



LUTHERAN
SOCIAL
SERVICES

HEARTBEATS

2004-05 ANNUAL REPORT

SPRING 2006

WWW.LSSJAX.ORG

VOLUME 16 ISSUE 2

A Message from the Director of Advancement

An annual report is one of those things that a nonprofit agency has to do each year. It is a factual accounting of how the organization performed the previous year and where it received its funding.

But to my way of thinking, an annual report is an opportunity to draw attention to all the good things that have happened and to all of the caring people who have made the work possible. It serves to inspire and motivate all of us for the work that may be accomplished in the current year by building on the past. A blessing in disguise, I would say.

Already a number of you who care about LSS and the people we serve have responded to our 2006 Have A Heart Campaign. Many of you have already volunteered to help the agency with donations of items needed for resettlement or food needed for distribution to agencies feeding hungry people.

If your name is listed in the enclosed report of 2004-05 donors, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts. We continue to need your support as we look to increase current services and begin new programs, even in the face of decreased funding from the government.

If your name is not listed inside, we hope that you will consider helping us this year. A reply envelope is included in this report for you to make a gift, or you can make a gift online at www.lssjax.org.

Please tell us if you are a Thrivent Financial for Lutherans member, so that we can maximize your gift through the Giving Plus Program, and if your company matches employees' charitable contributions.

*--Karen J. Rieley, director of advancement
and Heartbeats Editor*

LSS helps people in need in 2004-05 with support from thousands of caring people and organizations

Second Harvest Food Bank distributes most food ever

The 2004-05 fiscal year was a milestone for the LSS Second Harvest Food Bank, thanks in part to the Super Bowl in Jacksonville. The Food Bank was named the official organization for food recovery for over 50 sanctioned NFL events, and as a result, recovered over 64,545 pounds of food, which equates to 43,030 meals.

In total, the Food Bank redistributed the most food ever – 7.65 million pounds of food last year, and became one of four food banks in the country to win the Grocery Manufacturers of America Growth Recognition Award. At nearly 8 million pounds of food distributed, the Food Bank is nearly 1 million pounds over its capacity as rated by America's Second Harvest, the national food network of which it is a part. And yet, also according to studies by America's Second Harvest, there is enough need in Northeast Florida for the Food Bank to be distributing 12 million pounds of food each year.

LSS President/CEO Wayne Rieley formed a Food Bank Task Group to study and recommend how the agency can best increase its capacity. The group includes Bryan Bartlett, Grubb and Ellis/Phoenix Realty Group; J.F. Bryan IV, Reinhold Foundation; Terry Derreberry, Winn-Dixie Corporation;

Tommy Grimes, Grimes Logistics; Larry Huser, LSS Board of Directors; Marty Lanahan, AmSouth Bank; Jerry Mackoul, Mackoul Distributors; Mike Santarone, The Stellar Group, and Susan White, EverBank.

The Food for Families Mobile Pantries program of the Food Bank supplied grocery boxes to more than 2,500 individuals. The Food for Families Mobile Pantry program is designed to effectively distribute donated food directly to families in need in their own neighborhood. The Food Bank works with a sponsoring group in identifying an appropriate distribution point and recruiting volunteers to assist in the distribution. Last year, the City of Baldwin sponsored a Mobile Pantry at the St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church in Baldwin. Other Mobile Pantries were sponsored by Gerda Ameristeel at its plant in Baldwin and by Murray Jenks at the Eastside Community Center.

The Food Bank's Kids Cafe grew dramatically last year, serving 33 percent more after-school snacks and 330 percent more meals. In total, 51 Kids Cafe sites served over 10,000 meals each week last year. Most of the funding for Kids Cafe came in the form of reimbursements from the Florida Departments of Health and Education. The Lucy Gooding Charitable Trust Foundation and Publix Charitable Foundation also funded the Kids Cafe program.

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Through a cooperative effort between members of the Second Harvest Food Bank network and local civic and government support, Kids Cafe has become one of the nation's largest free meal service programs for children.

Locally, the LSS Second Harvest Food Bank Kids Cafe works in conjunction with agency host sites, such as Boys and

Girls Clubs, faith organizations and after school programs. Kids Cafe offers children in low-income neighborhoods a safe place to find nourishment, meet role models, and participate in activities designed to

enhance both educational and social development. The Kids Cafe works through donated and purchased foods and supplies. Menus are developed and items are distributed to participating sites. Staff and volunteers assist with homework and other planned activities.

Thirty-five percent more Weekend Meals were also distributed through the Kids Cafe program last year. Kids who are hungry during the week are often hungry throughout the weekend as well. Thanks to funding from ConAgra Foods, which is the national sponsor of America's Second Harvest's Kids Cafe program and from Food Lion Stores, the LSS Second Harvest Food Bank

distributed food to 900 children, enough for 13,283 meals.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) provided USDA commodities to the Food Bank, which it distributed to member agencies for free and TEFAP reimbursed the Food Bank for the cost of distributing the food. The



National Association of Letter Carriers Food Drive, May 14, 2005

State of Florida Department of Education funded the Summer Meal Program so that the Food Bank could continue to help the families of children served in Kids Cafe even after the school year ended. The City of Jacksonville

Public Service Grant also funded Food Bank operational costs.

In addition to these government grants, the Florida Association of Food Banks funded some of the transportation costs incurred by the Food Bank to recover food, and United Way of Northeast Florida, the Jaguars, Kraft Foods, and the Edna Sproull Williams Foundation all supported the Food Bank last year as well.

Many individual and corporate donors send financial gifts, as well as donate food and volunteer time, to help the Food Bank in its ongoing efforts to end hunger in Northeast Florida. For every dollar donated, the Food Bank is able to distribute \$8.09 worth of food.

The Food Bank shares food out to its member agencies for an average sharing fee of about nine and a half cents per pound; however, some items, such as bread, cakes, and Costco products, are shared out at three cents per pound. This sharing fee provides revenue against expenses incurred for facility and equipment maintenance and food handling and shipping.

Special events are also an important source of funds to support the work of the Food Bank. Last year Empty Bowls returned to the Prime Osborn Convention Center in November last year after maxing out the space available in the Radisson Riverwalk Hotel. Over 800 people attended and the event raised more than \$26,000 for the Food Bank. AmSouth served as the premier sponsor for the sixth year.

Also in November, the Taste of NFL – Jacksonville celebrity dinner raised over \$100,000, making Jacksonville the third highest revenue producer among all Taste events held by NFL team owners around the country last year. The National Taste of NFL, held during Super Bowl weekend in February last year, donated \$140,000 to the LSS Second Harvest Food Bank.

LSS Food Bank shares food with social service agencies to help end hunger

Trinity Rescue Mission's operations manager, Mickey Gaydosh, knows how important the LSS Second Harvest Food Bank is to their agency. "We are able to achieve our goal of offering a cost-effective way to get people off the streets and help them become productive members of society, thanks in part to the food we get from the Food Bank," Mickey told LSS supporters recently.

According to Mickey, Trinity Rescue Mission served 165,000 meals in 2005 on a budget of just \$5,000. The mission is opening a 96-bed center for women and children in 2006 that will nearly double its meals outtake to 300,000 meals.

The LSS Second Harvest Food Bank is working hard to increase the quantity of food it has available for redistribution to help Trinity Rescue Mission and 400 other organizations working to end hunger in Northeast Florida.



Empty Bowls Luncheon, Nov. 15, 2005

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The National Association of Letter Carriers Food Drive held in May last year brought in 194,774 pounds of food to stock the Food Bank shelves during the summer months. And following a one-year hiatus, the Jacksonville Food Fight returned this past June and raised a record \$40,000, thanks in large part to Everbank as the event's presenting sponsor.



Food for Families Mobile Pantry, March 24, 2005, Baldwin, Fla.

Last year's hurricane season kept the Food Bank busy as well. In addition to its usual disaster response of food and water to affected areas, the Food Bank, in partnership with PRI and Baptist Health, sent multiple tractor trailers into the Gulf region. It also handed out emergency food boxes to evacuees coming to the Food Bank location and the LSS main offices and distributed extra amounts of food to the member agencies serving evacuees in Northeast Florida.

Refugee and Immigration Services Program resettles refugees and helps families adjust to new life

Last year, the Refugee and Immigration Services (RIS) Program resettled 234 people from other countries – 80 from Africa, 61 from the Western Hemisphere, 51 from the former Soviet Union, 32 from Eastern Europe, and 10 from Asia. These people had been granted the status of refugee, asylee, or entrant by our country's State Department because they were escaping persecution due to political wars or religious beliefs. They came to LSS via Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS), Episcopal Migration Ministries (EMM), and Church World Service.

The 27 RIS staff members speak a total of 19 languages and come from 14 countries in the world. They work to pave the way for refugees in learning about the American culture, government requirements, banking, and employment processes. Their goal is to promote long-term economic self-sufficiency and effective resettlement for refugees, entrants, and asylees.

Through Resettlement Services, the RIS staff works to introduce newly-arrived refugees to their new community. Staff members help refugees secure safe

housing, food, cash assistance, public health screenings, health care, and Social Security cards.

Through Employment Services, RIS staff assists all eligible refugees in achieving economic self-sufficiency and effective resettlement in as short of a time period as possible by helping them find gainful employment. Staff members help refugees search for jobs, write resumes, and learn how to complete job applications.

The RIS Program has longstanding relationships with a number of employers

LSS helps bring miracle of sight to Liberian refugee

RIS caseworker Rachel Obal, a refugee herself originally from the Sudan, knows miracles happen. Just ask her to tell her amazing story about a blind Liberian refugee whose sight was restored. The Liberian and his 13-year-old son were sent to LSS for resettlement into a Southside apartment, and Rachel was assigned to be his caseworker.

The first time that Rachel met him, she tried to greet him by shaking his hand, but he did not reach out to meet her hand. She wondered if it was because it was not part of his people's tradition to shake hands. Then she realized that he was blind; in fact, he said he had been blind for 10 years.

Rachel asked his 13-year-old son if he knew how to cook. He said no. She asked him who cooked for them when they were living in the refugee camp. He said that some relatives helped them. So, Rachel went shopping and then came back to their apartment to cook two big pots of rice and chicken stew. She left them lots of fruit for their desserts.

Rachel eventually took the father for a medical check-up and the doctor referred him to the Jacksonville Eye Center. The doctor there discovered that one of the father's eyes was totally dead, but he recommended surgery for the other eye.

Rachel went with the father so that she could help with interpretation during the surgery. Before the surgery, the doctor warned them that there was no guarantee that the father would be able to see after the surgery. The father agreed to the surgery. Rachel asked if she could pray before the surgery began and both the father and doctor agreed. Rachel prayed for a miracle.

The surgery took almost one hour. When the father saw Rachel for the first time, he said, "Are you Mama Rachel?" Rachel said yes.

Then he said, "Are you a black woman?" Again Rachel said yes.

"I thought you were a white woman," he said. Then he started screaming, "I can see the trees and their different colors. I can see people with different colors.

"I can see houses with different colors!" Rachel was so excited that she burst into tears, and the nurses joined her. She knelt down and thanked God for a miracle.

Once the father's eye was completely healed, he could cook, clean, and wash his clothes and do the housework needed. He is now working in the Omni Hotel. He is self-sufficient and taking care of his son. He even has enough money to send to his relatives in Liberia. He is now learning to drive and soon will be able to buy his own car.

Proof enough to Rachel that miracles do happen.



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in Jacksonville who are eager to hire refugees. The top five employers last year were Gate Concrete, Venus Swimwear, Cintas, Best Western Hotels, and Aramark. They hired refugees mainly from Bosnia, Cuba, Haiti, Liberia, and Sudan.

In Career Laddering, staff members help each refugee develop an individual career track based on agreed-upon career goals.

Refugees are encouraged to target specific jobs and identify professional growth objectives, including further education needed, skills training, and credentialing necessary before moving to the next step on the career ladder.

Last year, Career Laddering staff helped 29 refugees find and participate in further training to advance their careers. For example, a Liberian woman received training as a Certified Nursing Assistant and was able to move from working as a housekeeper earning \$6 per hour to a patient care assistant earning \$8.50 per hour. A Cuban man attended classes so that he could achieve a commercial driver's license, Class A (CDLA license) and was able to move from working as a carpenter's helper earning \$10 per hour to working as a CDLA driver earning \$13.50 per hour. After participating in a Computer Programming Certificate Program at Florida Community College at Jacksonville, a Sudanese man who had been working as a machine operator earning \$9 per hour was able to get a job as a computer programmer earning \$18 per hour.

The Refugee Youth Program provides services to assist all eligible refugee youth and their families in achieving family stability and integration into the Jacksonville community. School liaisons work within the schools to help refugee youth with all aspects of the public school educational system, such as

development of good study habits and tutoring if necessary. Last year, the Refugee Youth Program worked with 155 youth – 78 girls and 77 boys. They came from 24 countries, including Afghanistan, Angola, Azerbaijan, Burundi, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, Congo, Croatia, Cuba, Ethiopia, Gambia, Haiti, Iran, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Liberia, Myanmar, Russia, Sudan, Uzbekistan, Yugoslavia, Mauritania, Sierra Leone, and the Ukraine.

As part of the Healthy Marriages/ Family Nurturing Services, staff members provide eligible refugee youth and their families with hands-

on assistance and guidance in the areas of family violence or psychosocial issues that may impede their progress toward self-sufficiency. Last year, these services helped 13 women and 9 men from eight countries.

Several government contracts support the majority of the work done in the RIS Program: contracts from the State of Florida Department of Children and Families that allow LSS to provide Employment Services including Career Laddering and Refugee Youth Program Services including Healthy Marriages/ Family Nurturing Services, and a cooperative agreement by the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration with LIRS and EMM to provide Reception and Placement Services.

Private grants help refugees sent to LSS with needs beyond the contractual limits set by the government, for example with rent, utilities, medical, and dental needs. Last year, funds from the Thomas M. and Irene B. Kirbo Charitable Trust helped cover some of these expenses.

ACE Program assists hundreds more people from all walks of life

Fifteen full-time staff members in the LSS AIDS Care and Education (ACE) program worked with 966 people last year who were HIV-positive. Three hundred fifty of these were new to the ACE program.

The ACE program provided case management services and referrals for health care and supportive services to 794 people last year. In addition, 52 people received mental health services from ACE's mental health counselor and 172 people were assisted through the H.O.W. program (Housing Opportunities for Women and Children). The staff's primary goals are to educate people about how HIV is contracted to help reduce its spread and to encourage people to be tested so that those who are HIV-positive will get medical help as early as possible.

Staff members assisted people with all aspects of their medical care. They helped them move into homes and apartments and find furniture, household items, heaters, AC units, clothing, and other personal items. Staff members helped people with HIV/AIDS find and interview for jobs. They served as advocates for the people they served to landlords, lawyers, and Department of Children and Families staff. They taught people how to budget and live independently.

Through the ACE Jail LINC (Linking Inmates Needing Care) program, staff worked with HIV-positive people incarcerated in the Duval County Jail. They continued to work with these people once they were released to break the cycle of behaviors that led to the arrest in the first place.

The ACE staff reached out and served people living in rural areas, women, racial/ethnic minorities and communities of color, homeless people,



Refugee Youth 2005 Summertime Express Camp

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gay, lesbian, and bisexual adults, incarcerated persons, injection drug users and other drug users, and parolees. In all, staff members had a total of 14,694 visits to or from those served in the program.

The majority of the people the program served last year, 568, were 25-44 years old, and another 62 people were 18-24 years old. Two hundred eighty-two of the people served were 45-64 years old and 33 were 65 years or older. In terms of race and ethnicity, 254 were white, 671 were black or African American, 25 were Hispanic or Latino, and one was Asian.

Most of the people served in the program, 738 of the 966, had household income at or lower than the Federal poverty line; however, only six of them

were homeless. Seventeen people with whom the staff worked died before the end of the year.

The majority of the services that the ACE Program offered last year were funded by the following government contracts:

- Ryan White Case Management – Ryan White Title II (via Jewish Family and Community Services (JFCS), which is the Lead Agency contracted by HIV/AIDS Program Office of the Florida DOH);
- Jail LINC Case Management – Ryan White Title II (also via JFCS) and Ryan White Title I (via City of Jacksonville Department of Mental Health & Welfare, which receives the funds as an Emerging Metropolitan Area from the State of Florida);

- Ryan White Mental Health – Ryan White Title II (via JFCS except for some of the administration cost) and Ryan White Title I (via City of Jacksonville, Mental Health & Welfare for a portion of the administration cost);
- Housing Opportunities for Women and Children, Shared Housing, and Transitional Resources & Assistance for Inmates needing Services – Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (via the federal government to the state government to the City of Jacksonville);
- Project AIDS Care Waiver Case Management – State of Florida Medicaid (a certification of the agency and individual case managers to provide the service).

Thanks to additional funding provided through grants from brAIDS and St. Luke's Metropolitan Church, the ACE Program was also able to help people with furnishings and household goods needed to set up apartments.

ACE Program helps people take care of themselves and their families

Some people who are HIV-positive or living with AIDS became infected through no direct action of their own. Denise Johnson, ACE Housing Program manager, tells the story of a woman who found out three years ago that she was infected with the HIV virus when she visited her doctor for prenatal care of her son who was eventually born with the HIV infection. Her husband of 10 years infected her with the virus, and after this youngest son was born, abandoned them and their two other children.

The mother has worked since the birth of her son; however, she became ill about five months ago and fell behind in paying her rent and other bills. Three months ago, the mother and her three children were evicted from their home. Since then, they have been staying with her mother in a nearby neighborhood.

A case manager referred the mother to the LSS ACE Housing Program. Denise encouraged her to work on her goals of finding decent and affordable housing, keeping her family intact, and maintaining medical treatment for herself and her infected son. Her two other children have managed to make the A – B Honor Roll in school, and she worried that their homelessness will threaten their grade averages, as well as their mental and emotional wellbeing.

The mother became ecstatic at the prospect that the ACE Housing Program would be able to help her to find and maintain decent, affordable housing in the children's school area, as well as being able to continue medical treatment with a doctor whom she has come to trust and value. The HOW (Housing Opportunities for Women and Children) program, helped the mother find a small house near her physician's office.

She has to take only one bus to and from her employment. Denise also provided her with bus tokens to alleviate the costs of transportation to daycare and to work on a daily basis.

The family also received new household items and cleaning supplies to maintain their new housing. The mother was so grateful to the LSS Housing Program that she prepared cake and ice cream and invited the housing staff to an open house.

Denise will be able to help the mother with four additional months of support, encouragement, and financial assistance, which should allow this family to "get back on its feet," and remain a happy, thriving, and intact family.



Representative Payee Program helps people make good decisions

As the only agency in Northeast Florida that manages Social Security checks for people not capable of spending their money appropriately, the LSS Representative Payee Program helped 896 people last year. The seven staff members in the program worked to meet a series of objectives designed to keep the people with whom they worked off the streets and ensure that their basic living needs were met.

Staff members met the following objectives last year:

- Provided fiscal management for 60 persons receiving Social Security benefits and living with HIV/AIDS;
- Met face-to-face with 85 percent of the people for whom they provided fiscal management services;

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- Ensured that new clients in the program had housing within 60 days of beginning Representative Payee services;
- Paid all monthly fixed bills for the people with whom they worked and helped them live within their established budgets;
- Prevented homelessness for all of the persons living with HIV/AIDS;
- Ensured that 90 percent of the people with whom they worked did not experience incarcerations;
- Referred all of the people who needed referral to substance abuse treatment or mental health treatment.

Of the people with whom they worked last year, most were 18-59 years old. Five were four years old or younger, 21 were ages 5-17, and 122 were 60 and older. About an equal number were African-American and Caucasian. Four were Asian/Pacific Islander and four were Hispanic. About half of those served lived in assisted living facilities (ALFs) and half lived on their own. All of the

people served last year are considered low income, according to the Federal Poverty Guideline.

The Representative Payee Program works in partnership with over 50 assisted living facilities, the Mental Health Resource Center, Mental Health Center of Jacksonville, River Region Human Services, Northwest Behavioral Services, Clay County Behavior Services, St. Johns County Mental Health Department, Nassau County Mental Health Services, North Florida AIDS Network, the LSS ACE Program, and Gateway Community Services. These partnerships help staff members follow the whereabouts of the people they serve, understand their total financial obligations, and work together to make sure that these people are able to access services that they need.

The people whom this program serves are especially susceptible to making bad spending decisions and are often easily manipulated by others. Before they were required to have a

Representative Payee, these people would often spend most or all of their Social Security checks on alcohol, drugs, or non-essential items without regard to shelter, food, and other basic needs. They then were forced to turn to other community resources as well as federal monies to survive the rest of the month, using the resources of other community services to house, feed, or otherwise care for them after their money was gone.

Government funding for the Representative Payee Program came from the State of Florida Department of Children and Families for Substance Abuse and Mental Health and from the City of Jacksonville Public Service Grant. The program also received fees from clients who were not covered under these two grants. These clients pay \$32 per month and the amount is deducted from their account each month. The cost to cover program expenses for each client is actually about \$44 per month.



Representative Payee Program helps keep people safe and sound

LSS Representative Payee financial associate Lejla Terzic feels a sense of accomplishment from helping one of the people with whom she works find a safe place to live. When she first met the young man, he was going from friend to friend for help and for a place to stay. He had no food, but Lejla was only able to give him \$35 a week from his Social Security benefits, based on his homeless status.

Lejla asked the young man many questions about his living arrangements and how he was surviving on the streets. He explained to her that he wanted to have a "roof above his head," a nice, warm place where he could possibly even take a shower with clean water.

Lejla was concerned because the young man was very young and did not even have someone who could give him a ride so that he could look for a decent place to live. He didn't have a case manager and was not getting help from any other social service programs, such as food stamps or housing.

Lejla called an office manager for one of the apartments with which the LSS Representative Payee Program has a relationship. The manager gladly accepted the young man and paperwork was completed quickly. The young man was able to move into an apartment the same day.

The young man called Lejla to let her know how happy he was. Now that he has an apartment, he is eligible for and receives a larger personal weekly allowance and also is given funds to pay for utilities. Lejla says that she hopes this young man will continue to remain as happy as he is right now.





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ANNUAL DONORS PROVIDING SOLUTIONS FROM THE HEART

Balance Sheet for Year ending September 30, 2005

ASSETS

Current Assets

Cash and cash equivalents	\$891,073
Cash and cash equivalents – restricted	\$1,026,774
Accounts receivable – service fees	\$35,581
Accounts receivable – funding sources	\$552,167
Pledges receivable – short-term portion	\$2,271
Available from endowment fund – current portion	\$23,173
Food Bank inventory	\$10,339
Prepaid expenses	\$12,845
Total Current Assets	\$2,554,223

Property and equipment, net

\$3,001,963

Other Assets

Pledges receivable – long-term portion	\$3,377
Available from endowment fund – long-term portion	\$69,521
Total Other Assets	\$72,898

TOTAL ASSETS

\$5,629,084

LIABILITIES

Current Liabilities

Accounts payable	\$82,009
Accrued retirement expense	\$29,327
Compensated absences	\$90,055
Deferred revenues	\$20,995
Deposits held for others	\$1,027,274
Other accrued expenses	\$63,127
Notes payable – current portion of long-term debt	\$68,792
Total Current Liabilities	\$1,381,579

Long-term Liabilities

Notes payable	\$656,371
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TOTAL LIABILITIES

\$2,037,950

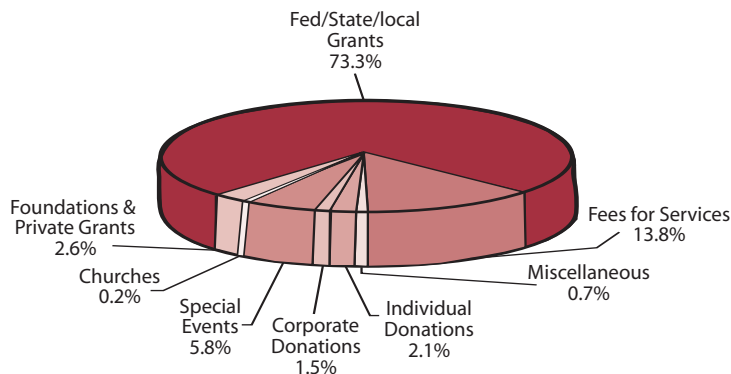
Net Assets

Unrestricted net assets	\$3,115,968
Temporarily restricted net assets	\$475,166
Total Net Assets	\$3,591,134

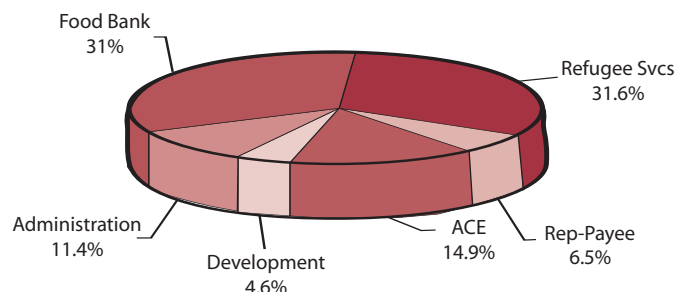
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

\$5,629,084

Agency Revenue by Source



Agency Expenses by Program





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ANNUAL DONORS PROVIDING SOLUTIONS FROM THE HEART

2004-05 Annual Donors

Platinum Heart Club Leadership Level

(Gifts \$1,000 and above)

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brAIDS Foundation	Ms. Carolyn Hoffner	Mr. & Mrs. R. Wayne Rieley
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Fresh Pond Trust	National Education Loan Network	United Way of Tri-State
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Gerdau Ameristeel	New Life Christian Fellowship of Jacksonville	Mr. & Mrs. Larry Wertz
Mr. & Mrs. Charles P. Goodyear	One Independent Square LLC	Winn Dixie Stores, Inc.
Mrs. Doris Gregory	Panera Bread Foundation	
Mr. & Mrs. George V. Grune Sr.	Mr. & Mrs. Tom Petway	
Guilderland Interfaith Council		
Harry's of America, L.L.C. DBA Harry's Seafood Bar & Grille		

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Gold Heart Club

(Gifts \$500 - \$999)

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 Baptist Medical Center
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VOLUNTEER FOCUS

JetSet propels LSS into the future

In July 2005, the first members of the LSS JETSET came together to learn more about Lutheran Social Services and discuss how they could make a significant difference in the agency's ability to help people in need. As young professionals tapped by their bosses based on their potential leadership, the JETSET (Junior Executives Today Setting an Example for Tomorrow) brought enthusiasm and fresh ideas to the agency.

The JETSET supports the mission of LSS to serve and care for people in need by serving as an ambassador in the community. The members were encouraged to organize, develop, coordinate, and support an annual project of their choice. They also recruited volunteers for the agency, and provided leads, referrals, and requests for services to Joe Chimelewski, community relations/volunteer coordinator, for follow-up.

Over the past year, the number of members grew from about a dozen to 18, representing a number of Northeast Florida companies and organizations. The JETSET members responded enthusiastically, benefiting LSS in many ways, including the following examples:

- Acosta Sales and Marketing (Matt Parks, JETSET member) — storage racks and displays to the LSS Second Harvest Food Bank.
- AmSouth Bank (Allen Kilgo, JETSET member) — premier sponsor for the past six years for the Empty Bowls Luncheon held in November, which benefits the Food Bank. Allen served on the Empty Bowls planning committee and displayed Empty Bowls artwork in AmSouth's downtown bank lobby during last November's First Wednesday Art Walk.
- Barnes and Noble (Ashley Peake, JETSET member) — space in its St. Johns Town Center store for an Empty Bowls display and for potter Tim Bullard to make bowls this past November to help promote the 2005 Empty Bowls Luncheon. Ashley offered vouchers to customers so that a percentage of their purchases would benefit LSS. She also donated Barnes & Noble plastic bags and solicited Chik-Fil-A discount coupons for JU-LSS SportsFest goodie bags.
- Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida (Lisa Acheson Luther, JETSET member) — 2005 Corporate Sponsor of LSS in support of the agency's community relations program, with continued commitment into 2006. The company also contributed holiday book bags and donated books to the Refugee Youth Program.
- Everbank (Phillip Bravo, JETSET member) — first-ever presenting sponsor for last June's Jacksonville Food Fight, which benefits the Food Bank. Phillip joined fellow RotarAct volunteers in managing the recent JU-LSS SportsFest for 235 disadvantaged children.
- First Coast News (Melissa Ross, JETSET member) — covered LSS events last year.
- Gate Petroleum (John Cockerham, JETSET member) — employment for some LSS refugees at Gate Concrete. John ensured that posters for last year's Noel Freidline Sacred Jazz Concert to benefit LSS were displayed in Gate convenience stores throughout the area.
- Jacksonville University (Alan Verlander, JETSET member) — hosted the JU-LSS SportsFest and enlisted the volunteer help of 60 JU Athletic Department staff members and student-athletes to provide 235 disadvantaged children with the opportunity to experience college athletics for a day.
- Greater Jacksonville Area USO (Sonja Jutsch, JETSET member) — 60 volunteers for a total of 240 hours spent helping to clear out the LSS Furniture Bank and unload trucks and set up distribution for the LSS Second Harvest Food Bank Neighborhood Mobile Pantry
- Promise 106.5 Radio (Heather White, JETSET member) — ticket giveaway promotion to promote the Noel Freidline Sacred Jazz Concert.
- Winn-Dixie (Dewayne Rabon, JETSET member) — bags for the National Association of Letter Carriers' food drive. Dewayne also donated bags and bottled water for the Neighborhood Mobile Pantry.
- Zurich Insurance Services (James Hopkins, JETSET member) — enlisted RotarACT volunteers and donated goodie bag items for the JU-LSS SportsFest event.

