



LUTHERAN
SOCIAL SERVICES
National Capital Area

2023 IMPACT REPORT



A world map with a dark blue background. Countries are outlined in white. A large number of countries, including Mexico, Central American nations, Caribbean islands, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Argentina, and many across Africa, Asia, and Europe, are highlighted in a vibrant orange color. The text 'OUR STORY' is overlaid on the left side of the map.

OUR STORY

Since 1917, Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area (LSSNCA), a human services and immigration relief and refugee welcome agency, has accompanied those in need throughout Maryland, Northern Virginia, and Washington, D.C. to foster resiliency, self-sufficiency, and access to opportunities. We provide wraparound supportive services that strengthen the foundation on which families, youth, children, and individuals can rebuild their lives in the D.C. metro area.

Motivated by our belief in the inherent dignity of all, LSSNCA's innovative participant-informed programs serve persons forced to flee their homes, unaccompanied children and youth, and other under-served communities by filling in the gaps. Piloting initiatives like the area's first camp for kids impacted by the HIV/AIDS crisis, originating local pro se asylum workshops for Afghan Allies, launching a Resource Center to serve as a community hub for all our new neighbors, and offering trauma-informed mental health support services, LSSNCA's vision is to create an inclusive community of well-being where people thrive.

MISSION

Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area (LSSNCA) accompanies those in need to foster resiliency, self-sufficiency, and access to opportunities by creating, connecting with, and engaging welcoming communities.

VISION

An inclusive community of well-being where people thrive.

VALUES

- Motivated by our belief in the inherent dignity of all humans.
- Collaborating with integrity and accountability.
- Advancing equity, inclusion, and social justice.

A large white circle with a thin black border, containing the statistics '3,001 People' and '46 Countries'.

3,001

People

46

Countries

THE LONG WELCOME

In 2023, with your generous support, Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area (LSSNCA) focused on rolling out the long welcome, understanding that newcomers to the D.C. metro area who have been forced from their homes, unaccompanied children seeking protection, and young people navigating the transition to adulthood benefit from wraparound care to help build their resilience.

With your support, we launched a Resource Center in Northern Virginia to serve as a community hub for those rebuilding their lives – providing a dignified shopping experience of new and gently-used goods donated by our generous community as well as providing educational offerings, such as ESL, financial literacy, and cultural orientation workshops.

Drawing from your interest in caring for the most vulnerable of refugees—children who arrive to the United States alone—we expanded our foster care program for unaccompanied children, offering a short-term, or transitional, option for kids who are seeking reunification with family members in the United States, and need an alternative to large-scale shelter placements while case managers are assessing the safety and suitability of family placements.

Our partnerships with local law firms providing pro bono support allowed us to significantly grow and maximize our legal service offerings, understanding that persons who are arriving in need of humanitarian protection need assistance applying for work authorization, immigration relief, and green cards.

We know that the best solutions are those developed in and with communities, and we expanded community partnerships, continued prioritizing hiring people with lived experience in the programs we offer, and inviting program participants to speak to our community and stakeholders. We partnered with the University of Maryland to stand up a Community Advisory Board comprised of program participants and newly resettled refugees in the community to advise on research on barriers to accessing higher education and have been implementing and sharing recommendations stemming from the research.

Believing in the inherent dignity of all people, we continued to educate our local representatives and elected officials on the experiences and needs of those we serve, and advocate for more just and humane policies.

We are deeply grateful for your partnership, your advocacy, your time and talents, and your generous support in helping us advance our vision of an inclusive community of well-being where people thrive. Together, we can create the world we want to see.

In gratitude,



Kristyn Peck, Chief Executive Officer

Leadership

Kristyn Peck
Chief Executive Officer

Dr. Mamadou Sy
Chief Operating Officer

Raymond R. Rawlins
Chief Financial Officer

Jacob Barclay
Chief Development Officer

Nadya Andrusik
Executive Director, Children, Youth, and Family Services

Hameed Girowal
Executive Director, Refugee and Immigrant Services

Board Members

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Board Chair
Slalom Consulting

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Lutheran Services in America, CEO and President (Retired)

Rachel Holtzman
Save the Children

Dr. Amina Khan
Children's National Hospital

Marie Martinez Israelite
The Human Trafficking Institute

Ex-Officio Board Members

Kathryn Wheeler
Administrative Assistant to the Bishop, ELCA Metro DC Synod

Pastor Lloyd Gaines
Lutheran Missouri Synod, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church



“We are deeply grateful for your partnership, your advocacy, your time and talents, and your generous support in helping us advance our vision of an inclusive community of well-being where people thrive. Together, we can create the world we want to see.”

KRISTYN PECK, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

WHAT WE DO



Refugee and Immigrant Services (RIS)

Since 1941, LSSNCA has supported families and individuals fleeing war and persecution. Our Refugee and Immigrant Services (RIS) department provides comprehensive support in the D.C. metro area, including initial resettlement, employment, housing, and educational services. Programs like Good Neighbor and Champions help set-up homes and foster community, while the TEA Club brings together recently resettled women with women who have roots in the community for friendship, English language practice, and orientation to U.S. culture. Youth mentoring in Maryland and Virginia supports refugee students. We facilitate job readiness, placements and hiring fairs in partnership with companies like Amazon and Walmart. We also offer recertification programs to help participants utilize their professional and medical skills in the United States.

Children, Youth, and Family Services (CYF)

Our Children, Youth, and Family Services department prioritize the safety and well-being of children and youth. We provide a continuum of foster care placements for children and youth arriving to the United States alone, seeking humanitarian protection. This includes short-term, or transitional, foster care for children who are pursuing reunification with family members, and long-term foster placements for children for whom there are no viable family reunification options. We also provide foster care for Spanish-speaking youth in the Washington, D.C. Our Youth Development and Wellness program supports young people in their transition to adulthood through evidence-based curriculum on healthy relationships.

Services for New Americans

LSSNCA offers comprehensive wellness services through two key programs. The CARE (Counseling, Access, Referrals, and Education) for Newcomers program provides crucial support to asylum-seekers, offering mental health services, trauma screenings, trauma-informed therapy, “Know Your Rights” sessions, and help navigating community resources. Additionally, our Trafficking Victims Assistance Program (TVAP) supports victims of human trafficking with case management, mental health evaluations, and assistance in obtaining T visas. Our legal services include asylum, Employment Authorization Document (EAD) adjustment, and family reunification, ensuring individuals understand their rights and receive necessary support through complex immigration processes. For fee-based clients, we assist with naturalization, adjustment of status, work authorization, and other immigration needs.

The Resource Center

LSSNCA's Resource Center serves as a community hub for LSSNCA program participants, offering a welcoming space that fosters cultural enrichment and mutual support. It acts as the central meeting point for engaging support groups, providing a platform where individuals can connect, share experiences, and build a sense of community. The Resource Center is also the headquarters for LSSNCA's goods donations, where essential items are gathered, and through our Shopping with Dignity initiative, participants select the items they need upon their arrival in the DMV, empowering them to take control of their new beginnings and feel a sense of ownership over their resettlement journey. This holistic approach addresses immediate material needs as well as emotional and social underpinnings.

REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT SERVICES



1,566
Individuals resettled

2,184
Individuals provided employment services

Top countries of origin:
Afghanistan
Syria
Burma
Guatemala
Yemen

50%/50%
Male/Female



62% Services provided in Virginia
38% Services provided in Maryland

Recertification Services (Virginia)

Top 3 recertification fields:
Engineering
Healthcare
IT

17
Professionals enrolled in the program

2
Completed recertifications (Surgical Assistant and CISCO/CCNP)
Others are still in progress for completion of certification

Housing Team Services

3,000+
Homes identified by LSSNCA

8+
Average new housing partnerships established in each office

40
Nonprofit housing organization partners

15
Evictions stopped

6
Congressional and county government offices engaged with about housing

5
Resettlement agency partners

Youth and Education Services

12
Ukrainian school impact grantees

47+
Youth mentored

25+
Community organization partnerships for youth and family activities



LSSNCA collaborated with University of Maryland, Baltimore County School of Social Work, Texas A&M University, and SUNY Empire State University to research refugee access to higher education. Research was informed by a Community Advisory board, comprised of recently arrived refugees. Findings have been shared with educators, policy makers, and federal and state agencies, and are informing evolving LSSNCA initiatives.

CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILY SERVICES



“It’s an incredible gift to raise my three younger children alongside Zaara and Maria, who are from Ethiopia and Honduras respectively. Having family members who speak different languages, practice different faiths, and come from different backgrounds has given our younger children a broader world view and deepened their compassion.”

MAGGIE, A URM FOSTER CARE PARENT

LSSNCA works with D.C. Child and Family Services to place and provide case management services for up to 10 foster children and youth with Spanish-speaking families in the D.C. metro area. The goal of this program is to provide support and services to the children/youth and their families to facilitate reunification as quickly as possible. When reunification not possible, our team explores other permanency options, such as guardianship and adoption.

Foster Care

29

Unaccompanied
Refugee Minors
(URM)

30+

Foster
Families

7

Spanish-speaking
D.C. foster youth

**Top countries
of origin:**
Honduras
El Salvador
Eritrea
Afghanistan
Somalia

Our Youth Development and Wellness (YDW) provides an evidence-based curriculum that addresses healthy relationships, effective communication, and other aspects of navigating the difficulties of adolescence to address overall well-being in several D.C. schools, as well as to female youth, some who have been detained, preparing them for successful reintegration into their communities. We also hosted our annual Youth Haven summer camp for local families.

Youth Development and Wellness (YDW)

7

Female youth
enrolled in
our Healthy
Relationships
Curriculum in
juvenile detention

33

Program participants
served by Adoption
services across
Maryland and
Washington, D.C.

227

Program participants
served by YDW from
Washington, D.C.
ranging in age from
8 - 20, including
25 who attended
summer camp



SERVICES FOR NEW AMERICANS

Trafficking Victims Assistance (TVAP)



Top countries served by TVAP:
Honduras
Mexico
El Salvador

16
Survivors of trafficking served through the Trafficking Victims Assistance Program (TVAP) and Aspire Programs

31%
Program participants aged 0-17

55%
Sex trafficking

50%
Program participants aged 18-29

40%
Labor trafficking

19%
Program participants aged 30-39

5%
Both labor and sex trafficking

CARE for Newcomers

Top countries served by CARE:
El Salvador
Honduras
Nicaragua
Guatemala

546+
Asylum-seekers served through CARE for Newcomers



Summer, a survivor of rape while falsely imprisoned in her home country was pregnant and miscarried. Despite being safely in the United States, negative thoughts related to her experiences and feelings of shame were ongoing. After several weeks of therapy with LSSNCA clinicians, Summer shared she was practicing tools when feeling overwhelmed, and that she started socializing with family and friends. She also said she felt more open to being in a relationship again someday, which was not something she thought about since her assault. She is also now able to go out in public by herself. Summer still experiences fear due to her past trauma, but continues to practice the therapeutic exercises she learned from LSSNCA to continue working through it.

Health and Wellness Services

1,144
Individuals received health appointments and connections

10
Afghan Allies served through Wellness Services within one month of launch

22
Clinical sessions held over one month

THE RESOURCE CENTER



\$1,202,416.97

Value of in-kind donations



Yesica, is a single parent of a 5-year-old son who lives in the DMV with her younger brother. Her shopping experience at the Resource Center was “a major help” as she was able to take home bed linen, clothing, personal hygiene items, and other basic necessities. Her son was very excited when he found a SpongeBob blanket and left with a big smile as he carried an action figure he also picked out that was half his size!

4,389

Individuals provided personalized goods

3,626+

Volunteer hours donated

60+

On-site events and programs like cultural orientation, legal workshops, community events, and family fun nights.

10

Large scale distribution events for clothing, coats, and backpacks.

LEGAL SERVICES, AND CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES

71

Afghan program participants received parole

42*

Cases received asylum approval

1,602

Program participants served in Maryland and Virginia

Central American Minors Program (CAM)

12

New cases

164

Assisted with providing additional information to support their reunification case

27

Assisted with verifying their family ties for the reunification process

Lautenburg and Iranian Refugee Programs (RIF)

12

New cases

48

Requests for evidence (RFE)

*1 case represents an average family size of 4

PARTNERS & VOLUNTEERS

2,500

Total # of volunteer hours

1,000+

Community partners

130%

Increase in volunteering by the end of the fiscal year

2,093+
Volunteers

“Here’s what I have learned. You don’t have to be an expert as a volunteer ... It’s a labor of love I can tell you that. The payoff for me is it is just so good to help using the skills and experience I have. It takes six to eight hours to change someone’s life dramatically. And, we become friends ... I have had a lot of Afghan food. A lot of [the families I work with] share their stories of how they left or how they had to leave their family behind, how siblings or children who are girls can’t go to school anymore. That could be overwhelming because you always wish you could do more.”

RON LOBEL, LONGTERM EMPLOYMENT VOLUNTEER



Partners*

Good Neighbors of Capitol Hill



HUSSAIN FOR HUMANITY



INTERFAITH IMMIGRATION COALITION



*This list is a small representation of the congregations, civic partners, clubs, and community partners that supported LSSNCA's efforts throughout the fiscal year. We are grateful for your ongoing support and trust in our shared mission.

2023 FISCAL YEAR IMPACT

\$28,642,367

**Total Support, Revenue,
and Private Funding**

\$235,513

In-kind donations

\$10,567

United Way Campaign

\$794,454

Unrestricted Funds

\$27,601,832

Restricted Funds

Notable Donors

Metropolitan,
Washington, D.C. Synod

McKinsey & Company, Inc.

Mead Family Foundation

Our Savior Lutheran Church

Friends of El Sistema Greece

Erkiletian Family Foundation

Emmanuel Lutheran Church

World Learning

The Jewish Federation of
Greater Washington

Resurrection Evangelical
Lutheran Church ELCA

Leslie L. Alexander
Foundation, Inc.

City of Alexandria

The Morris and Gwendolyn
Cafritz Foundation



MORE RESILIENT THAN EVER

Serving on the Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area (LSSNCA) Board of Directors for the past six years has been a privilege and an honor. Witnessing LSSNCA's dedicated team skillfully navigate anti-immigrant policies and swiftly pivot to support newly arriving populations from Afghanistan and Ukraine—serving more program participants in one year than in the past four combined - has been truly inspiring.

Since 1917, LSSNCA has served the needs of our community without interruption, even as those needs rapidly change and grow. In 2023, we focused on strengthening our resiliency and connection to our local communities, preparing to weather any future challenges.

Today, we are the largest refugee welcome agency on the East Coast, meeting the housing, employment, and many other needs of more than 3,000 families and individuals fleeing persecution, war, and violence from over 46 countries in 2023 alone. Through Refugee and Immigrant Services (RIS) we have welcomed over 6,500 Afghan Allies since the fall of Kabul and more than 215 Ukrainians since the conflict began in their country.

Our CARE for Newcomers program offers trauma-informed mental health and psychosocial services to asylum-seekers. Thanks to our dedicated team and network of community partners, we supported over 546 persons seeking asylum and other forms of humanitarian relief in the D.C. metro area.

Our Unaccompanied Refugee Minors (URM) program creates loving foster homes for youth who fled war and persecution and arrived in the United States without parents or legal guardians. This year, we welcomed and supported children from Afghanistan, El Salvador, Eritrea, Honduras, and other countries around the world.

Through Legal, Citizenship, and Immigration Services, we provided critical assistance to include asylum workshops, legal consults, applications for immigration relief, and much more.

While LSSNCA receives public funds to provide many of these services, it is only through the generosity and commitment of donors and volunteers like you that we can fill gaps and be resilient to political and economic changes. Your support is crucial in helping us maintain and grow our programs, providing essential services to those in need.

We invite our community, donors, and volunteers to join us in this mission. Whether by opening your home to an unaccompanied refugee child, donating to support our work, or volunteering your time and skills, you play a vital role in our efforts. Together, we can continue to build stronger, more resilient communities, and we thank you for your partnership and support.



Josh Eberle, Board Chair



“Most [of us] are moving around the world for safety, hope. We do have the feeling of being an outsider in another country but if you think ‘why did we leave our country?’, it’s because we didn’t have freedom of choice but when you have freedom of choice that means it’s your country and so we should feel at home in the U.S.”

AMINAH, RESETTLED PROGRAM PARTICIPANT

Coming up on 20 Years of Service at LSSNCA

“As we mark this significant milestone, I am reminded that our work is far from finished. The worldwide refugee crisis continues to escalate, with millions of people displaced by violence, persecution, and environmental disasters. The need for sustained compassion, solidarity, and collective action has never been greater.”

DR. MAMADOU SY, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
Celebrating his 20th year in 2024









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Make a Donation

Your support directly assists with meals, housing, employment, education, immigration support, mental health services, and contributes to building a community of well-being where people thrive.

