We are so proud to have Bethany Village as part of our network and congratulate Kris and his team on expanding their facility to help even more seniors thrive.

Bethany Village staff have come up with innovative ways to stem the virus while continuing to provide excellent care.





SPIRITRUST LUTHERAN

OCTOBER 22, 2020

Thank you
Domestic Abuse Solutions Team
for all you do!



Today's Front Line Hero is SpiriTrust Lutheran for their dedication to fighting against domestic abuse.

SpiriTrust Lutheran, based out of York, PA, provides over 23,000 people in Pennsylvania and northern Maryland with a number of services, including assisted living, memory support, rehabilitation, and personal care.

Due to the rising rates of domestic violence as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, SpiriTrust had to completely redesign their Domestic Abuse Solutions program, which teaches alternatives to domestic abuse and helps individuals learn to live non-violently. Prior to the pandemic, approximately 30 men a week would participate in an in-person Domestic Abuse Solutions group. Currently, SpiriTrust is averaging 60 men in their weekly virtual groups, and have experienced increased turn-out in their women's groups as well.

Thank you to SpiriTrust Lutheran and their Domestic Abuse Solutions team for their resourcefulness and steadfast commitment to fighting domestic violence!



LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF NORTH DAKOTA

OCTOBER 21, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota for offering mental and emotional support during this time of such grief and loss, and for its commitment to adoptive, foster and kinship parents.

Since LSS North Dakota's founding more than 100 years ago, its services have expanded to meet the changing needs of individuals, families and communities. Today, LSS builds and strengthens communities through support services focused on family (e.g., adoption and family coaching), mental health (e.g., counseling and domestic violence interventions), and youth (e.g., school-based interventions and juvenile court diversion).

At a time when Americans are increasingly feeling socially isolated due to COVID-19 restrictions, the importance of maintaining one's mental and emotional wellbeing has never felt greater.


Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota's and Abound Counseling's mental-health providers will continue to offer therapy services via telehealth options. The organizations are committed to continue accepting new clients on top of existing caseloads. Abound Counseling and LSS of North Dakota are also collaborating with the BE A FOSTER Movement to help provide high-quality podcasts on topics that are of importance to adoptive, foster and kinship parents.

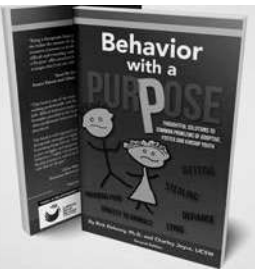
In addition, the groups conducted a virtual book club this summer that focused on the second edition of "Behavior with a Purpose, Thoughtful Solutions to Common Problems of Adoptive, Foster and Kinship Youth," where many foster parents were able to receive continuing education credits through their licensing agency for their participation. Thank you to LSS North Dakota for expanding your services and finding new, engaging ways to support your community.

THE BE A FOSTER Virtual Book Club

Coming January 2021!

The Need is Great • Make an Impact
BE A FOSTER
beafoster.org





#BeAFoster • BeAFoster.org • info@beafoster.org

Book Title
Behavior with a Purpose

Duration • Source
TBD via Zoom

Dates • Times
New dates and times for our signature BE A FOSTER "Behavior with a Purpose"

HALEY LEIS

OCTOBER 20, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Haley Leis, Lutheran Services in America's very own intern!

Haley has worked entirely remote during the COVID-19 pandemic and is providing stellar support to our team. In the past few months, Haley has helped our member engagement team develop programs to address urgent topics affecting health and human services across the country. With her effort, we continue to provide a robust offering of webinars and virtual meetings benefiting our network of 300 member organizations, such as our CEO Summit. We have also been able to grow our Strength & Service series, an interactive gathering that brings together our members and external stakeholders to collaborate on ways to tackle specific issue areas affecting all of us in today's climate. Haley has also assisted our public policy and advocacy team with their communications, thoroughly researching and clarifying outcomes of policy platforms affecting front-line workers and the nonprofit sector as a whole.

Outside her internship, Haley is in her senior year of undergraduate studies at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) in Richmond, VA, where she is pursuing her B.A. in Political Science. Like many other college students, she has had to make the switch to online classes due to COVID-19. In spite of this, Haley remains connected with the VCU community and leads several student organizations on campus. Haley plans to continue her studies after graduation and pursue a master's in public policy.



All of us at Lutheran Services in America are so excited to have Haley on board and know that our work is stronger because of her!



WELLSPRING LUTHERAN SERVICES



Today's Front Line Hero is Wellspring Lutheran Services, which will open Michigan's first recovery high school for teens battling addiction in January.

OCTOBER 19, 2020

Wellspring Lutheran Services' history dates back 125 years. Based in Flint, Michigan, Wellspring helps change lives, build strong families and transform communities through behavioral health, adoption services, affordable housing, assisted living, foster care, and other important services. The organization's behavioral health division emphasizes recovery from trauma, addiction and other challenges that prevent people from living their best life.

While the recovery high school model has been around for more than four decades, Michigan until this point had no such facility, despite the fact that the state has a disproportionately high rate of teen drug and alcohol use with nearly 2,000 students in southeast Michigan alone leaving school (voluntarily or involuntarily) due to use. As the first of its kind in the state, the new Wellspring Academy will provide smaller classrooms, customize workloads to respond to academic challenges, provide recovery-enabling enrichment activities, and create a welcoming environment where teens will be encouraged to be open about possible relapse. For COVID-19 safety reasons, the school will launch virtually in January before moving to in-person classes in September 2021.

Thank you to Wellspring for providing sorely needed support and helping students on their path to recovery.

ADVOCATE AURORA HEALTH



It is undeniable:
**Racism is a public
health crisis**



OCTOBER 16, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Advocate Aurora Health for its fight against racism and its resulting ill effects on the health of communities.

As one of the top 10 health systems in America, Advocate Aurora Health is constantly looking for new, innovative ways to help connect people to their health and create stronger communities. Its reputable doctors, nurses and team members are committed to pursuing exceptional outcomes in several medical fields of study, including oncology, pediatrics, geriatrics, primary care, and trauma care.

Advocate Aurora Health recently joined 38 other health institutions across 45 states and the District of Columbia to formally recognize racism as a public health crisis. The declaration follows a similar statement and call to action the organization issued over the summer with 36 other health systems in the Chicago area. Advocate Aurora Health recognizes that social determinants of health such as poverty, mass incarceration, and joblessness contribute to health inequities in under-resourced communities. It is committed to seeking solutions that improve social and economic conditions, thereby improving health outcomes and closing health care disparities in communities across the country. In addition, the organization is already active in battling the spread of COVID-19 by providing educational programs, services and PPE to underserved communities in order to help flatten the curve.

Thank you to Advocate Aurora Health for your commitment to serving as agents of change in the fight against racial and health inequities!



SEAFARERS INTERNATIONAL HOUSE

OCTOBER 15, 2020



Seafarers International House sends its Port Chaplains to visit with the crew, offer spiritual guidance and provide much-needed comfort.

Today's Front Line Hero is Seafarers International House, which is providing comfort and hope to shipping crews impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Seafarers International House, based in New York City, is dedicated to helping immigrants and refugees avoid homelessness and become settled in the United States. Additionally, Seafarers International House also provides assistance, such as Wi-Fi access and medical assistance, to ship crews stuck in port.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, shipping barge workers have not been able to leave their boats or receive crew rotations. In order to make their time at sea more comfortable, Seafarers International House sends its Port Chaplains to visit with the crew, offer spiritual guidance and provide much-needed comfort during these difficult times.

Thank you to Seafarers International House for the support you provide!

LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF NEW YORK

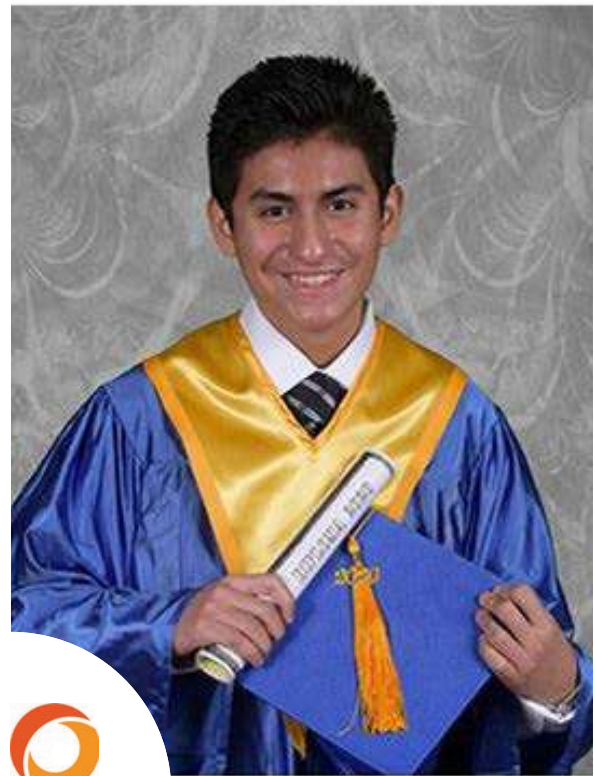
OCTOBER 14, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Lutheran Social Services of New York for its commitment to the growth and success of students at The New LIFE School in the New York City area.

The New LIFE School, which is operated by LSS New York, opened its doors in 2006 with the mission to "educate students in time to make a difference." It focuses on empowering students who have struggled academically, behaviorally and emotionally in a mainstream school setting, helping them to gain confidence, learn valuable academic and life skills, and realize their true potential. The school's dedicated staff works to ensure that each student's individual needs are met through differentiated, hands-on and exciting learning opportunities.

The school didn't allow the coronavirus pandemic to shelve this year's graduation ceremony. Since an in-person event was not possible, the school held a virtual graduation event where about 70 students, family members and LSSNY staff attended.

Valedictorian Dayron Garcia Varo spoke at the ceremony about how he had set goals shortly after entering high school to achieve what he wanted to achieve, including becoming valedictorian. Dayron aspires to become a math teacher and hopes to help students with learning disabilities overcome their obstacles. As he told his classmates, "We are more than test scores. We are students with goals and bright futures."



Thank you to LSS New York and The New LIFE School for expanding opportunities to students and to Dayron for inspiring this latest class of young scholars.

**"WE ARE MORE THAN TEST
SCORES. WE ARE STUDENTS
WITH GOALS AND BRIGHT
FUTURES." – DAYRON GARCIA
VARO**



DR. ANTONIO OFTELIE



OCTOBER 13, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Dr. Antonio Oftelie, the new court-appointed monitor for overseeing the completion of Justice Department-mandated reforms at the Seattle Police Department.

Dr. Oftelie is a Lutheran Services in America board member and the executive director of Leadership for a Networked World, an applied research initiative at Harvard University that works to create transformational thought leadership and learning experiences for executives building the future of outcomes and value. Dr. Oftelie states he is “unapologetically bullish” on the world’s future, and believes that every pressing challenge requires piecing together innovative ideas, from ensuring economic security and expanding civil rights to redesigning healthcare and improving education.

Dr. Oftelie grew up just three blocks away from Minneapolis’ Third Precinct police station, which was destroyed following the tragic death of George Floyd. His personal experience and professional expertise in seeking reforms for complex problems inform his thinking on how the city of Seattle can strengthen the integrity of its police department to ensure public safety and equity for all citizens. Dr. Oftelie believes Seattle has a good foundation for “a modern, effective, efficient and progressive policing organization that needs to just be taken to the next level.” Getting to that next level means:

- Allowing Seattle residents to define “public safety” and ensuring that mission is met effectively, efficiently, and transparently
- Positioning the SPD to become innovative and adaptive to future challenges
- Focusing on the values and culture within the police department, from the bottom to the top

Thank you to Dr. Oftelie for your service to the city of Seattle and our sincerest wishes for your success in achieving these crucial outcomes.



INSPIRITUS

October 12, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Inspiritus for supporting Gulf Coast communities impacted by hurricanes.

Inspiritus has a legacy of care dating back nearly 40 years. Formerly known as Lutheran Services of Georgia and Lutheran Services in Tennessee, Inspiritus seeks to empower those who face challenges and disruptions: children who have been abused or neglected, people with developmental disabilities, refugees and immigrants, individuals affected by natural disaster, and people in low-income communities. Inspiritus delivers programs and services to help individuals and families progress, as measured by four markers of a thriving life: basic needs, stability/safety, community integration, and self-sufficiency/self-determination.

Inspiritus disaster relief teams have been a welcome source of support for coastal Louisiana and Alabama communities who are still recovering from the devastation left behind by recent hurricanes. Response teams started in Lake Charles, Louisiana, following Hurricane Laura before extending support to Alabama communities that were affected by Hurricane Sally. So far, volunteer teams in Alabama have completed at least 66 home assessments and 50 job requests, including tree work and debris removal. Many of these volunteers opted to work in both locations for several weeks at a time. Many homeowners are so appreciative of their work that they offered the teams home-cooked meals as a token of their gratitude. With Hurricane Delta adding further damage to the region over the weekend, the work of Inspiritus' volunteers feels more vital now than ever.

Thank you to Inspiritus and the volunteers on your disaster relief teams for providing crucial support to families and communities.

So far, volunteer teams in Alabama have completed at least 66 home assessments and 50 job requests.



LUTHERAN FAMILY SERVICES OF NEBRASKA

OCTOBER 9, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska, which is celebrating its community's diversity and supporting local students.

LFS of Nebraska's mission is to express "God's love for all people by providing quality human care services that build and strengthen individual, family and community life." It lives out that mission through services for children, including early intervention programs, community services, particularly for refugees, immigrants, and survivors of human trafficking, and behavioral health programs. These services impact more than 45,000 people each year across Nebraska, as well as in parts of Iowa and Kansas.

LFS of Nebraska recently announced that it received a \$3 million gift from Coyner and Donna Smith to establish a scholarship fund designed to support high school seniors from low-income, minority families.

Recipients will receive \$25,000 toward their college education, regardless of the school to which they have been accepted, and must maintain at least a 3.4 GPA to renew the scholarship each year. The Coyner and Donna Smith Diversity Scholarship's purpose is to help students who face barriers due to their socio-economic status, and by supporting those students' higher education aspirations, help break the cycle of poverty that affects families for generations. The application process launched this fall, and a selection committee will fund at least five students in the first academic year.

To learn more or apply, visit www.lfsneb.org/smith-diversity-scholarship.

Thank you to LFS of Nebraska and to the Smith family for your commitment to empowering students in your community who have been marginalized!

The Coyner and Donna Smith Diversity Scholarship's purpose is to help students who face barriers due to their socio-economic status and help break the cycle of poverty that affects families for generations.



LUTHERAN LIFE COMMUNITIES

OCTOBER 8, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Lutheran Life Communities, which is honoring its front line staff with Friday celebrations and t-shirts.

Lutheran Life Communities is passionate about providing high quality residential and healthcare options for seniors and their families. Its person-centered approaches are designed to meet seniors' specific needs, including personalized short-term rehabilitation and memory care. Lutheran Life Communities has five campuses with locations in Illinois, Florida, and Indiana, and its Lutheran heritage and core values of compassion, excellence, learning and innovation, and stewardship impact those campuses on a daily basis.

Lutheran Life Communities is grateful for the professionals who work faithfully to live out the mission, and it demonstrated that gratitude by celebrating the staff on two consecutive Fridays, (September 25 and October 2). Team members across Lutheran Life Communities campuses recognized each other's hard work, and wore t-shirts that celebrate the strength, unity, diversity, and community throughout the organization.

An individual team member at Lutheran Life Communities who will be recognized for his excellent work is Reverend Cory Wielert, Corporate Director of Spiritual Care. Rev. Wielert will accept the Gutenberg Award from the Chicago Bible Society on behalf of chaplains who are serving in senior living communities. Chaplains' ministry is so important, perhaps now more than ever amid the COVID-19 pandemic, and we are grateful for their service to seniors.



Thank you to Lutheran Life Communities for your staff's incredible commitment to seniors, and for recognizing their hard work and resiliency during the pandemic!

TEAM MEMBERS WORE T-SHIRTS THAT CELEBRATE THE STRENGTH, UNITY, DIVERSITY, AND COMMUNITY THROUGHOUT THE ORGANIZATION.

THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN GOOD SAMARITAN SOCIETY



Greg Wilcox (far right) pictured with cousin Mark Jerstad and grandparents Amelia and August "Dad" Hoeger."

Today's Front Line Hero is the Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society, who is innovating to provide high quality wound care through the pandemic.

OCTOBER 7, 2020

The Society provides care in 26 states, including services for seniors, home health care, and rehab/skilled care. Through the COVID-19 pandemic and the precautions it has required, the Society has been intentional not to lose sight of clinical priorities, and successfully implemented telemedicine in areas such as wound care and behavioral health. The Society purchased 1,000 iPads at the beginning of the pandemic so skilled nursing facilities could engage in virtual visits, allowing patients to stay home and avoid exposure to the virus. Other adaptations in recent years, such as cushioning wheelchairs, are also helping ease skin conditions for wound care patients, and preventing the need for additional in-person care.

The Society's staff is wholly committed to the well-being of patients, and an excellent example of commitment to service is Greg Wilcox. Greg retired this week after 32 years of service at the Society, and most recently served as VP of Mission Integration and Senior Pastor. One of Greg's greatest joys was helping provide inspiration and resources to those who live and work in the Society so they could experience God's love. Greg is deeply rooted in the history and mission of the Society, as his grandfather founded it in 1922. Greg, you are so appreciated and will be deeply missed!

Thank you to the Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society for your ongoing commitment to patients' well-being!



TWIN LAKES COMMUNITY

October 5, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Twin Lakes Community, which is committed to lifelong learning for seniors.

Twin Lakes Community is a Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) located in Burlington, NC. It is one of the largest and longest-established CCRCs in the state, with a campus of more than 500 independent living residents, as well as residents in other levels of care. Twin Lakes' aim is to help seniors live with real purpose, and its mission is to celebrate the progression of life and dignity by empowering everyone in the community to live, work, and serve to their fullest potential.

In alignment with Twin Lakes' mission, the community is committed to lifelong learning, and views its slogan, "Live, Learn, and Grow" as a way of life. Twin Lakes offers a wide range of lifelong learning programs, including its partnership with Elon University, which is just minutes away.

LIFE@Elon is the university's lifelong learning program, offering non-credit educational opportunities to people ages 50 and older. The program includes classes on a variety of subjects, including arts, literature, history, politics, and sciences, that are taught by retired Elon faculty, as well as other local educators. The LIFE@Elon classes are well attended by the Twin Lakes Community residents! Classes start this month, and all the content has been transferred online to keep seniors in the community safe from the coronavirus.

Thank you to Twin Lakes Community for offering safe and meaningful opportunities for seniors to engage in lifelong learning!

Twin Lakes Community views its slogan, "Live, Learn, and Grow" as a way of life.





MOUNT OLIVET

OCTOBER 2, 2020



The COVID-19 pandemic unfortunately meant the annual state fair outing was cancelled to protect residents from the virus, but that did not stop the Mount Olivet staff.

Today's Front Line Hero is Mount Olivet Careview Home, which brought the Minnesota State Fair to its campus.

Mount Olivet provides a continuum of care for children and seniors through its day services and residential facilities. The facilities are located in Minneapolis, MN, and Mount Olivet Careview Home offers high quality personalized skilled nursing and long-term care. In addition to nursing care, residents at Mount Olivet Careview Home have access to therapeutic recreational programs, chaplaincy, social services, and culinary services to meet each individual's needs. The staff are truly committed to fostering a loving and caring environment that serves the whole person.

The Minnesota State Fair is a highlight each year for many Minnesotans, and the Mount Olivet Careview Home residents typically enjoy an annual outing to the fair. The COVID-19 pandemic unfortunately meant the annual state fair outing was cancelled to protect residents from the virus, but that did not stop the Mount Olivet staff. They brought the state fair to the Mount Olivet campus! The residents loved the sidewalk entertainment, such as jugglers and performers on stilts, as well as visits from barnyard animals and state fair themed foods.

The Mount Olivet residents have more upcoming events to look forward to, including accordion players, Pumpkin Pie Day, and a Halloween costume contest. We can't wait to see the pictures! Thank you to Mount Olivet for your creativity, and ensuring that your residents have much to look forward to throughout the pandemic!



KNUTE NELSON

OCTOBER 1, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Knute Nelson, whose therapy dog Molly is bringing joy to seniors.

Knute Nelson serves seniors in West Central Minnesota, and is known in the region for its quality care provided with compassion. Its mission is to enrich the lives of those served, and offers many lifestyle options and services for seniors, including independent and assisted living, home care, outpatient services, and technology to help seniors remain safely in their homes. There is always something happening at the Knute Nelson locations to help residents and patients find meaning in every day, such as lunch bunches, chair yoga, and baking days, to name a few.

A favorite member of the Knute Nelson family is therapy dog Molly. Molly regularly makes the rounds and visits with the residents, who are excited to see her.

When Molly comes to visit, the Knute Nelson staff plans all sorts of dog themed activities, and encourages the residents to think about their favorite four legged friends and the bond that humans share with their dogs. What a wonderful and safe way to bring a smile to seniors' faces during the pandemic! Not only is Knute Nelson committed to its residents, but it is also committed to serving the community, at large. Last week, Knute Nelson hosted a Drive-Thru Picnic, and served more than 100 meals to the local community. Knute Nelson's generosity is certainly appreciated.

Thank you to Knute Nelson for your dedication to seniors and your community through the pandemic!

There is always something happening at the Knute Nelson locations to help residents and patients find meaning in every day.





DAKOTA BOYS AND GIRLS RANCH

September 30, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, which is fostering a "culture of caring" on its campuses.

With locations in Fargo, Bismarck, and Minot, North Dakota, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch is a Christ-centered residential treatment and educational center for children. The Ranch provides psychiatric therapy and trauma-informed care, and walks alongside children in their healing and development. Children receive high quality education while at the Ranch at the on-campus Dakota Memorial School, which specializes in creating a successful learning environment for children with special psychiatric and behavioral needs.

The Ranch recognizes that the pandemic has been difficult for everyone, so the staff is working extra hard to spread joy.

A favorite tradition at the Ranch is Songwriting Saturday, during which the children write songs that are performed by a local musician. The residents get to dance and enjoy hearing their very own songs.

The staff is also intentional about fostering a "culture of caring," and pointing out when those moments of caring occur. Residential Supervisor Stacey Swigart shared her experience, noting that examples of caring occur every day at the Ranch, such as when residents teach each other games and draw pictures for the staff, and when the staff show love to the residents by checking in and caring deeply about their wellbeing. Small actions make a big difference!

Thank you to Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch for going the extra mile to care for children and spread joy through the pandemic.

Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch staff intentionally foster a "culture of caring."

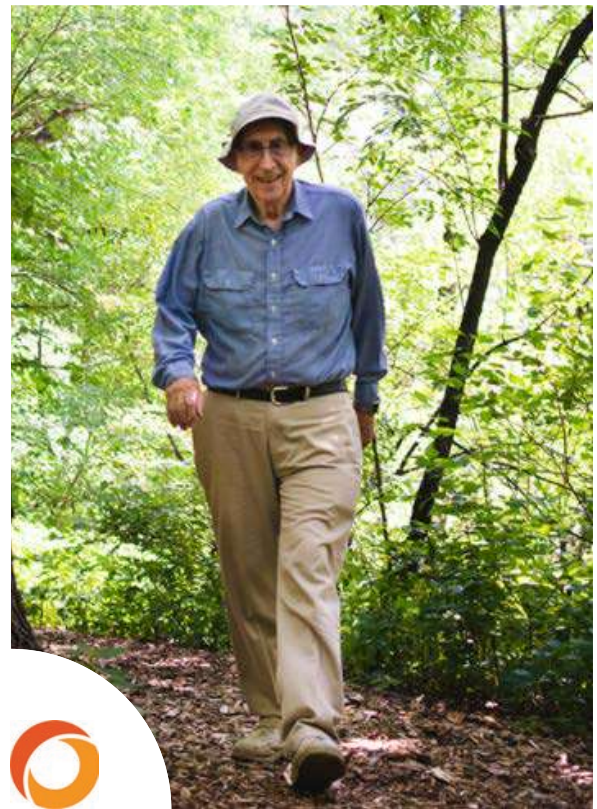
OAKWOOD VILLAGE

SEPTEMBER 29, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Oakwood Village, whose residents are enjoying nature walks and getting some fresh air throughout the pandemic.

Oakwood Village is a retirement community in Madison, Wisconsin with two campuses: Prairie Ridge and University Woods. Both campuses include a full continuum of care for seniors, offering independent living, assisted living, memory care, and rehab. The staff at Oakwood care deeply about the seniors they serve, develop strong friendships, and work to ensure the residents' holistic needs are met.

Oakwood created a new nature walk group so residents could enjoy the outdoors throughout the spring and summer months. Many of Oakwood's residents have developed a lifelong passion for being outdoors and enjoying nature, and the staff at Oakwood recognize the physical and emotional benefits outdoor activity can have. The group has been venturing off campus and into nature, taking advantage of the great walking and biking trails, beautiful natural settings, and lakes surrounding Oakwood's campus. With the COVID-19 pandemic requiring restrictions on activities, seniors have been itching to get outside and engage in safe activities like nature walks. Oakwood's nature walks have become a well-loved pastime among the seniors! Even as weather turns cold, the resident-coordinated walking group on campus will continue meeting three mornings every week to enjoy the newly installed Bluebird Trail on the Prairie Ridge campus.



Thank you to Oakwood for keeping seniors active and providing opportunities for them to enjoy nature throughout the COVID-19 pandemic!

THE STAFF AT OAKWOOD VILLAGE RECOGNIZE THE PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL BENEFITS OUTDOOR ACTIVITY CAN HAVE.



LUTHERCARE

SEPTEMBER 28, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Luthercare, whose campus participated in the Lancaster Walk to End Alzheimer's on Saturday.

Luthercare is strongly rooted in the Lutheran commitment to serve, and provides high-quality senior living communities, and early learning programs for children in Lancaster and Lebanon counties in Pennsylvania. From independent living to skilled nursing to home care, Luthercare offers comprehensive options for seniors, as well as offering a safe, nurturing environment that prepares children to be successful students. Luthercare proudly celebrates its Lutheran heritage, while welcoming interfaith engagement to make a positive impact on the community.

Though many events across the United States have been forced to cancel due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Luthercare is ensuring its community participates in events that can be done safely.

Luthercare served as a Select Sponsor for the Lancaster Walk to End Alzheimer's that occurred this past Saturday, and encouraged its residents to participate. To prevent community spread of the COVID-19 virus, the walk was not held at a central location, but walkers wore their purple t-shirts associated with the event, and chose unique routes across Lancaster County.

The sidewalks, tracks, and trails throughout Lancaster were purple as the walkers worked to raise funds and awareness for the fight to end Alzheimer's. Walkers took different routes throughout the county, but were united with the same goal: a world without dementia. Thank you to Luthercare for helping seniors stay active through the COVID-19 pandemic, and supporting important causes in your community!





WARTBURG ADULT CARE COMMUNITY

September 25, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Wartburg Adult Care Community, which held a three-day memorial service in honor of those lost to COVID-19.

Located in Westchester County, NY, Wartburg offers senior living and comprehensive healthcare services. Wartburg also offers caregiver support at every stage with an array of options to best serve the whole family.

Wartburg recognizes the immense loss the community experienced from the COVID-19 pandemic, and the nature of the virus meant typical end of life traditions such as hugs and shared meals were not possible. Concerned that lack of closure could delay healing and prolonged self-isolation could trigger depression, Wartburg held the three-day Wartburg 2020 Memorial Weekend.

During the weekend of memorial services, Wartburg recognized the front line staff who served at the height of the pandemic in New York with a plaque and a statement from Wartburg's Board of Directors, saying that this time will be remembered for the great compassion shown all over the world. They also planted an anchor tree in honor of an employee who served at Wartburg for 40 years. The Wartburg team provided spiritual care to families who lost loved ones with prayer, organ music, and an opportunity to meditate in the chapel.

Several hundred people visited Wartburg's campus for the memorial services, and enjoyed beautiful weather throughout the weekend. To keep participants safe, masks and social distancing were required, and Wartburg implemented screening and contact tracing.

Thank you, Wartburg, for offering healing to your community that has experienced loss and grief.

EBENEZER SOCIETY

SEPTEMBER 24, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Ebenezer Society, which is finding creative ways to engage seniors and the community through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ebenezer was founded in 1917 by Lutherans in Minneapolis with the purpose of providing care for older adults experiencing homelessness, as well as others in need in their community. Today, Ebenezer is one of the largest senior living providers in Minnesota, and offers assisted living, independent living, adult day programs, as well as many other services for seniors.

Ebenezer intentionally provides its community members with numerous social activities, and hopes that they feel truly a part of the Ebenezer family. From Veteran's coffee clubs to Oktoberfest to traveling apple orchards, there is always something going on at Ebenezer's campus, and the staff have found ways to continue these offerings safely through the pandemic.

The Ebenezer Society Foundation recognizes that the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted senior living communities especially hard, and that seniors are relying on activities and programs more than ever to ease feelings of loneliness. To help sustain existing programs for seniors and add new opportunities, the Ebenezer Society Foundation is selling humorous COVID-19 specific shirts with messages like, "COVID Hair – don't care," and "I'm smiling – behind my mask." A portion of the proceeds supports programming for seniors through the pandemic. Get your shirt at Rambow.com by entering the store code "Ebenezer."



Thank you to Ebenezer for your work to keep seniors engaged and cheerful through the COVID-19 pandemic!

**THE EBENEZER SOCIETY
FOUNDATION IS SELLING
HUMOROUS COVID-19 SPECIFIC
SHIRTS WITH MESSAGES LIKE,
"COVID HAIR – DON'T CARE,"
AND "I'M SMILING – BEHIND MY
MASK."**

Starry Night

Honoring Roberta & Greg Kahlert

Hosted by Kelly Frager & Dr. James Ball

Featuring Simply Three

Celebrating the Gala's 15th year

CARROLL LUTHERAN VILLAGE

September 23, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Carroll Lutheran Village, which is supporting local students at Carroll Community College.

Carroll Lutheran Village is a continuing care retirement community in Westminster, MD dedicated to person-centered care. The campus includes a wide array of options and services, including private suites for assisted living, rehabilitation, long-term care, and memory support. The staff at Carroll Lutheran Village are committed to serving older adults and providing them the best possible life, and partner with various community and educational organizations that share their passion for older adults.

One of Carroll Lutheran Village's community partners is the Carroll Community College. The community college relies on an annual gala fundraiser to finance scholarships and other campus initiatives, and this year, Carroll Lutheran Village is one of the gala's main sponsors.

The Starry Night Gala will take place virtually to prevent the spread of COVID-19, but is shaping up to be an exciting event nevertheless!

Attendees of the December 4 gala will have the chance to participate in a silent auction, and receive a box delivered to their homes with ingredients for the signature 2020 cocktail as well as a selection of hors d'oeuvres from a local restaurant. Carroll Lutheran Village is proudly supporting local education, and serves as the Starry Night Gala's "Galaxy Sponsor." Carroll Lutheran Villages encourages its community to join in supporting the community college by attending the virtual gala.

Thank you to Carroll Lutheran Village for finding virtual ways to support local education through the pandemic!

Carroll Lutheran Village partners with community and educational organizations that share their passion for older adults.





LUTHERAN METROPOLITAN MINISTRY

SEPTEMBER 22, 2020



Today's Front Line Hero is Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry, which is encouraging its community to register and vote in the November 2020 election.

Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry (LMM) has faithfully served the community in Northeast Ohio since the 1960s. Its programs focus on housing and shelter, workforce development, and health and wellness services, and LMM aims to empower people and enable them to be self-sufficient. LMM is also an effective advocate for system change and serves as a catalyst for meaningful conversation about issues of justice.

Today is National Voter Registration Day and LMM is reminding community members to make their voices heard in the upcoming election. Over the past couple of months, LMM has provided non-partisan reminders and resources about registering to vote in Ohio.

The COVID-19 pandemic creates barriers to holding in-person voter registration events, but LMM is making the extra effort to get the word out virtually and ensure its community has the resources and opportunity to register. LMM is providing reminders like that it only takes six minutes to register to vote, and celebrated National Black Voter Day on September 18. LMM also encourages its community to get into "good trouble" through civic engagement, and held a Facebook live event called the "Your Vote Your Voice forum," which highlighted the importance of holding elected officials accountable after the ballot.

Thank you to Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry for encouraging your community members to make their voices heard, and resourcing them in doing so! Happy National Voter Registration Day! You can register to vote and double check your voter registration status at your current address at vote.org.



GENACROSS LUTHERAN SERVICES

SEPTEMBER 21, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Genacross Lutheran Services, which is forming partnerships to achieve better outcomes for seniors.

Genacross Lutheran Services provides care for seniors, youth, and families in northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan. Though Genacross has a rich history with more than 150 years of service, the organization is quick to adapt. Genacross is committed to embracing change and innovation so its ministry can continue to evolve to meet current needs, and serve seniors and families as effectively as possible.

In the spirit of innovation, Genacross partnered with a comprehensive medication management solutions company called Cosana and Simply Connect, a cutting edge technology platform.

Genacross entered into the pilot project with the aim of improving resident outcomes and saving on prescription costs through medication assessments, and saw great success.

The pilot included one-on-one work with individuals at Genacross senior residential facilities to gain a more complete, holistic view of the patients' health and protocols. The average age of the pilot participants was 75 years old. At the beginning of the project, participants took an average of 11 medications.

The project successfully reduced the patients' daily medication intake by nearly three prescriptions on average, and improved outcomes by reducing the risk of complications and side-effects from the medications. The project also cut healthcare costs for the residents and for Genacross, saving an average of more than \$3,000 per patient per encounter.

Thank you to Genacross Lutheran Services for your ongoing commitment to innovation and improved outcomes for those you serve!

The pilot project included one-on-one work with individuals to gain a more complete, holistic view of the patients' health and protocols.





ADVOCATE AURORA HEALTH

September 18, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Advocate Aurora Health, which is partnering with the ELCA Outreach Center in Kenosha, WI to provide support to the community.

Advocate Aurora Health is one of the ten largest non-profit health systems in the United States, and a leading employer in the Midwest. It includes more than 500 sites and serves more than three million patients annually. With an aim to help people live well, Advocate Aurora Health is a national leader in clinical innovation, health outcomes, consumer experience, and value-based care.

There has been considerable trauma in the community of Kenosha, WI over the past weeks with the shooting of Jacob Blake by police on August 23 and the protests that ensued. Many people in Kenosha are feeling afraid and uncertain. With the support of United Way of Kenosha County, Advocate Aurora Health is responding to the need for additional support to address that trauma in the community.

Advocate Aurora Health is providing Community Support Sessions at the ELCA Outreach Center in Uptown Kenosha, and offering emotional, psychological, and spiritual care. The Community Support Sessions are helping community members cope with difficult experiences and their negative feelings by providing strategies and techniques for how to care for themselves and others during trying times.

Thank you to Advocate Aurora Health for providing additional resources to the Kenosha community following the trauma it experienced.

Advocate Aurora Health's Community Support Sessions are helping members of the community cope with difficult experiences and their negative feelings.

CONCORDIA PLACE

SEPTEMBER 17, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Concordia Place, which is helping young people find purpose and direction.

Concordia Place believes that all people deserve to reach their full potential, and provides growth and opportunity to 800 children, teens, and adults each year. Located in Chicago, Concordia's programs for teens aim to help build confident, civic-minded teens, and 100% of teens served graduate from high school and go on to college or post-secondary education.

The programs offered by Concordia make a big difference in the lives of teens, and the staff was not willing to close down programming when the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Community Programs Manager Gwyn Moss quickly and effectively executed a plan to move the Emerging Leaders summer program online. The teens were able to engage with the program virtually, and safely complete activities like community engagement, arts and crafts, and nutritional cooking.

**CONCORDIA'S PROGRAMS
GAVE VALERY TRIGSTED
CONFIDENCE IN HER OWN
ABILITIES, AND RESHAPED
HER LIFE SO THAT SHE NOW
FEELS LIKE SHE IS PART OF
SOMETHING BIGGER.**



Concordia Place is proud of the teens who go on to do great things, and publicly congratulated Valery Trigsted, who was selected as a Thrive Teen Advisory Board member. Valery began participating in Concordia's programs when she was 13, and has continued engaging with its many offerings for the last five years. Valery shared that the programs gave her confidence in her own abilities, and reshaped her life so that she now feels like she is part of something bigger. The friendships and skills Valery gained through Concordia programs have been formative.

Thank you to Concordia Place for your ongoing commitment to teens' development!

LUTHERAN SERVICES FLORIDA



Today's Front Line Hero is Lutheran Services Florida, which is teaching children about celebrating diversity in its Head Start program.

SEPTEMBER 16, 2020

Lutheran Services Florida (LSF) provides services throughout the state, and works to provide life-changing human services to people regardless of age, background, or belief. Its programs serve children and families, youth, adults and elderly, refugees, immigrants, survivors of natural disasters.

In its programming for children and families, LSF has five Head Start locations in Florida, and is committed to early childhood education. The goal of Head Start is to enhance the development of very young children during the critical development period from birth and five years old, and to promote healthy family functioning.

LSF Head Start serves 1,403 children, and is intentional about encouraging and celebrating diversity in the classroom. Director of LSF Duval Head Start LaTanya Wynn-Hall spoke about LSF's work to teach children about respecting and valuing diversity from a young age on a recent segment on News 4 Jax's Morning Show. LaTanya said the Head Start program creates a safe space for all children and celebrates the differences they bring to the classroom, teaching them that all genders, races, abilities, and cultures are valued. For children who are not returning to the Head Start program in person due to the COVID-19 pandemic, LaTanya encourages parents to model behavior that celebrates diversity by showing interest in different cultures and demonstrating respect and empathy.

Thank you to LSF for your work to support young children and celebrate their differences!



LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF ILLINOIS

SEPTEMBER 15, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Lutheran Social Services of Illinois, which is supporting children and families in creative ways!

Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI) began serving Illinois in 1867 and touched nearly 50,000 lives across the state in 2019. LSSI's mission is to bring healing, justice, and wholeness to people and communities, and provides foster care, mental health services, reintegration programs for the formerly incarcerated, as well as many other programs to holistically support the community.

LSSI holds an annual backpack drive to resource children in need before they go back to school, including children in foster care and served by other LSSI programs. This year, the pandemic created some challenges with the school supply drive, but local congregations came through.

Several local churches donated hundreds of bags, school supplies, and funding to purchase supplies. Thank you to the Illinois congregations, and to LSSI for ensuring children are resourced as they return to school!

The Storybook Project is another way LSSI supports families, and this project helps children stay connected to their incarcerated parents.

Parents select a donated book, and volunteers record them reading the book to their children. The recording ends with a message of love and support to the children, and the book and CD are sent to the children to read along. For many children, the CD is the only connection to their parents, so they treasure it.

Thank you to LSSI for your continued support of children and families through the challenges of the pandemic!



LUTHERAN FAMILY SERVICES ROCKY MOUNTAINS



SEPTEMBER 14, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains, whose Spirit Wellness Program is supporting individuals impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains (LFSRM) provides a wide array of programs, including adoption, foster care, older adult and caregiver support, prevention services, and refugee services. LFSRM has offices in Denver, Colorado Springs, Fort Collins, Greeley, Albuquerque, Las Cruces, and Salt Lake City, and works to address unmet needs impacting vulnerable populations in those communities. Having served the region since 1948, LFSRM believes that all people, from the newborn to the most elderly, are valued members of the community.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created immense uncertainty, and we are still figuring out how our families and communities will be impacted long-term. The unknown can be overwhelming and stressful, and LFSRM believes it is essential that we care for our emotional health and well-being. LFSRM is partnering with the Colorado Spirit Crisis Counseling Program to connect people impacted by the pandemic with quality services to support them through the recovery process. The LFS Colorado Spirit Wellness Program assists communities as they address the challenging effects of the pandemic through community-based outreach, and offers emotional support, connections to helpful resources, and approaches to manage stress healthfully. The program is anonymous, and provides tailored care at no cost to the participants. To prevent the spread of the virus, the Spirit Wellness Program's offerings are provided by phone or virtual platform. Thank you to Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains for providing holistic care to your community through the pandemic!



ELDER CARE ALLIANCE

September 11, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Elder Care Alliance, whose Mercy Brown Bag Program is safely providing nutritious food to elders throughout the pandemic.

Elder Care Alliance is a network of five communities serving seniors throughout California, and the communities aim to be a place where seniors flourish. Elder Care Alliance was founded with a deep sense of spirituality, and welcomes residents regardless of religious background or beliefs.

Elder Care Alliance's Mercy Brown Bag Program has distributed bags of nutritious groceries to seniors in the community for more than 34 years. Food insecurity is a growing problem in Alameda County and half of all seniors are unable to make ends meet. Too often, seniors in the area are forced to choose between food and lifesaving medications.

The Mercy Brown Bag Program serves those seniors, and year after year distributes one million pounds of food to nearly 5,000 seniors in need.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, Elder Care Alliance was committed to ensuring the Mercy Brown Bag Program could continue safely. It adjusted programming so volunteers packed bags of groceries instead of the typical shopping style of distribution, and began delivering groceries to seniors at no charge so they could stay home. Thanks to its mighty team of volunteers, the Mercy Brown Bag Program increased the number of seniors served with more than 1,000 new clients since the pandemic started!

Thank you to Elder Care Alliance for addressing food insecurity among seniors in your community!

Year after year, the Mercy Brown Bag Program distributes 1 million pounds of food to nearly 5,000 seniors in need.





THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN GOOD SAMARITAN SOCIETY

SEPTEMBER 10, 2020



Today's Front Line Hero is the Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society, whose seniors are having fun recreating their favorite album covers.

The Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society provides high quality senior services including home healthcare, rehab/skilled care, and senior living. It has locations in 24 states across the country, including Denton Village in Denton, TX, with a continuum of care and a 27-acre campus.

The staff at Denton Village had a great idea for a fun project with the residents – they recreated their favorite album covers! The seniors dressed up to look like the musician of their choice, including Madonna, Kelly Clarkson, and Janice Joplin. The staff photographed the seniors, and photo shopped their images to look like they were on the album cover. The seniors and community members loved it!

The Good Samaritan Society locations across the country are also safely and creatively celebrating birthdays and milestones. A resident at Scandia Village in Sister Bay, WI celebrated his 90th birthday with an outdoor concert that all the residents enjoyed from a safe distance. A Valley Vista resident in Wamego, KS celebrated her 110th birthday with a giant cake and a bagpipe player performing outside her window. The staff at Longs Creek Village in Auburn, NE helped a couple celebrate their 72nd wedding anniversary with a private celebration, flowers, and a delicious meal with chocolate cake.

Thank you to the Good Samaritan Society staff around the country who are going the extra mile to put smiles on seniors' faces!

CONCORDIA LUTHERAN MINISTRIES

SEPTEMBER 9, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Concordia Lutheran Ministries, whose residents are making beautiful, artistic masks to keep themselves and their fellow community members safe from the COVID-19 virus.

Concordia Lutheran Ministries has served for more than 130 years as a place with a mission of caring and a place for healing. Deeply rooted in the Christian faith, the staff and management share the belief that their efforts are to serve God's people and reflect God's love. With a wide array of services including retirement living, short-term rehabilitation, long-term nursing, and hospice services, Concordia has locations in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Florida.

At Concordia of Cranberry, a residential care community in Mars, PA, the craft crew has been working to make masks for their community members. Residents who enjoy crafting came together last Friday to make cloth tie-dye masks, which were a huge hit! The residents started the project with plain white cloth material that they dyed with their favorite colors and patterns. The masks were then distributed for residents and staff members to wear around campus and prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus. What a fun and thoughtful art project!



Thank you to Concordia Lutheran Ministries for your service to seniors, and to the residents at Concordia of Cranberry who are caring for their fellow community members with creativity!

**STAFF AND MANAGEMENT
SHARE THE BELIEF THAT THEIR
EFFORTS ARE TO SERVE GOD'S
PEOPLE AND REFLECT GOD'S
LOVE.**



GEMMA SERVICES

SEPTEMBER 8, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Gemma Services, whose Martin Luther School kicked off the new school year with enthusiasm and optimism.

Gemma Services serves children, youth, and families facing emotional and behavioral challenges, and provides education, nurturing and healing. Its offerings across Pennsylvania include education programs, mental health services in residential and community settings, foster care and adoption services, and prevention programs.

One of Gemma's schools is the Martin Luther School, a private academic institution offering special education for K-8th grade with the objective of helping children reach their educational goals. In early August, the Martin Luther School announced that to keep students and staff safe from the COVID-19 virus, the school would begin virtually in September, and the administration would reassess in mid-October.

In preparation for the new school year, the Martin Luther School staff has worked hard to prepare engaging virtual programming designed for each student's academic, social, and emotional growth, and each child has a dedicated staff member to guide and support them throughout the day.

The Martin Luther School staff began its school year with meetings in the first week of September, preparing for the students' first day of virtual school today.

The staff dressed up in fun costumes to represent their teams at the school, and brainstormed how they can empower themselves and the students in the new school year.

Thank you to Gemma for your enthusiasm for the new school year, and we hope you are having a great first day back to school!

The staff dressed up in fun costumes to represent their teams at the school.



WERNLE YOUTH & FAMILY TREATMENT CENTER

SEPTEMBER 4, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Wernle Youth & Family Treatment Center, which is keeping youth engaged with fun activities like the recent room decorating contest.

Wernle Youth & Family Treatment Center is located in Richmond, IN, and was originally founded in 1879 as an orphanage. Today, Wernle provides care for adolescents ages ten to twenty-one who exhibit significant behavioral challenges. Through both outpatient and residential services, Wernle crafts individualized therapeutic treatment plans for each child with a focus on building the confidence and behavioral controls needed for when they leave Wernle.



As a faith-based organization, Wernle partners with local congregations to provide spiritual care to the adolescents it serves. Local congregations show their support for Wernle in many ways, including sewing quilts for the adolescents to remind them that their community cares for them, and sending videos of their choirs singing. Wernle encourages the youth to engage in activities like drawing prayer cards, and is cognizant that holistic care includes spiritual health.

Wernle is always looking for fun ways to engage the youth who reside on its campus. From Christmas in July to collaboratively crafting towns out of popsicle sticks, Wernle has lots of fun activities for adolescents. One of those fun activities this summer was a room decorating contest. The boys and girls got to showcase their creativity by decorating their rooms with vibrant, handmade art that showcases their personalities!

Thank you to Wernle for your ongoing support of youth, and for ensuring they are engaged in fun activities!

**WERNLE CRAFTS
INDIVIDUALIZED THERAPEUTIC
TREATMENT PLANS FOR EACH
CHILD WITH A FOCUS ON
BUILDING THE CONFIDENCE
AND BEHAVIORAL CONTROLS
NEEDED FOR WHEN THEY
LEAVE.**





LUTHERAN SOCIAL MINISTRIES OF NEW JERSEY

September 3, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Lutheran Social Ministries of New Jersey, which has effectively adapted its PACE program to keep seniors safe.

Lutheran Social Ministries of New Jersey's (LSMNJ) purpose is to help those who need them most, and has supported its community since the early 1900s. Today, LSMNJ offers senior healthcare and retirement living, affordable housing, immigration legal services, disaster recover, as well as many other community services.

LSMNJ provides a program called PACE (Programs for All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly), which is a community-based program that includes medical care and social services with the goal of keeping the elderly safe and in their homes.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, PACE operated from a community center, but the program quickly adapted to continue serving seniors safely through the pandemic. LSMNJ altered its program to become "PACE without walls," with new technology, including telehealth, video call check-ins, and even gaming platforms to bring PACE services into homes. PACE has kept seniors feeling connected during a time when social isolation is a real challenge, with staff making meal deliveries and conducting virtual group activities. LSMNJ also implemented extensive safety and cleaning protocols in its PACE services to help keep seniors safe from the virus, and have successfully transformed a program based in a physical center to being entirely home-based.

Thank you to LSMNJ for adapting your PACE program to continue to meet the needs of seniors through the pandemic!

PACE has kept seniors feeling connected during a time when social isolation is a real challenge.

LUTHERAN COMMUNITY SERVICES NORTHWEST



Today's Front Line Hero is Lutheran Community Services Northwest, which is thoughtfully supporting new Americans.

SEPTEMBER 2, 2020

Lutheran Community Services (LCS) Northwest offers healing, help, and hope to vulnerable children, families, refugees, and others. LCS Northwest serves more than 40,000 people annually across Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, and provides supports for at-risk families, counseling, behavioral and mental health programs, after school programs for refugees, and citizen classes and legal assistance.

LCS Northwest is committed to inclusiveness, and it serves refugees from a variety of cultures and countries. To appropriately serve its diverse clients, LCS Northwest promotes culturally-specific behavioral health services, and its Multicultural Community Services (MCS) based in Portland recently shared principles that guide their work. To ensure the work is culturally appropriate, MCS is committed to programming being by the people, for the people, reflecting the understanding that individuals and communities know what is best for them. The programs are transdisciplinary, so behavioral health teams consist of staff with different roles and expertise, and care teams include peer support that is bilingual and bicultural. MCS is committed to deep equity, which is the realization that some people need more resource to improve outcomes. Though serving new Americans has been challenging during the COVID-19 pandemic, LCS Northwest is working to ensure that new Americans have access to resources, and is offering virtual citizenship days in September with free virtual legal help to fill out citizenship applications.

Thank you to LCS Northwest for your compassionate support of new Americans in your community!



ASCENTRIA CARE ALLIANCE

SEPTEMBER 1, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Ascentria Care Alliance, which is empowering individuals and its community as a whole.

Ascentria Care Alliance serves its community throughout New England, with programs in Maine, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Vermont. It defines the name "Ascentria" as "rising together," and the organization states it is called to "strengthen communities by empowering people to respond to life's challenges." Ascentria empowers vulnerable families and individuals by providing wrap-around services and offering holistic care to children and families, new Americans, and older adults with a wide array of programming.

Ascentria is proud of Chantal Zuzi, whom it formerly served in its unaccompanied minors program. Chantal recently accepted a position as the Senior Fellow of Student and Alumni Relations at RefuSHE.

Her work will include creating resources for settled alumnae and girls at RefuSHE who are still waiting for resettlement. Ascentria congratulated Chantal, who, informed by her own experience as a refugee, will support other refugees.

Ascentria is empowering the larger community by publicly sharing information about voting in 2020. As the pandemic will make voting more complicated this year, Ascentria is offering vetted information so Americans can protect both their health and their fundamental right to vote.

There has been much confusion around voting by mail, so Ascentria is sharing details including who can vote by mail, important deadlines, and how to apply to vote by mail. For information about voting, visit www.usa.gov/voting.

Thank you to Ascentria Care Alliance for your ongoing commitment to empowering your community!

Ascentria is called to "strengthen communities by empowering people to respond to life's challenges."



LYNGBLOMSTEN



History Theatre presents Lyngblomsten's Virtual Cabaret Performance Telling your story, thru song!

Summer 2020

AUGUST 31, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Lyngblomsten, which held a virtual performance of Cabaret with its residents, bringing joy to the community.

Lyngblomsten serves older adults and their families in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, MN through healthcare, housing, and community-based services. For more than a century, Lyngblomsten has been committed to enhancing the lives of older adults and walking the journey with their loved ones. As a Christian non-profit, Lyngblomsten partners with more than two dozen congregations across the Twin Cities and provides a continuum of care to meet holistic needs of older adults.

The residents at Lyngblomsten had planned to participate in a performance of the musical Cabaret this summer, but the COVID-19 pandemic meant they could not rehearse together or perform in person. The residents decided that the show must go on, and transitioned the performance to a virtual setting. With the help of teaching artists from the History Theatre in St. Paul, residents were able to use technology to practice virtually, and posted the full hour and ten-minute musical on YouTube for the community to enjoy.

Congrats to the residents of Lyngblomsten on your performance of Cabaret and thank you for bringing talent and entertainment to your community!



LUTHERAN CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES OF ILLINOIS

August 28, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Lutheran Child and Family Services of Illinois, which is constantly working to ensure that all children and families are treated equally in the child welfare system.

Lutheran Child and Family Services of Illinois (LCFS) works across the state of Illinois to nurture and strengthen children and families in need. LCFS provides preventative services to families, counseling services, adoption, and foster care.

LCFS has long been committed to being an antiracist organization, with a core commitment of being color cognizant, "believing in the importance of racial and ethnic differences because of their profound impact on individuals, groups, communities and society, as well as acknowledging the accompanying widespread racism and discrimination in our broader society."

Not only does LCFS engage consistently in explicit, productive conversations about the role of race in its work, it also actively advocates for addressing injustices and dismantling systemic racism.

After Jacob Blake was shot in the back seven times by a police officer in Kenosha, WI, LCFS publicly reaffirmed its vision for a world where all children and families are treated equally in child welfare, regardless of skin color, and children of color do not experience additional trauma due to implicit bias and institutional racism.

Today, we recognize the trauma that Jacob Blake's children experienced when they watched their father being shot. We recognize the trauma that far too many families of color undergo because of an unjust system. And we thank LCFS for its ongoing work to bring justice to child welfare.

LCFS "believ[es] in the importance of racial and ethnic differences because of their profound impact on individuals, groups, communities and society, as well as acknowledg[es] the accompanying widespread racism and discrimination in our broader society."





SPIRITRUST LUTHERAN

AUGUST 27, 2020



"He is my rock and my salvation."

Today's Front Line Hero is SpiriTrust Lutheran, which is building community and sharing joy in many ways through the pandemic.

SpiriTrust Lutheran's name reflects its Lutheran heritage, its spirit of service, and its commitment to building trust among those it serves. It offers a wide array of services for seniors including residential living, assisted living, memory support, and nursing and rehabilitation services, as well as hospice care, domestic abuse solutions, and counseling services. SpiriTrust serves more than 23,000 people in 16 counties in Pennsylvania and three in northern Maryland.

Throughout the pandemic, SpiriTrust has looked for ways to build community and faithfully serve its residents. For example, residents at The Village at Luther Ridge have been spreading kindness by painting fun pictures and words of inspiration onto rocks, which are then placed strategically on the campus. The rocks provide encouragement and have been eliciting smiles from those who see them, with messages like, "Stay Strong," and "He is my rock and my salvation." Resident Kathryn has also been spreading kindness by donating flowers from her garden to beautify the community.

SpiriTrust continues to work to keep the community safe in many ways, including reminding people to wear masks, and educating seniors on what to expect from calls from contact tracers, to ensure that scam calls do not take advantage of seniors and steal their information.

Thank you to SpiriTrust for your many efforts to keep seniors safe, happy, and healthy through the pandemic!



GOOD SHEPHERD REHABILITATION NETWORK

AUGUST 26, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Network, which is offering a wide array of virtual programming to support its community during the pandemic.

Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Network provides a complete continuum of care for adults and children with physical and cognitive challenges, and has served communities in Pennsylvania and New Jersey for more than a century. Good Shepherd is committed to compassionate care and innovation in its services, and is the world's leading clinical user of the Ekso Bionics exoskeleton for treating patients with spinal cord injuries.

Throughout the pandemic, Good Shepherd has continued to offer care in creative ways that prevent the virus from spreading in the community. One offering is the regularly scheduled Spinal Cord Injury Virtual Support Group.

This meeting provides space for people with spinal cord injuries to connect and talk, and the gathering also includes presentation on new products available to support them. Additionally, Good Shepherd Pediatrics offers therapy for cyber school students with both safe in-person and telehealth services for children, including physical, speech and occupational therapy.

Good Shepherd frequently posts resources that address specific needs associated with the pandemic, such as how to manage concussion symptoms during online learning and teleworking.

Thank you to Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Network for the many safe virtual offerings you are providing to the community to ensure people are safe and cared for through the pandemic!





CASSIA

August 24, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Cassia, which created a pen pal program to keep its residents connected to the community.

Cassia is headquartered in Edina MN, and provides independent senior living, assisted living, memory care, skilled nursing care, short-term transitional rehabilitation, adult day programs, and a variety of community-based services for older adults across five states. It is guided by the Christian faith, but committed to serving all people, and aims to help seniors live well.

When COVID-19 required senior living facilities to limit visitors, Cassia's Augustana Care Minneapolis started a pen pal program to help connect seniors to the community and prevent feelings of loneliness.

The program matched more than two dozen residents, and an unlikely friendship has formed between 7-year-old Addie and 73-year-old Augustana Care Minneapolis resident Gary. Addie has missed seeing her friends since schools closed in March and Gary has missed having visitors, but the pair is keeping each other company through regular letters and bringing each other joy.

Addie's mom has been surprised by how much the two have in common. Addie and Gary write to each other about favorite trips they have taken, music they enjoy, and their artwork. They even have each other's drawings framed and displayed in their rooms. Someday when it is safe, Addie plans to invite Gary for dinner with her family, and Gary will invite Addie to his birthday party.

Thank you to Cassia for your work to keep seniors connected to the community through the pandemic!

The pen pal program matched more than two dozen residents, and formed an unlikely friendship.

NATIONAL LUTHERAN COMMUNITIES & SERVICES



AUGUST 21, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is National Lutheran Communities & Services, which is leading the way in making a plan for the post-COVID-19 era.

National Lutheran Communities & Services (NLCS) is a non-profit that inspires and supports choice and opportunity in partnership with older adults. NLCS is headquartered in Rockville, MD, and provides services across the mid-Atlantic region, including Delaware, Maryland, the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. area, and Virginia.

COVID-19 has forced senior service providers to make huge adjustments to their daily work to keep seniors safe.



In May of this year, thought leaders in the senior services industry came together on the International Council on Active Aging Task Force to lead senior living transformation after COVID-19, and discuss how senior services should adjust after the pandemic. Cyndi Walters, COO at NLCS, joined that task force, which includes representatives from for-profit, non-profit, and affordable housing organizations that provide services to seniors. Cyndi recognizes that going forward, senior living will not return to its previous way of operating, and senior living communities need to be proactive and ready to adapt.

The industry leaders are working together on how to safely continue providing care to seniors while keeping communities safe, and the task force is generating ideas, tactics, strategies, and messaging for organizations to consider as they plan for serving seniors in a post-COVID-19 era.

Thank you to NLCS for your ongoing commitment to seniors, and for serving as leaders in the industry as we consider life after the pandemic!

**SENIOR LIVING COMMUNITIES
NEED TO BE PROACTIVE AND
READY TO ADAPT.**



KENCREST



Today's Front Line Hero is KenCrest, which is providing virtual vacations to the KenCrest family. KenCrest supports "community development by exploring possibilities, mobilizing resources, and empowering dreams."

AUGUST 20, 2020

Its offerings include educational services for children and families, as well as community-based programs for people with developmental or intellectual disabilities of all ages and their families. KenCrest is headquartered in Blue Bell, PA, but serves more than 12,500 individuals annually across Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Connecticut.

Many of the individuals who are served by KenCrest had to cancel their vacations when the COVID-19 pandemic hit. They are disappointed that their plans have been disrupted, so KenCrest is getting creative. The Enabling Technology department at KenCrest is working on a project that will simulate vacations through virtual reality. Generous donations enabled KenCrest to purchase four Oculus devices, which will help bring virtual experiences to life. The virtual reality headsets will make it feel like participants are walking along a beach, hiking through the woods, or enjoying a concert. KenCrest is even working to bring the details together to make the virtual vacations immersive, like sand, scented oils, and headphones.

Thank you to KenCrest for getting creative, and bringing much needed vacations to the KenCrest family!

LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF NEW YORK



AUGUST 19, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Lutheran Social Services of New York, whose staff are working to ensure their community has safe access to needed food and toiletries.

Lutheran Social Services of New York's (LSSNY) New LIFE Center of Long Island serves low-income residents, most of whom are mothers with children. The Center partners with more than 40 churches to accomplish its work of feeding individuals and families who are food insecure.

The Center has kept its doors open during the COVID-19 pandemic to serve families in need, and Program Coordinator Hylkije Halili and her colleagues worked quickly to institute new health and safety measures to protect themselves and their clients from the virus. The Center has been preparing prepackaged boxes which are distributed outside the Center so clients do not need to come inside to access food. The packages are filled with protein, canned food, fresh produce, and toiletries, and each box is tailored to clients' dietary restrictions and family size. So far, the Center has supplied food to 1,154 individuals who are food insecure during the pandemic.

When asked if she is concerned about being on the front lines during the pandemic, Ms. Halili replied that helping the community is important, and that all clients are abiding by the safety protocols. She said she enjoys working with LSSNY because the organization offers resources to people in need and truly helps the community.

Thank you to LSSNY, and to Hylkije Halili in particular, for helping feed your community through the pandemic!



NYU LANGONE

August 18, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is NYU Langone, whose dedicated front line staff were recently recognized in the Crain's New York Business Notable in Health Care 2020 list.

New York saw tragedy unfold this year as the novel coronavirus spread through the region. This year's Notable in Health Care special report shines a light on the stories of the front line workers who helped bend the steep curve in New York, and continue working to address the toll the pandemic has taken. Three of the heroes identified in the report work at NYU Langone. The front line workers at NYU Langone worked tirelessly when COVID-19 hit New York, and continue to fight to address health disparities that were accentuated by the pandemic.

Dr. Katherine Hochman, associate chair for quality of care and director of hospitalist program at NYU Langone is honored on the Notable in Health Care list.

Dr. Hochman helped lead the COVID-19 response, even while quarantined. She redeployed more than 850 doctors, front line staff, and medical students to provide support where needed, kept personnel updated daily, and made great efforts to keep spirits high. Dr. Hochman also implemented the Family Connect program to enhance communications when family members were in isolation. Also honored in the Notable in Health Care list are Dr. Mark Mulligan, director of the Division of Infectious Diseases and Immunology and of the Vaccine Center, and assistant professor Dr. Andrew Wallach.

Thank you to NYU Langone for your dedicated work throughout the pandemic!

This year's Notable in Health Care special report shines a light on the stories of the front line workers who helped bend the steep curve in New York.





LUTHERAN CHURCH CHARITIES

AUGUST 17, 2020



Today's Front Line Hero is Lutheran Church Charities, whose K-9 Comfort Dogs are offering much needed joy and comfort throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Lutheran Church Charities is headquartered in Northbrook, IL, and its mission is to "Share the mercy, compassion, presence, and proclamation of Jesus Christ to those who are suffering and in need." Lutheran Church Charities provides support to those who have suffered loss or serious illness of a loved one through the Hearts of Mercy and Compassion program, disaster and crisis response in the wake of natural disasters, and the K-9 Comfort Dog Ministry.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Lutheran Church Charities has continued offering the K-9 Comfort Dog Ministry visits virtually, recognizing that the support these visits provide are particularly important when stress is high. The K-9 Comfort Dogs also recently visited the inmates at DuPage County Jail, providing comfort, unconditional love, and good ears. Alongside the Comfort Dogs, the inmates read books to their children, and the stories were recorded on tape to be sent to their children. The books were donated by SCARCE (School & Community Assistance for Recycling and Composting Education), so the children could have a copy of the book read by their parent. The Comfort Dogs are often present at community gatherings, showing their love at events to commemorate the victims of gun violence, and making visits to senior living communities.

Thank you to Lutheran Church Charities for supporting your community through the K-9 Comfort Dog Ministry throughout the pandemic!



LUTHERAN SERVICES IN IOWA

AUGUST 14, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Lutheran Services in Iowa, which is elevating the efforts of its front line workers through the Compassion in Crisis Campaign.

Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI) provides a wide array of services, and is committed to providing compassionate care and strengthening families with offerings that support holistic well-being. LSI began the Compassion in Crisis Campaign to recognize front line workers and share stories of their commitment to LSI's mission of providing hope and healing.

One story that LSI shared is about Care Coordinator Samantha. LSI increased services to families at risk of substance use, domestic violence, and child abuse, as the stressors related to COVID-19 make those resources all the more necessary. Before the pandemic, Samantha checked in with families once per week, but now does virtual check-ins multiple times per week to provide resources to parents and monitor child safety.

When clients are at higher risk of abuse, Samantha and her team put on personal protective equipment so they can safely enter homes. Though Samantha worries about bringing the virus home to her own family, she says, "Child abuse does not stop, even when the world does."

Thank you to LSI for your commitment to children and families throughout the pandemic, and for recognizing the hard work of your front line staff!

"Child abuse does not stop, even when the world does."





LUTHERAN SERVICES CAROLINAS

August 13, 2020

Lutheran Services Carolinas (LSC) has multiple senior living campuses across the Carolinas, which offer subsidized care to low-income seniors, as Medicaid does not cover the full cost of care. In early August, LSC broke ground on a new senior living campus that will help cover the cost of the care it provides to low-income seniors, as well as the supports LSC offers to foster children, refugees, and individuals with developmental disabilities.

The new Trinity Landing campus is expected to be completed by 2022, and is the result of a nearly 40-year-old dream that began with a donation to LSC from a member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Wilmington, NC.

Trinity Landing will join the existing Trinity Grove to form a continuing Care Retirement Community, offering independent living and nursing home care.

The waterfront campus will include 124 apartments and 60 villas in the first phase of construction, followed by an additional 24 villas in the second phase. Trinity Landing is located on the Intracoastal Waterway, and will include a waterfront pavilion and dock with boat slips, as well as opportunities for physical activity, including walking and biking paths, boardwalks, and a kayak launch. Virtual tours have kept interest high, and Trinity Landing is already nearly 80% reserved.

Congratulations to Lutheran Services Carolinas, and thank you for your ongoing commitment to progress and serving your community!

Trinity Landing is the result of a nearly 40-year-old dream that began with a donation.

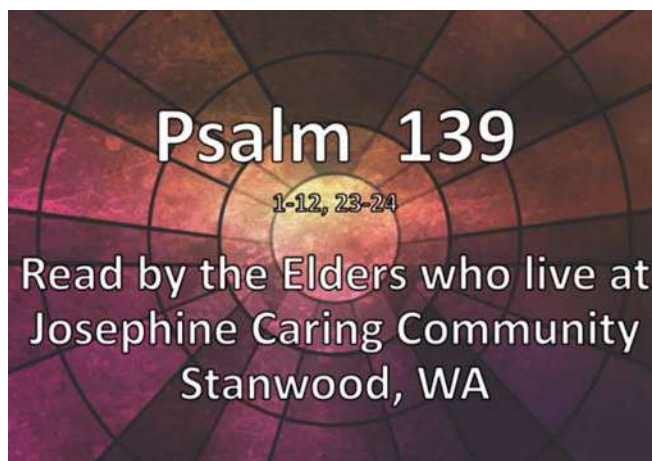
JOSEPHINE CARING COMMUNITY

AUGUST 12, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Josephine Caring Community, which is providing comfort to its residents and its community by sharing readings from Psalms.

Josephine Caring Community provides a home for seniors with services such as assisted living, transitional rehabilitation, and long-term care, as well as early learning and childcare. Located in Stanwood, WA, Josephine is committed to ensuring that no one in its community is left uncared for and aims to be a resource for all generations.

The COVID-19 pandemic has left many people across the country and across the world feeling fearful and anxious. Josephine is helping address those feelings in its community by sharing readings from the book of Psalms.



Josephine has posted multiple videos over the past months of its senior residents reading from Psalms. In the most recent video, the elders read Psalm 139, which is a reminder of God's presence. Messages such as, "You have searched me and know me. You know when I sit down and when I rise up..." serve as a reminder that we are not alone through this global pandemic, and offer comfort from the ancient book.

Thank you to Josephine Caring Community for engaging senior residents in readings of Psalms, and providing the larger community with messages of comfort through these difficult times.

**"YOU HAVE SEARCHED ME AND KNOW ME. YOU KNOW WHEN I SIT
DOWN AND WHEN I RISE UP..."**

INSPIRITUS



Today's Front Line Hero is Inspiritus, which is working around the clock to help stabilize individuals and families who are on the precipice of falling into economic hardship, and supporting foster children throughout the pandemic.

AUGUST 11, 2020

Inspiritus' mission is to guide families and individuals on a path from surviving to thriving, and it works to empower people whose lives have been disrupted to discover their strengths and resilience. Formerly Lutheran Services of Georgia and Lutheran Services in Tennessee, Inspiritus provides services to families and children, individuals with intellectual disabilities, refugees, and people who are recovering from natural disasters.

The COVID-19 pandemic and economic downturn have been challenging for many families across the nation, and Inspiritus is working tirelessly to provide financial aid and income supports with job coaching across the state of Georgia. The Inspiritus Financial Opportunity Center is providing resources and making efforts to halt eviction for hard working clients.

Inspiritus is also working to support foster children, and partnered with Ticket To Dream Foundation to provide foster children with the school supplies they need to succeed as they return to school. Though times are hard for many families, heroes continue to emerge such as the Inspiritus foster family in Atlanta who recently took in a family of seven foster children. Inspiritus is grateful for the heroes who allow the important work to continue.

Thank you to Inspiritus for your ongoing care for families, and to the Inspiritus community that supports the work!

LYNGBLOMSTEN



AUGUST 10, 2020

Today's Front Line Hero is Lyngblomsten, which is engaging seniors in art projects and helping keep their spirits high. Lyngblomsten serves older adults and their families in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, MN through healthcare, housing, and community-based services.

Founded in 1906, Lyngblomsten has long been committed to promoting dignity through informed choices for senior living options, respecting individuality, and orchestrating the best life possible.

Lyngblomsten hosts an annual Mid-Summer Festival for the community. Unfortunately, Lyngblomsten was forced to make the tough decision to cancel the event this summer to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and keep seniors and community members safe. The Mid-Summer Festival would have occurred on July 31, and Lyngblomsten found another way to bring some celebration to the campus that afternoon. At last year's festival, local artist Anne Krocak worked with festivalgoers to create a community art project they called, "Stepping Together." The community artists created three mosaic stepping stones that highlight various aspects of the community at Lyngblomsten. On July 31, the campus celebrated that identity and community by placing the beautiful stepping stones in its newly landscaped entryway. The residents at Lyngblomsten have been working on other art projects, as well, such as their heart art projects, which were displayed in the dining room as a reminder of the love that lives all around the campus.

Thank you to Lyngblomsten for your ongoing work to care for seniors and remind them of the love and community connection all around them!

CONTACT US

Have a **Front Line Heroes story to share?**

Please contact Christopher Findlay, Senior Marketing Manager, at cfindlay@lutheranservices.org.

