



Kaitlyn Peters



Concordia Lutheran
High School

Long-lasting connections

Celebrating Unique Partnership with Concordia Lutheran High School

When Kaitlyn Peters completed an internship at Lutheran Social Services of Indiana as a high school senior seven years ago, she had no idea she would eventually work for the agency one day as a full-time case manager. That's exactly what happened, however, thanks in part to the internship program at Concordia Lutheran High School. Through this internship, Kaitlyn made important connections and gained valuable work experience — opportunities that ultimately led to her current position at LSSI.

Concordia's internship program never guarantees full-time employment for the students who enroll in the program. In fact, students aren't allowed to receive compensation during their placement. What the internship program does promise is the opportunity to explore career options in a professional working environment. Students from Concordia pursue semester-long internships in any number of professions, including education, law, medicine, and veterinary science, as well as social services.

The internships at LSSI have worked especially well, in part, because of the strong Lutheran connection and focus on faith that the two organizations share. "Students who pursue an internship at LSSI have already expressed an interest in the social work field," says Angie Moellering, President and CEO. "This experience gives them a glimpse of the work that we do, especially from a faith-based perspective. Concordia is a faith-based organization, so the partnership works very well."

In addition to the 70 hours students log at their internship placement, Concordia students also complete coursework that covers professionalism, work ethic, and communication skills.

"Another one of my main goals through the internship program is to help students know the value of their networks," says Luanne Erdos, head of the career internship program at Concordia. "I want to make sure that students foster the relationships they build with their mentors."

That strategy worked well for Kaitlyn, who had previously completed a daylong job shadowing experience at LSSI and wanted to explore a career in social services more in depth. The internship at LSSI confirmed her life direction and opened doors to future opportunities. "When I applied for the case manager position seven years later," says Kaitlyn, "I felt as if the team at LSSI already knew me, which helped me feel more confident."

Hiring someone from Concordia who had previous experience at LSSI was a plus for the agency as well. "It really helps to have a frame of reference for a potential employee," says Angie. "It makes a difference if you have already seen them in action."

Kristi Stanley, LSSI's intake director and grants manager, supervises all Concordia interns. She helps students gain a broad perspective of the social work field through a wide variety of experiences during their internships. "First," says Kristi, "we set up an interview, just as we would for an employee or college intern. We want to get a feel for what the student interns are looking for."

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Let's keep in touch

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Please indicate if you prefer to receive updates via email or in your mailbox.

SAVE THE DATE



LSSI (Lasting Stability and Success for Individuals) Works is currently accepting students for all upcoming classes. If you or someone you know needs a boost to find a long-term, sustainable career, contact us! Upcoming classes include:

July 9
September 10
November 5

Have a lunch hour to spare? We are seeking volunteers for mock interviews. We provide the questions and rating information, we just ask you provide us feedback to help our students improve their interview skills. For more information, contact Sue (sdoeden@lssin.org) or (260) 426-3347)



Beyond Our Doors

Expanding Our Reach Through Collaboration

A letter from Angela Moellering, President and CEO

“Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor.”

– Ecclesiastes 4:9 NIV

As the president and CEO of Lutheran Social Services of Indiana, I am reminded daily how fortunate I am to be surrounded by an amazing team of talented individuals—staff members who work together to bring about true and lasting change in our community. Each staff person at LSSI plays a distinct role in our clients’ success, and I am grateful for their contributions.

I am also thankful for the opportunity to work in conjunction with so many likeminded individuals and organizations beyond our doors. I truly believe we could not accomplish all that we do without the support of community partners. We are more effective because of agencies, churches, and volunteers who come around us and give of their time and energy.

Our board members, for example, give countless hours to LSSI. They help develop effective strategies and goals that guide our organization. These strategies, in turn, ensure that we will provide valuable services to our community well into the future. LSSI would not be the agency it is today without them.

In this issue, you will hear directly from a few of our board members as they share the reasons why they serve.

You will also read about a unique partnership we enjoy with Concordia Lutheran High School and their student intern program. Through this connection, we are able to invest in the younger generation, building relationships with people who are interested in the social work field—from a faith-based perspective.

When discussing our community connections, I would be remiss if I didn’t mention our relationships with area congregations. These partnerships expand our outreach by providing touchpoints beyond our typical client base. Through our relationships with churches, we can connect even more people to the resources families need to reach greater stability. In fact, we see ourselves as a ministry of the church, working together with congregations to create more impact in our community.

Finally, I am thankful for all of the people who give of their time and resources to LSSI. Clients’ lives are being changed because of your generosity. Please continue to join us in this transformational impact through your contributions. Thank you! ■



Balance Works, a mental health initiative by Lutheran Social Services offering proven, integrated mind-body-spirit therapy for children and adults, is currently accepting new clients. Our licensed, caring staff specialize in EMDR therapy, an approach to treat symptoms

of anxiety, depression, and several other mental health concerns. Insurances accepted are:

- Indiana Medicaid: Anthem HIP
- Traditional Medicaid
- Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield
- CareSource
- PHP
- Beacon

Call (260) 426-3347 for more information.



You can donate online with a credit card at www.lssin.org. Just hit the donate button at the top of the page!



WE WERE *Made to Thrive*

2 0 1 8 A N N U A L C E L E B R A T I O N

On March 8th, LSSI welcomed over 300 of our friends to celebrate another year of God’s work in our community through LSSI. The theme for the evening was “Made to Thrive.” Together, we celebrated the movement of LSSI families from just surviving to thriving! LSSI staff members were stationed throughout the room so guests could meet them and hear their stories about LSSI’s impact on Northeast Indiana.



LSSI was also proud to recognize our volunteer of the year, Mr. Paul Twedt, member at Risen Savior Lutheran Church. Paul has provided us with so many varied services. He has been a justice bread coordinator, a Thrivent action team coordinator, and of course, Santa for our little ones at the Christmas Family program each December.



Throughout the night, guests were entertained by the St. Michael’s bluegrass band, Jubilant Fields. The group, made of musicians aged 9 to 60+, performed several bluegrass favorites, including a sing-a-long.

Thank you to everyone that helped make the night a fun, memorable evening! A special thanks to all of our corporate sponsors. Save the date for our next Annual Celebration, scheduled for March 7, 2019. We would love to have you join us! To ensure you receive an invitation, please contact **Rachel Hardesty** at rharesty@lssin.org.

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Kristi works hard to make sure she gives students a full spectrum of jobs at LSSI—including behind-the-scenes work in administration, human resources, accounting, and information technology—in addition to the job shadowing they do in certain programs.

While student interns can’t experience every program firsthand, they do meet with each LSSI program director and participate in direct services in carefully controlled settings. “We’ve been blessed with great kids,” says Kristi. “I think we are able to give them a good view of what a not-for-profit, faith-based social service agency is all about.”

According to Kaitlyn, “It was so amazing to see all the different positions. I knew that people could come to LSSI to get help, but it was great

to see all the resources available to them.” Recently, Concordia placed another intern at LSSI. “She also had some foreknowledge of LSSI,” says Luanne, “but her eyes were really opened to how a group of people like that work in the community.”

For Kaitlyn and other LSSI interns, the experience also provided insight into what is required to get in the door at a social service agency, including education requirements. “I felt my experience was similar to a college-level internship,” says Kaitlyn. “Through Concordia, I was able to get ahead of the game.”

According to Kristi, that’s what the program is all about—investing in the future. “We get student interns as seniors in high school,” she says. “At that point in time, it’s so hard for

students to decide what they want to do with the rest of their lives. This internship gives them a taste of what working in social services would be like.”

Angie agrees. “We really want to build up the social work field,” says Angie. “The need is great, and there just aren’t enough qualified social workers available. This internship program is really about connecting with the younger generation and engaging people who are interested in the field.”

Luanne couldn’t agree more. “Concordia’s internship program is a great avenue for agencies and organizations to give back professionally as they model proficiency and job skills. What a gift to give a student!” ■

If you would like to receive an electronic copy of *Perspective*, please contact Rachel Hardesty at rharesty@lssin.org or (260) 426-3347.

Mission

Lutheran Social Services of Indiana expresses the love of Jesus Christ for all people through services that empower individuals and families to move toward social, emotional, and spiritual wholeness.



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In Their Own Words

Here's What People Are Saying About LSSI

It's no secret that we here at LSSI think our volunteers, staff, and clients are pretty amazing individuals; however, we don't want you to take our word for it. In the next three issues, instead of telling you about these folks' commitments and accomplishments, we're going to let them speak for themselves. In this first issue, we feature members of our board, who reveal the reasons they serve at LSSI.

"I'm excited to be on LSSI's board because I'm convinced that God works through its staff and director to do so much more than any other organization that I could be connected with. It's a calling that transcends myself. God put me here." – Steve Gilbert

"Sharing the love of Christ with others by helping them see the life Christ wants for them is amazing. I feel privileged to be a small part of an organization that does so much to make a difference in our community. I can't pick just one favorite [program]. I have seen and spoken to several of the clients and personally witnessed the impact our programs have made on their lives." – Shawna Squibb

"I'm excited to be on LSSI's board... I appreciate LSSI for how they share the love of Christ, whether...by training unemployed/underemployed people, [providing] counseling, or even [offering] daycare. The love of Christ is at the core." – Nancy Berning

"I was asked to serve and said "yes!" I believe in the mission of LSSI and feel it's a great privilege to be part of an organization that is having a positive impact on the individuals and families in our community. LSSI is an innovative organization that seeks to improve the lives of individuals and families in our community and actively share the love and forgiveness that is ours through Christ." – Ann Trzynka

"I'm excited to be on LSSI's board because I appreciate LSSI for its Christ-centered focus and innovative programming, like LSSI Works, that gives folks a new beginning." – Art Schroeder