



Preparing for the Workforce of Today and Tomorrow

*How two LSSI programs
are equipping people with
the skills they need to succeed.*

The Workforce of Today

In just a few short months, Lutheran Social Services of Indiana will celebrate the sixth anniversary of our workforce development program, LSSI Works. Understandably, six years doesn't necessarily sound significant, especially after we just finished celebrating 120 years of service to our community. For the families who benefit from LSSI Works, however, that milestone is significant indeed.

In fact, we see that significance is only going to grow in the coming year, as Gillian Frazier, Development Coordinator at LSSI, explains. "Two years of substantial government subsidies during the pandemic for families living in poverty will be coming to an end. Some families have become dependent on that support."

Thankfully, individuals and families who continued to work diligently through LSSI programs are ready. "Our clients are equipped with budgets and savings plans," says Frazier, "They are equipped with plans that do not include extra subsidies. But for every family we have been able to help move toward stability, there are other families in our community close to or in crisis. Some individuals haven't worked for two, three or ten years who will need to find employment. They will need a refresher in the

types of personal skills that lead to successful career paths, the very skills we specialize in providing at LSSI Works."

That is why we at LSSI are so grateful our leadership team looked to the future over six years ago and supported the development of LSSI Works. "Prior to the program beginning, LSSI was assisting individuals in many programs to find employment as part of the economic stability element in our impact statement. As we did so, we realized that although some clients had the skills they needed to get a job, they struggled to keep that job," explains LSSI Works Program Director Fatima Washington. "We realized that people could get jobs without a problem. They could also learn how to do a job with no problem. The difficulty usually came from those things outside their job. Those personal obstacles that start outside of the work environment but drastically impact how you are able to navigate and perform in the workplace." Some of those skills include being able to function in a team or understanding the value of constructive criticism.

"Once LSSI Works was up and running, it was clear that the program was absolutely essential," said Washington. "Many of the people who were most successful in LSSI Works were individuals who had been chronically unemployed and were not even counted in unemployment numbers."

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Great Hope for 2022

A letter from Angela Moellering, President and CEO



Last year was an amazing one for LSSI. After all, it's not every year that you get to celebrate 120 years of service! Coming off such an accomplishment, it might be easy to wonder how we could possibly top such an event.

And yet, as I look ahead to 2022, I have great hope. That is because 2021 wasn't just a year set aside for us to celebrate our amazing history. Of course, we had much to celebrate. But 2021 was also a year of building for the future.

One of the ways we have been able to prepare for our future is through your contributions. Your monetary support gives us a stable financial foundation upon which we can build programs that make a difference. Government assistance for families is fleeting. **Your financial gifts offer stability to us as an organization, and by extension stability to the families we serve.**

My hope is great because during 2021 your impact was immense. You gave out of your abundance to help those in need, and the need was great indeed. In fact, while we were blessed with increased donations, we were also facing an increased demand for services, and that demand continues into 2022.

Unfortunately, during the last two years, many families began to rely on significant government assistance to meet their daily needs. As the country moves out of this phase of the pandemic, that support is coming to an end. Families without a plan will be in trouble, perhaps even deeper trouble than when the pandemic started.

Thankfully, God knew this moment was coming and He prepared the way. Over six years ago, the leadership team at LSSI looked to the future and saw the need for a program that promoted economic development for the families we serve. Looking back, I can see how God was putting us in a place where we could rapidly respond in 2022 to needs that we could have never imagined when we launched LSSI Works six years ago.

For families without subsidies or plans in place, LSSI is able to step in, offering support

that addresses their needs by teaching budgeting skills and basic financial literacy through Cup of Kindness. Through this program, we give them an opportunity to understand and manage their finances and take steps to create a secure financial future. The goal is financial stability and independence.

That's also where LSSI Works comes in, offering personal development, job retention strategies, and professional development skills that help individuals move beyond the barrier of unemployment. Certainly, we want to help our clients get through today, but we also want them to see their potential to thrive for tomorrow.

Programs such as these are only possible through the grant dollars and individual gifts that we receive from people like you. So thank you!

Please join us virtually for our Annual Celebration, where you can see the impact you made in 2021. And together, let's get ready for an amazing year in 2022, one that brings great promise and prepares individuals and families for today and tomorrow!

Join Us for a Virtual Celebration of Today, Tomorrow and Forever

Once again, due to an abundance of caution, our Annual Celebration for 2022 will be virtual. While we will miss celebrating with you face-to-face, we are pleased to be able to offer you the flexibility to join in when you are able. Be on the lookout for more details on how to participate, and LSSI delegates, please watch your mail for your delegate packet and proxy information!

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

Preparing for the workforce

(Continued from cover)

Removing the barriers to successful career paths for clients is what LSSI Works is all about. "One of the biggest lessons our Works participants learn is how to handle their personal life challenges so those issues don't impact their employment status," says Washington. "Those personal barriers could include toxic relationships, lack of personal supports or habits that have negatively impacted them."

"This program is about long lasting change, not a Band-Aid," says Washington. "Confidence is something that you can only pretend for so long. At that point, that person has to make a decision."

"Once LSSI Works was up and running, it was clear that the program was absolutely essential,"

– Fatima Washington

LSSI WORKS

These lessons for participants are important during the initial phase of the program, but also important later as well. Once participants are stably employed and begin to realize they can meet their pressing needs of today, they begin making real progress taking on other issues. "About six months into the follow-along support that we offer," said Washington, "people start getting comfortable with the idea that their daily needs are being met, and we begin to move them along the path to even greater family stability."

In fact, family stability and economic stability are highly interconnected. "We talk to participants frequently about personal issues impacting professional life and vice versa," says Washington. "Now, with the expansion of programs at the LSSI Fort Wayne North location, participants can easily access other services in the same building. We want to holistically make a positive impact for a person or family to bring them closer to maintaining economic and family stability to impart generational changes."



The Workforce of Tomorrow

LSSI Works isn't the only place we're making a workforce development impact. Again, LSSI Development Coordinator Gillian Frazier explains, "As we begin to celebrate the success of our Works families, we became aware that these clients were developing many of the same social, emotional skills we already emphasize at Children's Village (CV), just in a more grown-up way."

Understandably, the children at CV won't be entering the workforce for at least another decade or so, but the skills they are learning in their six to eight hours with us each day are incredibly similar to the skills developed at LSSI Works. "We might not call it 'The Power of the Pause' (an LSSI Works exercise on stress response) with our preschoolers," said Frazier, "but our teachers do encourage our preschoolers to 'stop and think' before they react," she said. "It's the same skill, just taught in a different, age-appropriate way."



Our CV programming offers the additional benefit of childcare to families who wouldn't otherwise have an opportunity to work or go to school. "Parents are able to have a safe environment for their children so they can focus on growing professionally," said Frazier, "and they can also benefit from engagement programs for parents by staff at CV. Informally, children are bringing home new skills their parents may not have known how to teach."

Through both of these programs, Children's Village and LSSI Works, individuals and families are gaining benefits they never dreamed of. They are developing both the economic and family stability they need to be successful for the long-term. Frazier concludes, "We are dramatically impacting the trajectory of these families, not just for today, but for tomorrow as well."



Children's Village

Lutheran Social Services of Indiana | Lutheran Life Villages

If you would like to receive an electronic copy of The Perspective, please contact Gillian Frazier at gffrazier@lssin.org or (260) 426-3347.

Our 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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Economic Stability Crosses Program Lines

How personal development is making a difference for clients in Recovery Care

LSSI Works and Children's Village aren't the only places where individuals and families are receiving the personal and professional skill development they need to find and maintain meaningful employment. In fact, economic stability is occurring in almost every program at LSSI in ways that are best suited for those families, even in programs where it might not be immediately apparent, such as Recovery Care.

"When someone begins in Recovery Care," said Gillian Frazier, LSSI Development Coordinator, "they have already done some intensive recovery work. Next comes the task of establishing a sober lifestyle outside of recovery, and this is where LSSI is best suited to support them."

For Recovery Care clients, that includes creating a safe and healthy living environment and establishing personal boundaries. "When you're in recovery," said Frazier, "your network gets very small. Once people pass the initial stages of recovery, they might need help navigating the process of getting back into a world where life has continued without them while they were dealing with the addiction."

Of course, not everyone in Recovery Care needs help with a job search. Many have the professional skills to secure a position. It's the personal issues that can make it difficult. If not addressed, those issues begin to impact the work-life balance in negative ways.

"That's where LSSI Recovery Care Coordinators come in, offering "follow-along" support, helping clients work on personal and professional skills simultaneously. This work can include encouragement to develop skills at LSSI Works. In some cases, Recovery Care clients need a more one-on-one approach to professional development. Either way, LSSI staff is committed to helping to move individuals toward economic stability.

Your support makes it possible to offer a path to healing and economic stability. We thank you for the very real way you are impacting the lives of people throughout our community.