

STORIES THROUGH THE YEARS

Meet Our Clients



JOHNATHAN
ACE PROGRAM

At only 24 years old, Johnathan found himself blindsided by an HIV diagnosis that not only brought him close to death but left him far removed from his loved ones.

At first, he was too scared to even come into Lutheran Social Services for his appointment with our AIDS Care and Education (ACE) program. He remembers sitting outside crying, feeling hopeless. His first steps into the building at LSS were symbolic of his first steps on the road to recovery.

Two years later, Johnathan's health has improved so that his HIV is now undetectable. He also became a full-time peer navigator with the ACE program, offering other individuals with HIV the clarity, comfort and resources he received when he needed it most.

"The team at LSS treated me like a human being when my own family wouldn't."



JUNIOR
REFUGEE SERVICES

Junior was born a refugee in Uganda with few resources. She and her four siblings had to work long hours on a farm to pay fees to attend school, and they lacked adequate medical care. Her family's most harrowing moment came when her brother was kidnapped for several months by the Lord's Resistance Army, a rebel group known for murder, abduction and child slavery.

In 2013, Junior's family was resettled in the U.S. after her father had become physically disabled from a leg injury. She began school excited to learn but nervous. Although she was familiar with English, she still faced significant cultural and language barriers.

But Junior received the help she needed through Lutheran Social Services. The nonprofit's refugee student program not only connected her with tutoring in classes and help with homework, but also provided her with a welcoming, multicultural community.

"I would feel left out and have no friends without LSS. It feels great to have someone who can relate to you."



RICARDO & BRENDA
NOURISHMENT NETWORK

Ricardo and Brenda came to Jacksonville in 2013 looking for a fresh start. Ricardo had accepted a position with an airline and moved his family to the area, opting to stay in a local hotel until they could find a proper place to live. But a few nights at the hotel turned into a few weeks, and a few weeks into a few months.

Alone in a new city, the family remained positive, but began to worry when food became scarce for their three children. That's when they turned to the Nourishment Network.

The program provided Ricardo and Brenda with fresh produce and a variety of foods to help fill the gaps through this difficult time for the family. The couple said the support took a big pressure off their shoulders while they got back on their feet.

"We needed help, and I thank God every day that we found it through the Nourishment Network."

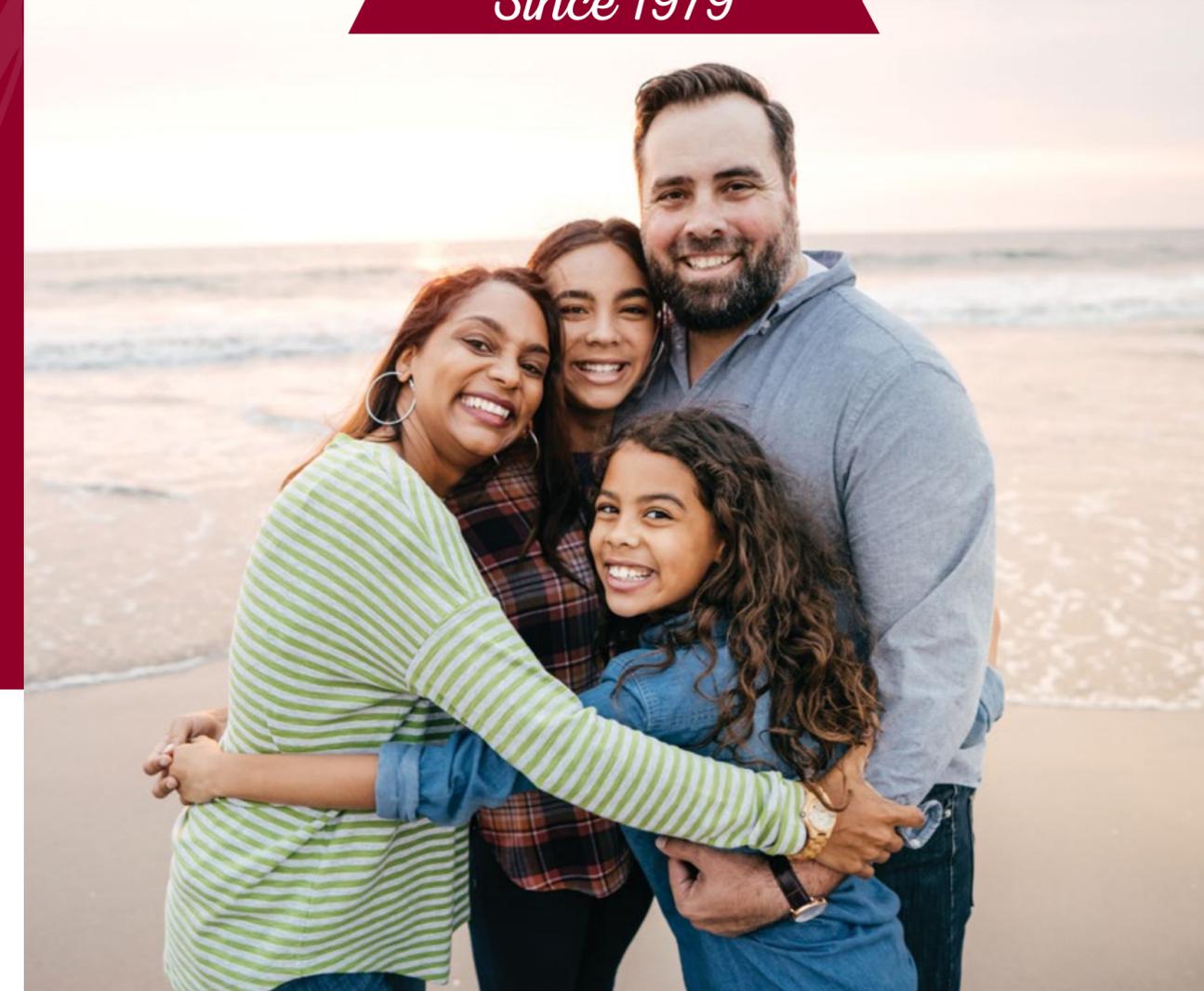


40 LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES
CELEBRATING 40 YEARS SERVING THE COMMUNITY

LSSJax.org | 904-448-5995

PROVIDING NEW BEGINNINGS

Since 1979



Thank you TO THE FOLLOWING COMMUNITY PARTNERS FOR HELPING CONTINUE THE LSS MISSION OF CARING FOR PEOPLE IN NEED:



40 LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES
CELEBRATING 40 YEARS SERVING THE COMMUNITY

HELPING OUR NEIGHBORS IN NEED

Lutheran Social Services of Northeast Florida (LSS) operates five very different community outreach programs that share an important commonality... the ability to help those facing hardships stabilize their lives and earn a fresh start.

PROVIDING FAMILIES WITH FRESH FOOD NOURISHMENT NETWORK

One in six people living in Duval County don't know when or where they will get their next meal. That's why LSS has spent 40 years fighting food insecurity through the Nourishment Network, our hunger relief program. Our most comprehensive hunger relief initiative is the Nourishment Network Market, the first client-choice food pantry based on Jacksonville's Southside. We also provide crucial support to food-insecure youth through our Backpack Program as well as food delivery to seniors living in low-income housing complexes throughout the area.



ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH HIV AIDS CARE AND EDUCATION PROGRAM

Our proven team has assisted individuals with HIV/AIDS for decades. The AIDS Care and Education Program (ACE) offers support services, including case management, therapeutic intervention and housing assistance. We also provide HIV-positive individuals with on-site medical care at the CAN Community Health Clinic at LSS. This clinic is the only comprehensive care facility on the Southside, making the challenges our clients face easier with a full scope of quality services under one roof.

SUPPORTING REFUGEES IN OUR COMMUNITY REFUGEE SERVICES

Our Refugee Services staff helps refugees find housing, enroll children in schools, identify employment opportunities, and apply for government identification. We also find new ways to enrich the community like working with JTA to translate maps and travel cards for current refugees working in the area.

COACHING INDIVIDUALS TO FINANCIAL SUCCESS STEPS 2 SUCCESS

Steps 2 Success offers a comprehensive approach to financial assistance for First Coast residents. Our staff operates in Florida's first Financial Opportunity Center and helps individuals with career counseling, job placement, one-on-one financial coaching, and income support services like food stamps and utility assistance. This program is in partnership with LISC Jacksonville, United Way of Northeast Florida, Family Foundations of Northeast Florida, and New Town Success Zone.

HELPING THE VULNERABLE MANAGE FINANCES MONEY MINDERS

Money Minders works with underserved residents, managing their Social Security and disability benefits to ensure their basic needs are met. This program is essential in stopping the cycle of homelessness for some of our most vulnerable neighbors, including those who struggle with mental illness, developmental disabilities or other challenges.



LSS BEGINS SERVING THE COMMUNITY

The Rev. Dale Gatz is appointed as the first CEO of LSS, serving the organization for more than 10 years. Gatz was responsible for shaping the vision of LSS alongside board president Marie Friedsam.

NOURISHMENT NETWORK ESTABLISHED

The first initiative operated by the nonprofit was the Nourishment Network – a small food pantry that would eventually grow tremendously in size and reach.

REFUGEE SERVICES PROGRAM ESTABLISHED

LSS established its refugee services program to aid those fleeing from religious, political or economic persecution. One year later, the nonprofit began assisting in the resettlement process for refugees, providing a wide range of services ranging from housing assistance to employment support.

ACE PROGRAM ESTABLISHED

The AIDS Care and Education program was established by LSS to provide case management, mental health services and education for people who are HIV-positive. The ACE Program is one of the few initiatives in Northeast Florida that provides wraparound services to HIV/AIDS patients, providing over 1,200 clients with access to vital services each year.

MONEY MINDERS PROGRAM ESTABLISHED

This program began after the Social Security Administration and the Florida Department of Children and Families approached LSS to assist the local low-income population. The Money Minders program helps these individuals manage their fiscal affairs appropriately to provide for their basic needs.

LSS BACKPACK PROGRAM LAUNCHES

The LSS Backpack Program was introduced to hundreds of food-insecure kids right here in our community. Every Friday, students and their parents can count on the program to provide a bag of food to support the entire family over the weekend.



LSS RELOCATES TO PHILIPS HIGHWAY

LSS leadership decided to relocate headquarters to Philips Highway for a larger, more central location designed to better serve the community.



FIRST COAST NEWS AIRS FEATURE SERIES

First Coast News shed light on local hunger through its Faces of Hunger series – a month-long initiative that told the stories of multiple food-insecure families and explained how the Nourishment Network and others in the community work together to solve hunger every day.



TWO NEW SERVICES ESTABLISHED

LSS worked with CAN Community Health to provide the first HIV/AIDS clinic on the Southside to offer individuals with HIV a one-stop shop for their case management and medical services. The nonprofit also partnered with LISC Jacksonville to bring the first Financial Opportunity Center, called Steps 2 Success, to our area.

CLIENT-CHOICE FOOD PANTRY OPENS

With support from Trulieve and Feeding Northeast Florida, LSS opened the first client-choice food pantry on Jacksonville's Southside to better serve the needs of the food-insecure individuals and families it serves. This model allows clients to select nutritious food that fits their dietary needs and significantly reduces food waste while bringing dignity to those in need.

OUR IMPACT

Since 1979

 230+ Million Pounds OF FOOD DISTRIBUTED

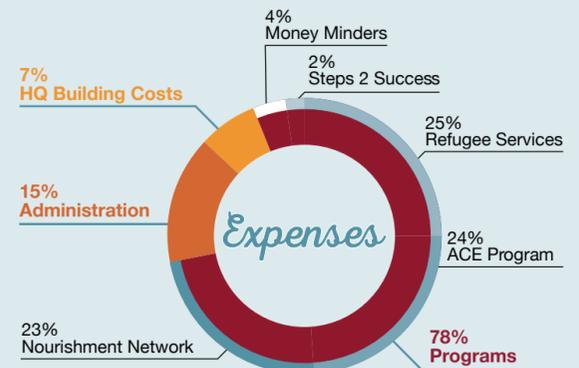
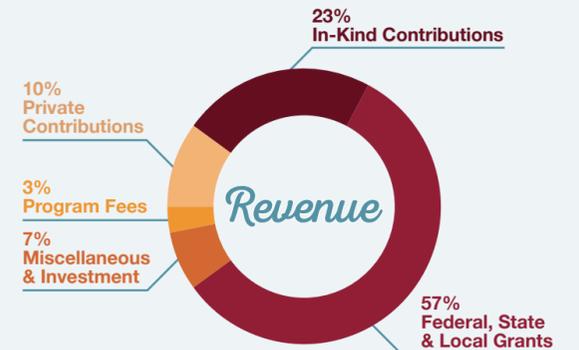
CLIENTS SERVED

 5,126 ACE PROGRAM

 4,544 MONEY MINDERS

 12,000 REFUGEE SERVICES

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT FY 2018



1979

1980

1992

1995

2001

2008

2013

2018

2019