

A year of...

INSPIRING HOPE

Made possible by you

Annual Report

2014



What are these?

Let's call them tokens of our appreciation. Cut them off, hang them on the fridge, or use them as bookmarks! These side bars highlight the fruits of your support. Each number represents children and families that have been touched by your compassion. Click on the numbers on every page to read a new story.

2104 Board of Directors

Richard Kauzlarich, Board Chair
 Nels Hendrickson, Vice Chair
 Joe Albrecht, Treasurer
 Sue Zimmerman, Secretary
 Lisa Gaffney
 The Rev. Anteneh Gebreselassie
 Rachel Grace
 Janice Hepburn
 Clemmie Solomon
 Lynn Tedesco

Ex-Officio Members

The Rev. John Denninger, President
*Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS),
 Southeastern District Represented by*
 The Rev. Kenneth G. Carlson
 The Rev. Richard Graham, Bishop
ELCA Metro Washington, D.C., Synod
 Melissa Graves, CEO

Special Thanks To...



70 Staff

Offering

— HOPE —

Rebuilding

— LIVES —

Mobilizing

— COMMUNITIES —



2,377

children & adults have found wellness, wholeness, & new beginnings



460

volunteers and interns mobilized to strengthen our community



135

community partners and faith groups rebuilt lives & offered hope

Thank You

For helping us plant...

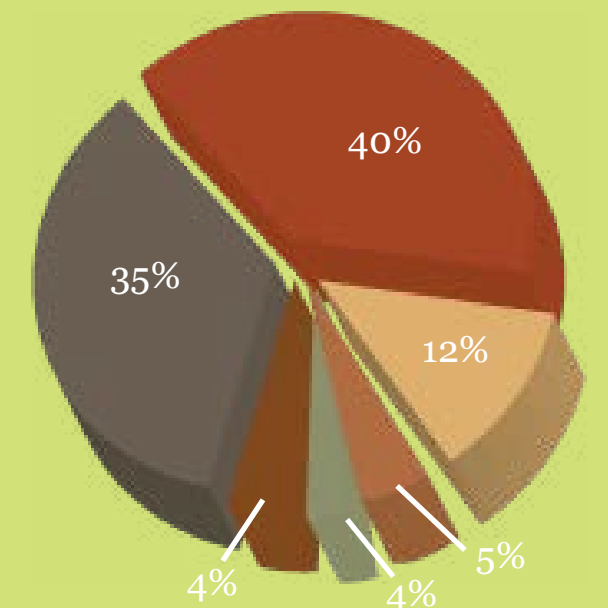
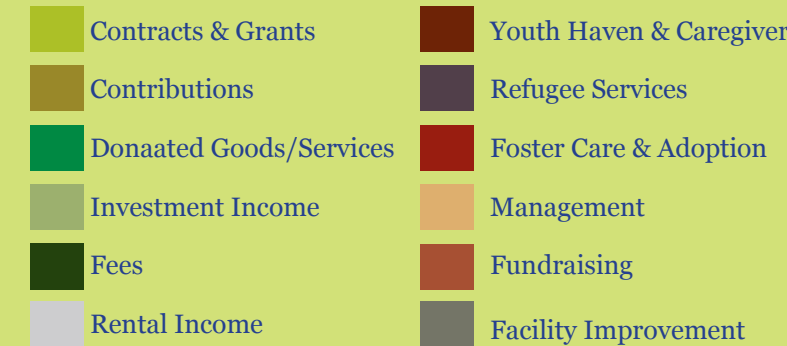
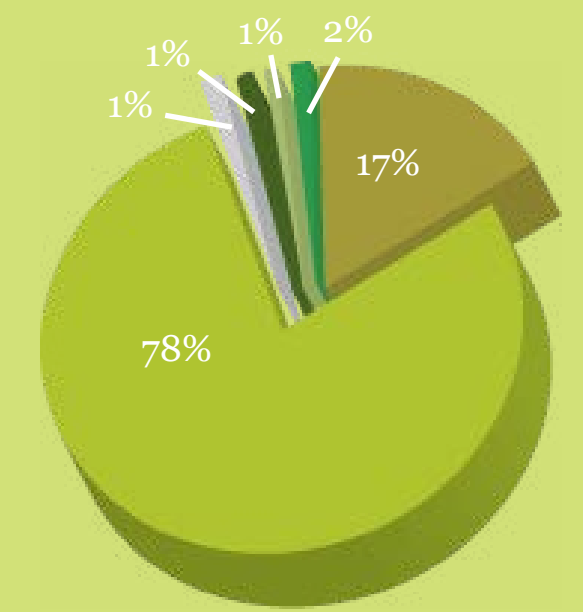
Mighty Seeds

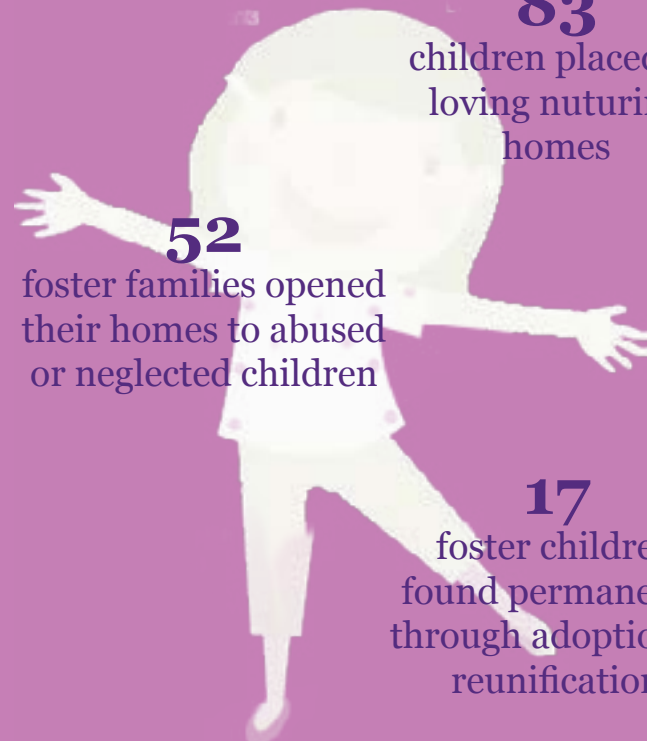
The Greek poet, Aeschylus, wrote, "From a small seed, a mighty trunk may grow." More than 25 centuries later his wisdom remains a vital reminder of the strength that can grow from a small kernel of hope, encouragement, and love.

Every hour of volunteerism, every dollar donated, every prayer raised up, or every thought given to our neighbors in need is a small seed waiting to sprout into a mighty trunk that will one day be the tree that provides shades for others. Your support is the voice on the telephone comforting a caregiver after a hard day; it is the hand greeting a refugee when he first arrives in America; it is the smile of a foster parent that welcomes a child home from school; it is the hug wrapped around a youth whom has been challenged by the stigma of HIV.

Because of your support throughout the past year, thousands of individuals had an opportunity to live the life they deserve. Thank you for planting the seeds in our community that will--and already have--grown into mighty trees.

In Service,
 Melissa Graves





83

children placed in loving nurturing homes

52

foster families opened their homes to abused or neglected children

17

foster children found permanency through adoption or reunification

HIGHLIGHT

The number of new foster families that were recruited in 2014 was 58% more than were recruited in 2013.

A few

Helping Hands

Give homes to many

Little Feet



One Baby Step To Heal A Family...

Ms. D and her two-day old son, JD, were in a difficult situation. It was 3 days after the arrival of little JD and time for them to leave the hospital, but they had nowhere to go. They had no place to call home and no family to support them. Ms. D knew she was in no place, physically or mentally, to take care of her son, so she made the emotionally difficult decision to do what was best for little JD.

When LSS/NCA got the call that she and her son were in need, your support came to the rescue. LSS/NCA found JD a foster home that would allow Ms. D to bond with her son regularly. Meanwhile LSS/NCA helped Ms. D find mental health assistance, parenting skill classes and job training. After three years of hard work and dedication, Ms. D was reunified with her son. Never missing a chance to visit with her son, she felt as connected to JD at reunification as the first day they left the hospital together.

The Early Signs of... Caregiving

Sally was living in beach community when her neighbors saw her attempting to walk five miles to the grocery store in the middle of a 90-degree day. She claimed she had no food even though her refrigerator had been fully stocked just days earlier. Sally was experiencing the early stages of Alzheimer's Disease.

After three years, Mary (her step-daughter) began to feel that she wouldn't be able to care for Sally for much longer. It seemed like a never-ending battle. Her family was tired, her marriage strained, and her children were not getting the attention they craved.

LSS/NCA didn't have a caregiving support program available at the time but with guidance from the Caregiver classes, Mary would have known the steps to take not only to care for her mother, but also to care for herself and her family while carrying the burden of providing for a aging loved one. Today, Mary works closely with the Caregiver Support program, helping caregivers make time for their own spiritual, emotional, and physical wellbeing—those priorities that are often forgotten when struggling to care for another.

**YOUR HEALTH
COMES FIRST**



Caregiver Reminders:

1. Plan more active days
2. Maintain a schedule
3. Be Mindful of your health
4. Ask for help
5. Share your experience

Caregivers Supported



HIGHLIGHT
LSS/NCA opened a new refugee employment office in Frederick Maryland, providing increased opportunity to partner with new employers and community partners.

674



Refugees feeling war & persecution found new homes & new beginnings in our community

912



Refugee adults provided job training and employment skills

832



Refugees found full-time employment and are providing for their families

Your
HUDDLED MASSES
yearning to
BREATHE FREE

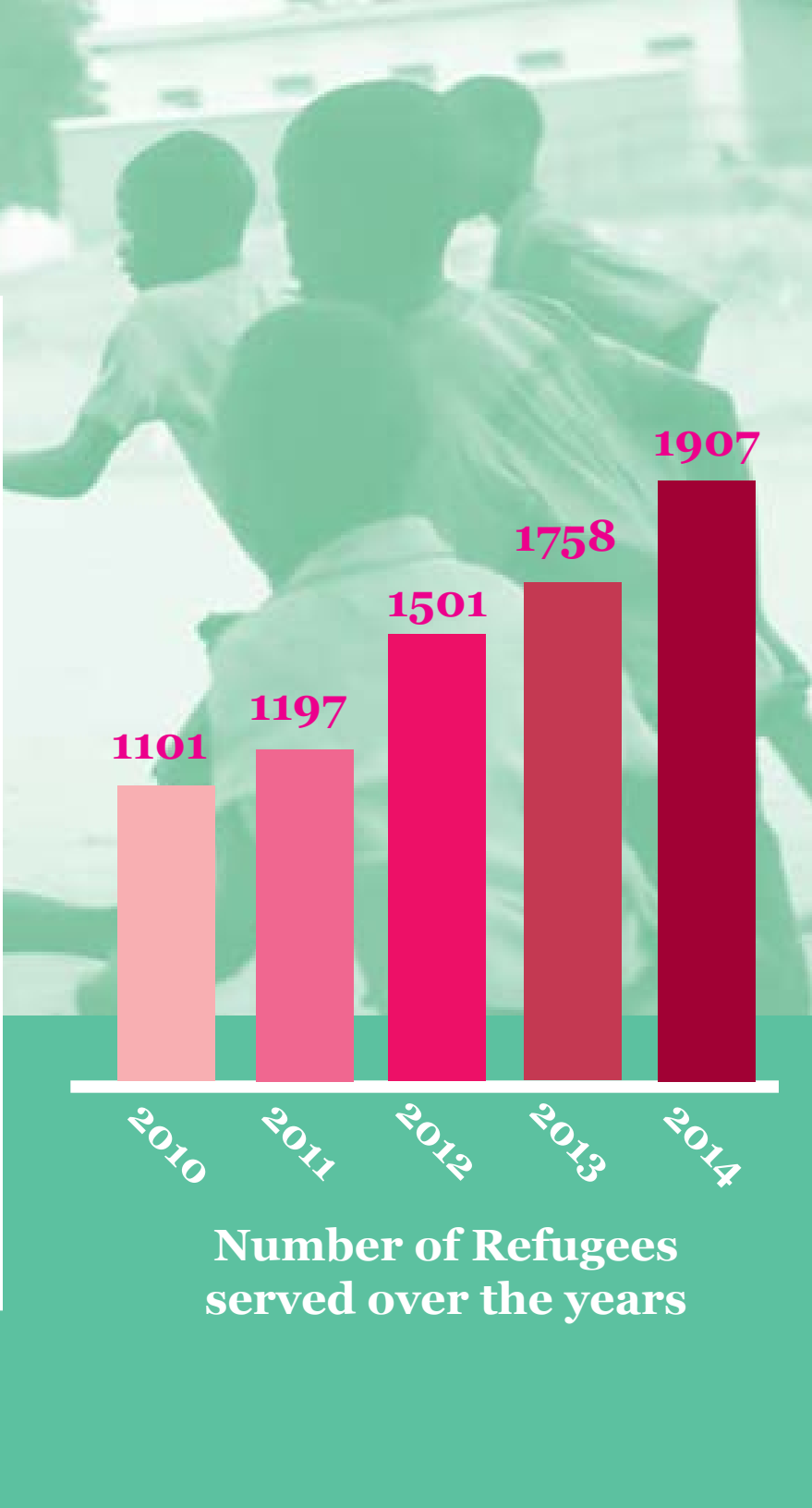


Refugee Families Fleeing for Freedom

Jean Paul, his wife, and five children fled the Democratic Republic of Congo in the middle of the night during the worst armed conflict in recent history. After years of seeking refuge in a camp outside Congo, they were given the opportunity to start a new life in America. When LSS/NCA staff picked them up at BWI airport, they were dressed in their finest attire, knowing that this was a special moment in their lives.

Local partnerships helped LSS/NCA staff find housing to accommodate the large family and provide them with all living essentials to begin their new life in America, including furniture, toiletries, and linens. The parents were enrolled in English and financial literacy classes while the children were immediately registered to begin school the next fall. (Access to education was a privilege they sacrificed to escape the war at home.) Within months of their arrival, LSS/NCA caseworkers helped Jean Paul find full-time employment with benefits and the children received stellar marks from their new teachers.

Only 9 months after arrival, Jean Paul passed his driver's test, saved enough money to purchase a car, and found a higher paying full-time job to support his family. Jean Paul is most excited about his children's academic achievements and the promising futures they will now be able to have here in America.



Number of Refugees served over the years

This Little
LIGHT OF MINE
I'm gonna let it
SHINE

HIGHLIGHT
Two Youth Haven teens attended the International AIDS Conference in Australia.

70 Youth
*affected by HIV empowered
through camp activities*

21 Families
strengthened



**85% of youth achieved
their personal goals**



More Than Just Marshmallows **Camp is Home**

Marti was a spunky 9-year-old girl when she attended Youth Haven Kid's Camp for the first time. She, like many other children who come to camp, had a hard time opening up to others about the anxiety and stress she constantly felt. Not only did Marti's mother have HIV, but Marti herself had lived with the illness all her life. She constantly feared getting sick, her friends discovering her secret, or worse, losing her mother.

At camp, Marti wasn't scared. She didn't have to keep a secret and for that one week she felt like she was a "regular" kid. She went hiking and swimming, roasted marshmallows, and was taught archery. She enjoyed the unique bonding experiences that made Youth Haven Camp her home away from home. She made friendships that have outlasted all others; she met counselors that continue to serve as personal mentors; and she made memories that would have never been without access to a summer camp that provided the special care and guidance she required.

Ten years later, Marti has returned as a student nurse and volunteers in the camp health center where she affectionately aids children in treating cuts and bruises. Today, Marti reaches out with that same big smile she had as a little girl as she works with teens coping with the health challenges she herself has had to hurdle—the challenges that have made her the courageous young woman she is today.





Find more stories and information at:

*Website: LssNca.org
2014 Snapshot (Infographic)*



Thank
you FOR
SUPPORTING

Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area