

**CALLED TO LOVE AND SERVE OUR NEIGHBORS
ABUNDANT LIFE TOGETHER**

**JILL SCHUMANN
PRESIDENT AND CEO**

"I came that they might have life and have it abundantly."
John 10:10

I. CONNECTIONS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCEpage 3

II. LSA – WHO ARE WE?page 5

III. LSA – AN ALLIANCE GROWING TOGETHERpage 9

VI. TRACKING TRENDS – WHAT’S COMING UP?page 33

V. FUTURE SEASONSpage 37

The Lutheran social ministry system has integrated, results-driven capacity.

Lutheran social ministry organizations are healthy and vital, engaged in effective service and advocacy.

Lutheran social ministry organizations live out their Lutheran identities.

Lutheran social ministry expresses a spirit of possibility and a will that shapes the future.

LSA and its members, in partnership with others, are leading a movement of hope and grace toward a society that values generosity, inclusion, justice and mutual care.

The five Ends Policies approved by the LSA Board of Directors, March 2008, LSA Board Policy Manual, Section 1.2. (Called to Love and Serve Our Neighbors), and affirmed by the LSA Membership at its April 2008 Annual Meeting.

I. CONNECTIONS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

CONNECTIONS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE ABUNDANT LIFE TOGETHER

Lutheran Services in America (LSA) is about **Connections that make a difference**. Connections, most especially, **with God** who first loved us. In response, we are called to love and serve our neighbors. That unleashes a cascade of connections.

Social ministry organizations (SMOs) forge connections with the **individuals, families and communities** with whom they share journeys. SMOs connect **staff members and volunteers** with meaningful vocations. SMOs partner with **congregations, districts and synods**. SMOs connect with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and/or The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, and thus with one another in **Lutheran Services in America**.

LSA, at the national level, fosters **connections between SMOs**, stimulates social ministry relationships **across the church**, and creates **connections at the national level** that further the work of Lutheran social ministry. LSA is about connections that make a difference.

And, it is in all of these connections that we have **abundant life together**. It is the connection to God that proves **more than sufficient** for the life of social ministry and it is the connections across the system that prove more than sufficient for the work we are called to do.

This year it is likely that the most significant **challenge and opportunity** for LSA and its members is the **current economic situation**. LSA is gearing up consulting services, discounted purchasing opportunities and information sharing conference calls, and is exploring other concrete forms of assistance that might be offered. It is clear that by working more closely together, Lutheran organizations can help one another get through difficult times.

It is also clear that times of challenge are times of opportunity. When the prevailing order is disrupted, those with a **vision for a better future** can lead with a new picture of possibilities. LSA's Ends Policies that focus on **shaping the future, and on shaping society** to be more generous, inclusive and just provide the platform for people of faith to come together, to trust in God and to make a difference.

The 2009 Report of the President and CEO to the LSA Board of Directors and Membership

The LSA Board of Directors requests, by Board Policy, that each year the President and CEO prepare a report that considers the past year in LSA, looks toward the future, and offers observations about the state of LSA.

This report contains:

- A brief snapshot of the social ministry organization members of LSA
- An illustrative, but not exhaustive, review of the accomplishments of LSA in the past year and a preview of the way that work will unfold in the coming year

The 2009 Report of President and CEO

to the LSA Board of Directors and Membership

Lutheran Services in America, April 2009

- A forward look at three trends gaining momentum likely to have direct and near-term impact on social ministry organizations
- A final section that explores the picture of possibilities for the future

Some of the **themes** that have emerged from a **high-level view of social ministry organizations**:

- **Interest in what it means to have “Lutheran” in an organization’s DNA** continues to grow. SMOs are exploring new ways to understand and live out “Lutheran.” There is great interest in LSA’s Hallmarks Initiative as well as in partnerships between congregations and SMOs.
- **SMO leaders are hungry to learn from one another.** Most are very willing to share information and to look for opportunities to **collaborate**.
- **Historic understandings of geographic and service line boundaries are giving way** to the realities of relocated donors, cross-geographic relationships and requests, specialized service line expertise, and limited SMO presence in some parts of the country. This presents challenges and it is time for a fresh consensus on protocols.
- The **economic recession is having an uneven impact on SMOs.** Most find their revenues shrinking, resulting in program and staff reductions in the midst of growing need. However, some are holding their own and others are growing and flourishing.
- **Tensions within and between the two denominations** (ELCA and LCMS) create challenges not only for the church bodies, but also for social ministry.
- More **SMOs are exploring structural affiliations.** These include back office ventures, joint programs, and a wide range of corporate integrations.
- There is rapidly growing **interest in social enterprise, community based services, and advocacy.** Interest is picking up **more gradually in the areas of volunteerism, community benefit and green initiatives.**
- There is arms-length **interest in the use of online tools and communities**, but most SMOs and their leaders have yet to embrace engagement through these media.
- A short survey of SMO CEOs conducted for the fall 2008 Executive Retreat indicated that finances and staffing were the **greatest sources of worry** for CEOs. Mission, trusting in and serving God, making a difference, new programs, results, and relationships were the **things that excited and sustained them.**

A **bird’s eye view of LSA as an alliance** suggests:

- Members have **enthusiasm for**, and a willingness to commit to, **LSA’s Ends adopted in 2008.**
- **More people are imagining new possibilities** for LSA and the Lutheran social ministry system.
- Lutheran organizations are becoming more well know for their **collaborative work in LSA.**
- **Formal LSA networks have cycles** that wax and wane based on a variety of variables.
- The **diversity of LSA’s members** creates tension between the need to focus limited capacity and the need to offer a sufficiently broad portfolio to engage all members.
- **New forms of convening** people to work together are needed, especially those that don’t require travel.
- **Positive relationships exist between LSA and the two church bodies.**
- The **new Ends will require concerted, system-wide effort.**

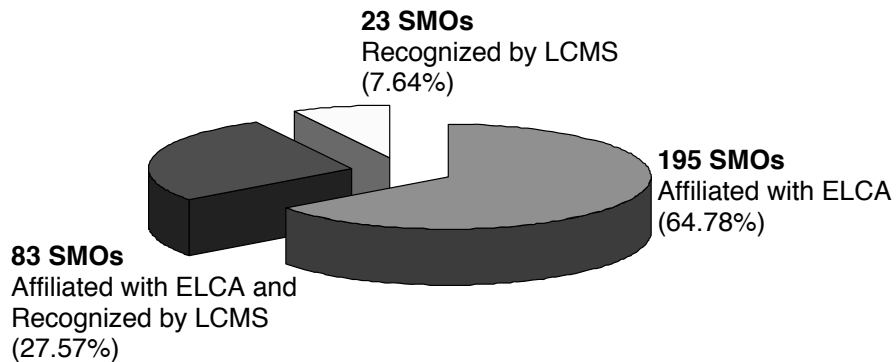
LSA looks to the future with hope and with a strong will to cultivate abundant life together through connections that make a difference.

II. Lutheran Services in America – Who Are We?

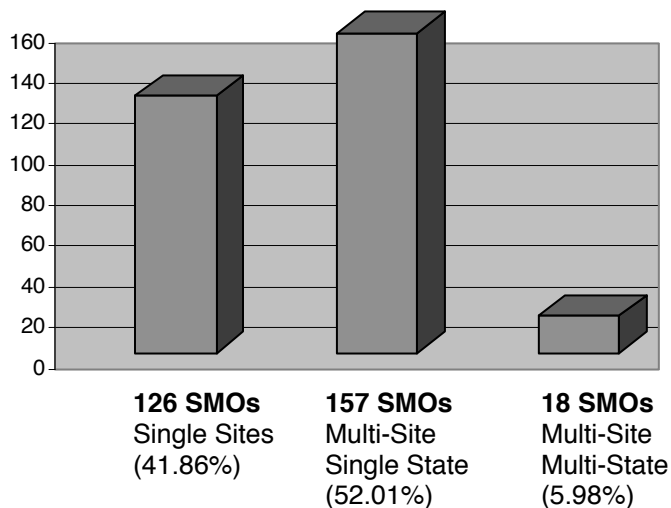
LSA is an alliance of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod and their social ministry organizations (SMOs). These SMOs are remarkably diverse. Some are small, some large, some young, some old, and some focused on one issue while others offer broad portfolios. There are currently technically 301 affiliated and/ or recognized social ministry organizations, and approximately 270 of those are considered active members of LSA.

Like the old story of the blind men and the elephant, it seems that many people know this Lutheran social ministry system only where they touch it. The following information provides a **snapshot of the Lutheran social ministry system in March 2009**. It is a dynamic picture as new organizations become affiliated, organizations grow and contract, and organizations merge and consolidate.

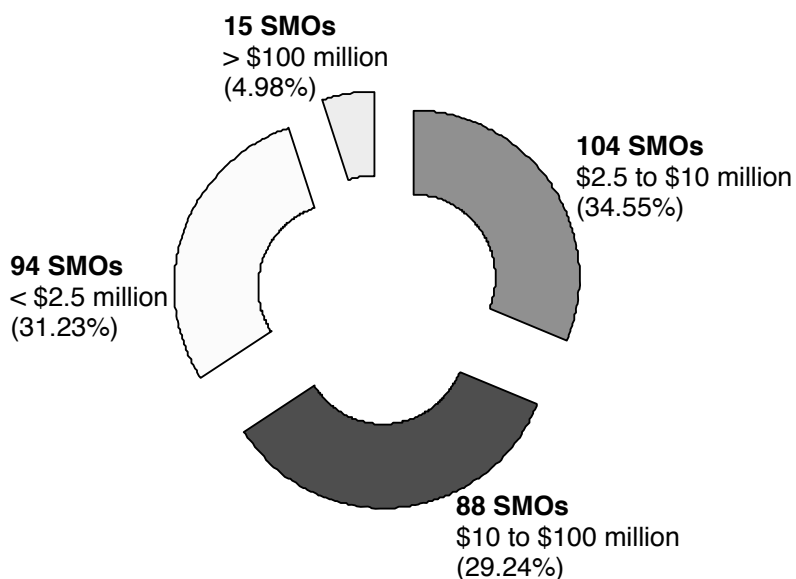
WHAT ARE THE CHURCH CONNECTIONS?



WHAT ARE THE SMO LOCATIONS?



WHAT ARE THE SMO BUDGETS?



WHERE DO THE NEWEST SMOS FIT?

For the past three years, most newly affiliated and/or recognized organizations have budgets under \$2.5 million.

TOGETHER LSA MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

deliver more than \$10 billion in services to more than six million people every year – that translates to one in 50 people in the United States.

WHAT DO THE SMOS DO?

Services and Activities*	# of SMOs	Percent of SMOs
Aging Services	197	65.45
Children, Youth & Family Services	115	38.21
Health Care Services	90	29.90
Emergency & Disaster Services	65	21.59
Disability Services	51	16.94
Housing & Community Development	53	17.61
Congregational & Chaplaincy Services	44	14.62
Mental Health Services	43	14.29
Consulting & Education Programs	28	9.30
Immigration & Refugee Services	28	9.30
Outreach & Support Ministries	24	7.97
Addiction Services	17	5.65
Volunteer Programs	8	2.66
Grant Making	2	0.66
Veterans Services	2	0.66

*These are broad categories. LSA's website offers a more refined search capacity: www.lutheranservices.org

The 2009 Report of President and CEO

to the LSA Board of Directors and Membership

Lutheran Services in America, April 2009

WHO ARE THE NEW SMOs?

Concordia Place – Chicago, Illinois
Sabbath Center Ministries – Lanark, Illinois

Bread of Healing, Inc. – Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Iowa Health – Des Moines, Iowa
Jefferson Area Lutheran Social Ministry – Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania
Lutheran Ministries and Social Services of Waco – Waco, Texas
Lutheran Social Services of Puerto Rico – San Juan, Puerto Rico
Navajo Evangelical Lutheran Mission, Inc. – Rock Point, Arizona
Our Saviour's Outreach Ministries – Minneapolis, Minnesota
The Ammerman Center for Creative Aging – New York, New York
Zarephath Ministries – Gresham, Oregon

All Things New Ministry – Lilburn, Georgia
Cherish Our Children – Minneapolis, Minnesota
First Community Center – Port Orchard, Washington
Immanuel Lutheran Services – Seattle, Washington
Spokane Urban Ministries – Spokane, Washington

Community Outreach Development – Las Vegas, Nevada
Lutheran Health Ministries of the Foothills – Glendale, California
PLM – Families Together – Raleigh, North Carolina
Redeemer Center for Life – Minneapolis, Minnesota

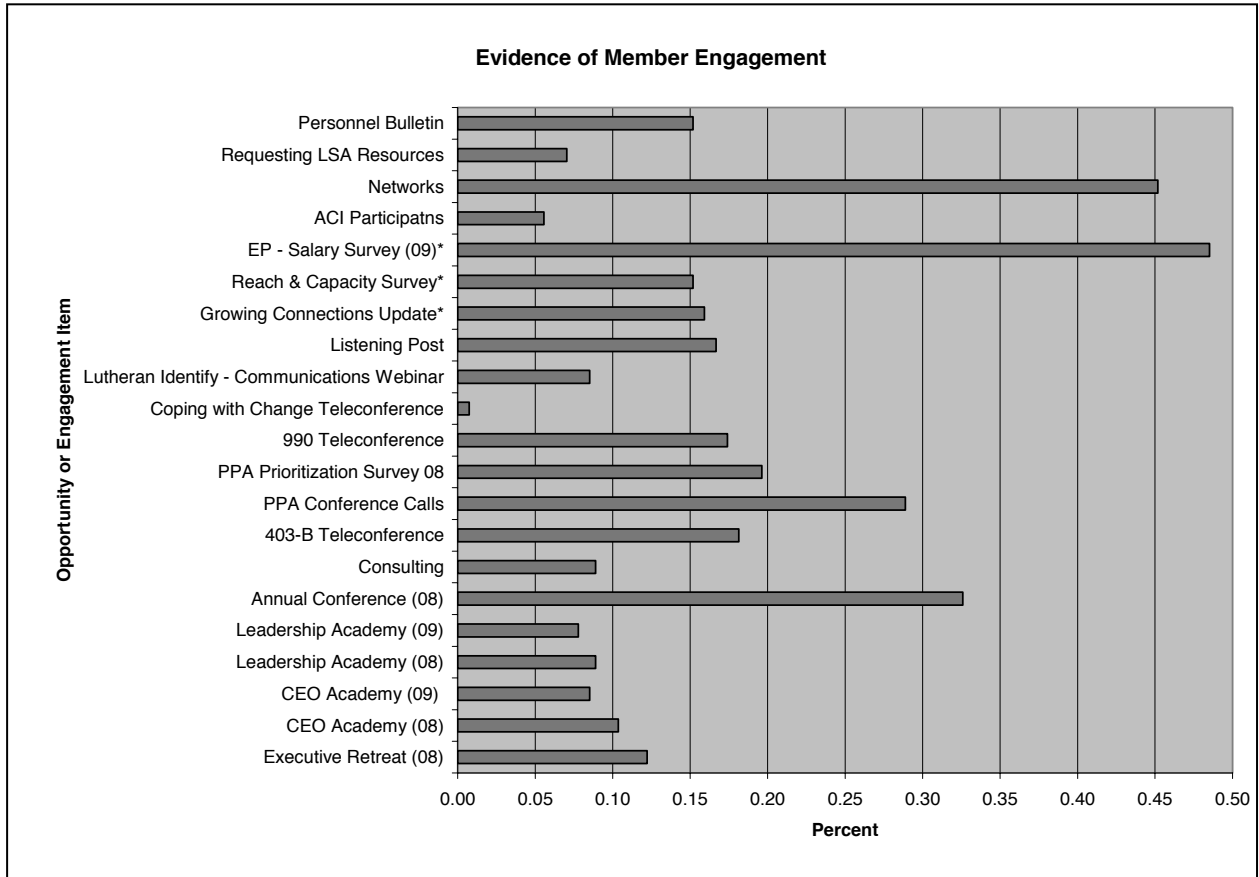
NEW TO LSA

These social ministry organizations have become affiliated and/or recognized in the past several years.

HOW ARE SMOs ENGAGED IN THE LSA SYSTEM?

From January 2008 through March 15, 2009, almost 98% of the active LSA members have demonstrated some degree of engagement with LSA. This engagement ranges from paying dues or participating in a single activity to robust involvement.

The following graph shows that a very large percentage of SMOs are engaged – in a variety of opportunities. Nearly two-thirds of LSA members have been engaged with at least one of the following: on-site learning events, teleconferences or webinars, consulting, informal consulting and/or networks. Almost 90% of the active members are engaged in some way beyond paying dues (242 SMOs). If dues payment were added, 98% of active SMOs are engaged with LSA (264 SMOs).



* The data collection periods for the Salary Survey, Reach & Capacity Survey and Growing Connections Update were not complete at the time of this report. NOTE: The total number represented above is 242 SMOs.

III. LSA – AN ALLIANCE GROWING TOGETHER

At the 2008 Annual Meeting of the LSA Members, the **vision for the LSA alliance for the next decade** was resoundingly affirmed: *Called to Love and Serve Our Neighbors*. LSA, at both the national and local levels, will work toward **five Ends**:

- Lutheran social ministry organizations are healthy and vital, engaged in effective service and advocacy.
- The Lutheran social ministry system has integrated, results-driven capacity.
- Lutheran social ministry organizations live out their Lutheran identities.
- Lutheran social ministry expresses a spirit of possibility and a will that shapes the future.
- LSA and its members, in partnership with others, are leading a movement of hope and grace toward a society that values generosity, inclusion, justice and mutual care.

This section of the report describes the work of LSA at the national level as it provides support and leadership to its members and points to plans for the coming year. For simplicity of presentation, the initiatives are grouped according to the End each most aggressively pursues. But, LSA shapes all of its work toward the simultaneous accomplishment of multiple Ends.

Aligning LSA's **strategies** and structure to support the new Ends, launching a robust portfolio of **communication** vehicles, and **engaging social ministry organizations** in new ways were key themes for the past year. **In the coming year** LSA will focus on:

- Financial strategies for difficult economic times
- Linking service and advocacy
- Technology as enabler
- Collaboration as an art and science
- And laying the groundwork for an emphasis **in the following year** on:
 - Fresh language and new ways of talking
 - Good governance
 - Replication of proven models
 - Hallmarks of Lutheran social ministry organizations



LUTHERAN SOCIAL MINISTRY ORGANIZATIONS ARE HEALTHY AND VITAL, ENGAGED IN EFFECTIVE SERVICE AND ADVOCACY.

GROWING CONSULTATION

LSA's consulting services are growing. Social ministry organizations and others within the Lutheran system and beyond are requesting a **wider range of services**. Here are just a few examples:

The 2009 Report of President and CEO

to the LSA Board of Directors and Membership

Lutheran Services in America, April 2009

- Board training that ranges from a single session to multi-year board development
- Mentoring of new staff members and coaching for senior staff leaders
- Facilitation of sessions to explore Lutheran identity
- Strategic planning and direction-setting
- Congregational exploration of new ministries
- SMO exploration of community and congregational partnerships
- Collaboration facilitation up to, and including, mergers
- New business explorations and new program ventures
- Executive transitions
- Assessments and tune ups for program portfolios, financial health, and management systems
- Turn-around strategies for organizations in distress

Informal consultation is growing, too. While ten percent of SMOs sought formal consultation, nearly half of all SMOs called an LSA staff member for informal consultation at least once in the past year. And, in response, LSA staff members connected SMOs to information, to resources and to one another.

**Grow Consultation -
Call LSA First!**

looking
forward

The generosity of talented experts across the Lutheran social ministry system means that the pool of peer consultants is rich and deep. LSA also engages external consultants as needed. LSA's Director of Consulting Services is planning additional areas of consultation to assist SMOs through troubled economic times. In cooperation with LSA's VP of Finance and Business Development, he is working on a more formal business plan to focus the portfolio, to identify new opportunities to assist members in cost effective ways, and to grow consulting services even more. LSA is also building relationships with Mennonite Health Services Alliance to expand the types of consultation available and to increase timely and geographically sensitive response.

AGING IN COMMUNITY INITIATIVE OPEN SOURCE HYBRIDS

In January 2008, fourteen SMOs were awarded grants from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Foundation and began a unique year-long journey together. LSA's VP of Strategic Initiatives and Program Development guided a process in which the **grantees grew into a dynamic learning collaborative**, cross-pollinating their practices and developing new, improved **hybrid program models to help people live independently for as long as possible as they age.**

A core feature of the Aging in Community Initiative (ACI) was the exploration of **open source methodology**, which originated in the computer sciences and only recently is being applied to the social sciences. In the open source framework, proprietary concerns and traditional top-down structures are set aside so that a more grassroots collaborative energy can bubble up. Embracing these ideas, ACI project participants have grown into a community where they feel empowered to share deeply and openly,

The 2009 Report of President and CEO

to the LSA Board of Directors and Membership

Lutheran Services in America, April 2009

including their financial and business models as well as their program strengths and weaknesses, in the service of **collaborative innovation**.

At the urging of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Foundation, another core feature of the Initiative was expanded **partnership** effort between the **participating organizations and congregations**, resulting in a strong new corps of congregational **volunteers** who are helping to staff the programs.

The guiding plan for the ACI was that the emerging models would not only be effective, but also relatively low cost, sustainable, Lutheran in identity, and replicable. That hope has been realized. Nine of the 14 participating organizations were awarded continued funding by Thrivent, and will continue to work together through June 2009, further testing their new models and completing how-to guides that will **help other organizations start similar programs**. From the collaborative work of the nine participating organizations, **five models are emerging**:

- A social group respite model in which volunteers offer seniors with memory loss a day of therapeutic activities, social interaction and meal sharing at a congregation while providing family caregivers a day of relief.
- A respite model in which volunteers visit the home of aging individuals, extend companionship, social interaction and practical support while providing caregivers relief.
- A caregiver educational curriculum that volunteers deliver in congregational and community settings.
- A co-op model that views aging people as valuable social assets and in which a pan-Lutheran congregational coalition links volunteers with people in need, and links those receiving services with opportunities to serve others.
- A care team model in which teams of congregational volunteers partner with paid staff to provide enhanced care management services to aging people in their homes.

**Create Hybrids -
Share What Works!**

looking
forward

For LSA, the ACI and its emerging models are just the beginning of a new strategic response to the growing trend toward community approaches to aging. In April 2009, LSA will begin a new journey, in partnership with the ELCA's Lutheran Services for the Elderly Endowment and Criterion Ventures in New York, in which LSA will develop new expertise and capacity as an agent of replication. Some of the emerging ACI models will provide the first opportunities to explore what kinds of replication and scaling strategies will be most effective in spreading practices that work. Opportunities to build shared Lutheran brands are anticipated. While focusing initially on aging services, LSA's long term goal is to use its new replication expertise to strengthen the system across all services lines.

Services to older people and their families are offered by more than two thirds of SMOs. That number is higher if one includes programs like food programs, not specifically targeted to the frailties of age but serving many older people. Aging service ministries are proliferating in congregations, too, many times in partnership with SMOs, LSA has pledged to support and build the Lutheran presence and brand in aging. Through communications strategies, reports, new models, technology for independent living, information sharing, and partnerships, LSA and SMOs will work together to provide leadership to an aging nation.

SMO SUSTAINABILITY

Affinity Business Relationships

SMO use of **affinity purchasing relationships** continues to grow slowly but steadily. Mosaic has implemented a purchasing portal to link to the wide portfolio available through Consorta and is enthusiastic about the results. Discovery Services, a good partner to LSA through Mosaic, offers car/van fleet services. CDW has completed an agreement with LSA. As more LSA members participate in purchasing arrangements, word of mouth may increase the rate of adoption, particularly as cost concerns escalate.

Health Benefits

LSA, CHRM, and the ELCA and LCMS benefit plans worked with concerted effort for several years to explore ways to offer health benefits to SMO employees. The **last and final model** to be explored through the national Church Benefits Association agreement with Highmark Blue Cross/ Blue Shield **proved unworkable**. All of the partners deserve thanks for unstinting effort through a long and vigorous exploration of many different approaches to providing lower cost health benefits to SMOs. The process and decision points have been carefully documented in order that others can fully understand what has been explored. The document can serve as a starting point should the topic arise in the future.

Green Initiatives

Many LSA members are “greening” their operations. In addition to day-to-day efforts to **reduce, reuse and recycle**, new **construction and renovation projects** are employing new technologies for energy efficiency. Some social ministry organizations are exploring ways to generate their own electricity to sell back to the power companies for a net return. Ted Hart from GreenNonprofits will be presenting at the LSA Conference and LSA will continue to share information on SMO initiatives so that others can consider adoption.

Contribute to
Sustainability -
Work Together!

looking
forward

In the coming year, special emphasis will be placed on assisting SMOs with the financial dilemmas inherent in the economic recession. LSA is engaged in discussions with foundations, church investment funds, corporate and nonprofit partners and government granting and contracting entities to identify new sources of funding and access to capital. Consulting services, including facilitation of affiliation/ integration, will offer outside counsel to organizations wishing to assess financial health.

LINKING SERVICE AND ADVOCACY

“Lutheran SMOs are healthy and vital, engaged in effective service and advocacy.” The language of this Ends policy is quite intentional when it **links service and advocacy**, and then connects them to what it means to be healthy and vital social ministry organizations. SMOs partner day-by-day with individuals and communities to address real needs in real time. They also recognize that they are called to engage in

The 2009 Report of President and CEO

to the LSA Board of Directors and Membership

Lutheran Services in America, April 2009

advocacy for, and with, individuals and communities to ensure **longer-term, broader-scale sustainable change**.

One part of that advocacy is the collective public policy advocacy work SMOs do through LSA. LSA engages, educates and empowers members to become active in public policy advocacy. Elected officials on all levels of government want to hear from their constituents, and **SMOs know better than most how policy decisions play out on the ground**.

The **Lutheran Services in America Disability Network has been a system leader in public policy advocacy**. For the past several years, many of the LSA-DN members have contributed funds to support a public policy advocacy position in LSA's Washington office. They have leaned in to advocacy with time and energy as well as dollars. In January 2009, LSA-DN members agreed to make the position an ongoing shared effort of the network.

Engaging and Equipping SMOs

Some of the ways LSA's Washington, DC-based advocacy staff encourages SMO advocacy:

- **LSA Washington**, an e-publication is produced weekly. It provides updates on legislation, action alerts, websites of interest, social media tools to improve public policy advocacy, and notice of conference calls on public policy priorities and other developing issues.
- **The new LSA website** is updated regularly and is the hub for public policy updates. The *Take Action* page is changed often as public policy advocacy opportunities are identified.
- The LSA and LSA-DN public policy office host **two conference calls each month** to educate LSA members on important and timely public policy issues. The experts who impart information also learn from LSA members.
- As the use of **e-tools for advocacy** evolves, LSA is using teleconferences and conference breakout sessions to teach SMOs how to make good use of this technology. Perhaps most importantly, LSA uses these tools in its own work, providing a place for SMOs to learn right along with LSA staff. LSA members are following LSA and LSA-DN on **Twitter** for updates on legislation. They are being encouraged to use short **videos** for advocacy, and they are active participants on the LSA Disabilities Network **Ning** advocacy site. The **LSA Public Policy Advocacy Toolkit** is being updated to include social media tools and will be posted on the LSA website as a free resource.
- **LSA connects with SMO staff members when they come to Washington, DC to advocate**. Current information on key issues, coordinated messages, combining local and national voices, and even a cup of coffee or the use of an umbrella are some of the things LSA members have found helpful.
- Since many LSA members cannot come to Washington, DC to advocate, the LSA public policy office has arranged **telephone conference call meetings between LSA members, their congressional offices, and LSA staff members**. The conference calls allow congressional staff to hear what constituent service providers are experiencing as a result of the recession, what others across the country are experiencing, and proposed legislative solutions. Congressional staff commented that they found the conference calls highly informative.

In the fall of 2008, the LSA public policy office reached out to LSA members to complete its biannual **public policy advocacy survey**. Results of interest include:

The 2009 Report of President and CEO

to the LSA Board of Directors and Membership

Lutheran Services in America, April 2009

- Eighty-five percent of the 130 respondents have corresponded with their elected or appointed officials; 72% have invited elected or appointed officials to do a site visit; 70% engage staff in public policy advocacy.
- Fifty-three percent of respondents are interested in networking opportunities for advocacy.
- Eighty-two percent of respondents are “very” or “somewhat” interested in a residency/sabbatical in LSA’s DC office; 82% in writing a guest article in an LSA publication; 80% in providing outreach to key Congressional committee members; and 79% in constructing advocacy op-eds to be used by others.

Clearly, those who responded are interested in, and engaged in, advocacy. LSA staff will find new ways to **increase their engagement** and will also work to **engage new people**.

It is not surprising to note that LSA members are far more engaged in public policy advocacy as a result of the **economic recession**. Needs are increasing and resources are shrinking. In January, LSA gathered information from LSA members and produced a short paper, **A Call to Care**, outlining SMO experiences. The paper, prepared for a **Senate briefing** conducted by Father Larry Snyder of Catholic Charities USA and the LSA President and CEO, has been distributed widely and received media attention in Washington and beyond. Many SMOs have cited the paper in their newsletters.

Engaging and Equipping Decision Makers

In addition to educating and equipping SMOs for advocacy, the **LSA public policy office educates and equips decision makers in Washington, DC** to improve public policy in the areas of greatest interest to the social ministry system.

Priority Areas for 2009 Are:

- Health Care
- Affordable Housing
- Child Welfare
- Social Services Block Grant
- Volunteerism and National Service
- Federal Budget

More information about the overarching goals in those areas and updates on specific legislative and administrative issues is provided for the 2009 Annual Conference and on the website, so will not be reviewed here.

LSA has experienced **significant legislative and regulatory success in the past year**. LSA worked in coalitions; met with members of Congress, their staff members and administrative decision makers; wrote letters; hosted educational conference calls for LSA members; and provided informational updates and action alerts.

- **Health Care:** LSA focused on three health care proposals: 1) Reauthorization of the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP); 2) Moratoria on Medicaid regulations that would be harmful to LSA members; and 3) An increase in the Federal Medical Matching Rate (FMAP), the federal-state formula for the Medicaid program.

The State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) reauthorization was signed into law on February 4, 2009. The Medicaid regulations were not implemented by the Administration and in February President Obama issued a directive that immediately withdrew two directives issued by the Bush Administration. The Medicaid FMAP was increased as part of the American Recovery

and Reinvestment Act. An \$87 billion increase in Medicaid funding has been sent to states, territories and the District of Columbia. It includes \$15 billion for FMAP.

- **Home and Community Based Services:** The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a proposed rule that would make significant changes to Home and Community Based Services. The provision grants states the option of providing home and community based services (HCBS) to people receiving Medicaid without the need to apply for a waiver. Instead, states will have to submit a state plan amendment to CMS for approval. Through this option, HCBS would be expanded to thousands of Medicaid beneficiaries.
- **Child Welfare:** On October 7, 2008, the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 was signed into law. Widely regarded as the most sweeping child welfare legislation of the past 15 years, the law promotes permanent families by making kinship care and kinship guardianship more accessible options, offers federal supports for families who adopt children with special needs and provides stronger supports for young adults aging out of foster care among other provisions. LSA was especially supportive of the provision expanding funding for child welfare worker training to private, nonprofit organizations.
- **Affordable Housing:** The National Housing Trust Fund, created as a part of the Housing Economic Recovery Act, was signed into law on July 30, 2008. The National Housing Trust Fund will provide for the housing needs of very low income families. Funding for the Trust Fund is included in President Obama's FY2010 budget request.
- **Social Services Block Grant:** The economic recovery legislation included a \$400 million increase in the Social Services Block Grant but the funds were not included in the final bill. This program is currently funded at \$1.7 billion; LSA continues to support funding for SSBG at its full authorized level of \$2.8 billion. The Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) is crucial to meeting increasing demand for a variety of health and human service needs on the local level.
- **Federal Budget:** In 2008, under the Bush Administration, there were no significant increases in funding to help meet the growing need for health and human services. In 2009, there has been a shift as the Obama Administration focuses on domestic issues and programs of concern to LSA members.
- **Pension Reform:** LSA members told LSA of the challenges they faced under the Pension Protection Act of 2006. LSA alerted Independent Sector (IS) and worked closely with IS and LSA members to achieve a temporary solution.
- **The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act** includes a Strengthening Communities Fund with \$50 million to help nonprofit organizations to meet increased demand for services. The Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, legislation passed by Congress but as of this writing not yet signed into law by the President, includes a Nonprofit Capacity Building Fund that will make grants to intermediary nonprofit organizations to provide training on best practices, financial planning, grant writing, and compliance with tax laws for small and midsize nonprofit organizations. The legislation also includes The Social Innovation Funds Pilot Program which will provide funding for developing innovative and effective solutions to national and local challenges.

With a new Administration and Congress, significant effort has been focused on building **relationships and access:**

- LSA worked closely with the **Obama Transition Team, Presidential Inauguration Committee and new Obama Administration**, including Joshua DuBois, named Executive Director of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships. Because LSA was helpful

to that Office, at the eleventh hour LSA received two invitations to the inaugural prayer service at the National Cathedral. LSA's Board Chair and Senior Director of Public Policy attended.

- LSA and LSA-DN sent the new Obama Administration **transition documents on faith and government partnerships**, health care and housing. LSA has highlighted the *A Call to Care* white paper, economic recovery bill recommendations and LSA public policy priorities on conference calls with the new Deputy Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the new Deputy Domestic Policy Advisor, with an economic policy advisor and with White House faith-based staff.
- LSA public policy staff members were two of ten people invited by the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships to Mr.Obama's **first major speech on the economy** just prior to his inauguration.
- LSA staff held more than a dozen **meetings with the Obama Administration**, including meetings with the Domestic Policy Council, the Office of Management and Budget, the Office of Innovation, and the Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships.
- LSA public policy staff members are conducting **meetings with Lutheran members of Congress**.

**Root Out
Systemic Issues -
Link Service and
Advocacy!**

looking
forward

In the coming year LSA will emphasize the connections between service and advocacy. Building the engagement of SMOs, a proactive rather than reactive approach, and strategic partnerships will be at the top of the list as LSA takes a hard look at the best ways to tackle public policy advocacy.

VOLUNTEERS – SPRINGING UP RANDOMLY OR CULTIVATED BY INTENT?

Volunteers are a significant and growing component of Lutheran social ministry. Most SMOs engage volunteers, but few have yet to tap the **full power and passion of these partners**.

Traditional models of working with volunteers are being replaced. New generations of volunteers expect different kinds of engagement. This includes younger volunteers, whose involvement in the recent presidential election signals a readiness to be engaged. It also includes people interested in “encore” careers, and leadership level volunteers who want to make a bigger difference. Many SMOs have only begun to **re-think recruitment and mobilization strategies** to make use of this talent pool.

**Grow Capacity -
Cultivate Volunteers!**

LSA has begun expanding opportunities for SMOs through teleconferences and breakout sessions at the Annual Conference. At the urging of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, the Aging in Community Initiative (ACI) models include a significant focus on the use of volunteers. LSA is partnering with Lutheran Volunteer Corps to build a non-residential volunteer corps made up of a wider range of adults, including people post-retirement.

looking forward

LSA views volunteerism as an important building block for the future. It will craft strategies to equip both LSA and its members to engage a broader range of volunteers and will share what is working. LSA will seek out opportunities to parlay national service initiatives to SMO advantage. Stay tuned and get involved as LSA works to make sure that unlike volunteer plants that spring up randomly in the garden, the Lutheran system is known for intentional cultivation of people with passion and talent.

THE LUTHERAN SOCIAL MINISTRY SYSTEM HAS INTEGRATED, RESULTS-DRIVEN CAPACITY.

KNOWLEDGE CROSS-POLLINATION

Annual Conference

The **LSA Annual Conference** gathers leaders from across the country as a community that worships, learns, faces challenges, and shares joys together. Increasingly, the Conference also serves as a launching point for small group initiatives, new system-wide projects, and the chance to help shape LSA as an alliance of many partners. CEOs and senior staff members from SMOs, network members, SMO board members, church leaders and other partners all find the Conference valuable. It can be a challenge to address the many interests of such a **diverse group of participants**, but the Conference evaluations indicate a high level of satisfaction.

The event has grown over the years and despite the economic downturn and increasing travel challenges evident a year ago, the 2008 Conference in St. Louis reached attendance rivaling the best-attended 2007 Anniversary Conference. Attendees in 2008 particularly appreciated the focus on the future, the increased opportunities for interactive sessions and the rich portfolio of breakout sessions. Alan Weber received a spontaneous standing ovation at the close of his Friday morning keynote address. There was **great interest in, and support for, the new Ends** resulting from the Vision for the Next Decade process.

The **2009 Conference** will be held in Washington, DC. The start of a new Administration and Congress makes it the right time to marry public policy advocacy and DC relationship building with learning and networking. The Conference is one place, among many, where LSA's growing "social capital" of national relationships is paying off. Well-known presenters are willing to make the LSA Conference a priority for their time because they have come to know and respect LSA and are eager to collaborate. Similarly, in these times of limited resources it is encouraging to see that **so many social ministry leaders have made the 2009 Conference a priority**. Quotes from regular conference attendees about why they attend pepper this year's Conference Program Book – they all emphasize **content and colleagues**, but most especially **renewal of spirit**.

The Annual Conference regularly **draws participants from more than one third of SMOs** as well as a broad spectrum of church leaders. This percentage exceeds that of most association and faith-based organization conferences. However, LSA is eager to **widen the learning circle** to the remaining two-

The 2009 Report of President and CEO

to the LSA Board of Directors and Membership

Lutheran Services in America, April 2009

thirds of members. In addition to posting handouts on the LSA website, this year LSA has arranged for many of the breakout presenters to conduct **Webinars before and after the Conference**.

Teleconferences and Webinars

An oft-quoted truism about Lutheran ministry organizations is, **“If you’ve seen one, you’ve seen one.”** The **diversity of the system is a strength and a challenge**. In order to engage a wide range of social ministry organizations in learning, LSA is building a **portfolio of teleconference, Webinar and online learning opportunities**.

LSA continues to offer regular, convenient ways for LSA members to learn together. In addition to regularly scheduled public policy advocacy calls hosted by both the LSA Washington office and the LSA Disability Network (LSA-DN) and those convened in conjunction with the Aging in Community Initiative (ACI), LSA partnered with the ELCA Board of Pensions and LCMS Concordia Plan Services to offer Webinars on changes to employer roles in 403B plans. LSA partnered with a regional accounting firm to offer a Webinar on Form 990 which was attended by nearly fifty SMOs. Through the National Human Services Assembly, LSA has offered a series of Webinars to LSA members featuring nationally prominent speakers. The LSA Communicators Network hosted a Webinar exploring Lutheran identity with a focus on communication strategies. PACE, home health care and other community based aging service programs have also been featured on teleconference opportunities.

The response has been very positive as **nearly 50% of SMOs have participated in teleconferences and Webinars in the past year**.

Other Learning Connections

With its **new website**, LSA is more able to use that venue to provide information to member organizations and others. The **slides and notes from teleconferences and webinars** are posted there, as are handouts from the Annual Conference and links to web-based resources. LSA used the Leadership Academy to experiment with placing **short video clips** from the event on the LSA website. As 2009 Conference breakouts were planned, many of the presenters agreed to provide teleconference/ Webinar sessions in order to extend the benefit and reach of the conference to those unable to attend.

LSA has also **connected small groups of members to one another in response to specific requests** for peer exchange on particular topics. Brokering and participating in these connections is a delight to LSA staff.

LSA and its members continue to participate in the **Johns Hopkins Listening Post Project** through the LPP Soundings (surveys), LPP Innovator Roundtables (select members who explore in greater depth some of the Sounding results), and the LPP Communiqué Series (summaries of the Sounding results). Recent topics include: Investment Capital, Workforce Crisis, Advocacy and Lobbying, Public Policy Priorities for the New Administration, Information Technology, Infrastructure Projects for Economic Recovery Support and the latest survey on the Economic Downturn. LSA has 66 members in the Project and has had consistently high response rates, including the highest response rate of all the participating listening posts for the survey on Nonprofit Public Policy Priorities for the New

Share What
You Know –
Share What You’d
Like to Know!

The 2009 Report of President and CEO

to the LSA Board of Directors and Membership

Lutheran Services in America, April 2009

Administration. LSA has recently signed on to another Project effort, the *Forward Together: Empowering America's Citizen Sector for the Change We Need* Declaration, along with a growing number of other signatories in the nonprofit arena.

looking
forward

When the on site and teleconference/ web events are added together, nearly two-thirds of LSA's active members have participated in at least one learning opportunity this year. Patterns of attendance at these sessions over the past few years will form the basis for a comprehensive examination of LSA's best role in offering onsite, online and teleconference learning.

The 2010 LSA Annual Conference, Called to Love and Serve Our Neighbors: Abundant Life Together, is scheduled for April 26-28, 2010 in Sacramento, CA.

Recognizing the budget challenges of the coming year, there is discussion of potential short-term changes to the CEO Academy and the Executive Retreat which might include such things as back to back events in the same location, or other opportunities to achieve economies while preserving the key features of each.

In the coming year, LSA plans to continue its teleconference series on public policy advocacy, and to offer timely teleconferences and webinars on PACE, congregational-SMO partnerships, non-monetary exchanges, cost effective back office practices, green nonprofits, volunteerism, social enterprise, person-centered practices in aging, children's issues, etc. With a host of new community development members, LSA will find ways to create "community" within that group. LSA will continue to experiment with online gatherings and communities. LSA will be responsive to changes in the world and to changing areas of interest. Stay tuned and connected to help shape this curriculum as it develops.

GATHERING INFORMATION

Understanding and describing the Lutheran social ministry system is an important part of LSA's work. LSA gathers information carefully and selectively, and uses and reuses the information it collects. Surveys, teleconferences, formal and informal conversations and checking SMO websites and publications are the tools LSA uses. The media, potential partners, national initiatives, SMOs, the two church bodies, congregations and a whole host of others look to LSA as the source of information that will tell the story of Lutheran social ministry and connect them to it.

The Executive Profiles survey was released in early February, surveying CEOs and collecting executive compensation information that will be compiled and shared with SMO Boards for their use in setting compensation. That survey also gathers information about the leaders in the system that LSA uses for a variety of other purposes, including mobilizing the talent resident within the system. The *Leadership for the Future* survey of CEOs, conducted in conjunction with the Executive Retreat, is being translated into a *Conversations Series* booklet. The public policy advocacy survey has focused LSA's priorities, will allow LSA to better support member advocacy efforts, and has identified new ways for LSA to harness member interest. A survey about SMO involvement in the PACE program will allow LSA to convene members to learn from one another. A very short survey was sent to SMO CEOs and others to seek consensus on

The 2009 Report of President and CEO

to the LSA Board of Directors and Membership

Lutheran Services in America, April 2009

principles that will serve as filters to evaluate health care reform proposals. This year the regular updates to the Growing Connections sites, services and staff database includes brief questions to assist LSA staff in compiling fresh information about collective impact including the number of lives touched by LSA member organizations.

Member Outreach and Communications

LSA staff members continue an every-SMO outreach effort. The opportunity to hear from CEOs about their organizations and their work, to listen to their perspectives on how LSA might be helpful and to connect them to LSA and the wider system has proved valuable. This is now augmented by concerted outreach to new CEOs and new SMOs. A notebook containing basic information about LSA and Lutheran social ministry was mailed to all SMO CEOs in late October and is sent to new CEOs and SMOs. LSA staff members also work to maximize the value of travel by scheduling visits to member organizations when they are in proximity.

FOSTER COLLABORATION

Networks

LSA is revisiting and reinvigorating its network strategies in partnership with the networks themselves. The networks connected with LSA are quite diverse and have different needs, challenges and opportunities at different points in time. It is LSA's hope to provide just the right amount of support and structure for each to allow the energy and engagement of LSA members to set and drive an agenda that meets the needs of participants and creates value for the system. Highlights of network activity include:

Alliance of Lutheran Ministries of the South (ALMS) is exploring new possibilities for shared work, is working more closely with judicatories and may expand its geographic reach. Most recently, Lutheran Family Services in the Carolinas, Lutheran Services Florida and Lutheran Social Services of Northeast Florida have joined the discussions. The group is focusing attention on getting to know and to utilize the expertise of the various members, including regular peer-to-peer informal consultation.

Chaplains' Network has been working diligently to plan their conference: *Serving the Suffering, Serving the Servant*. Because of the economic impact on spiritual care budgets and spending, the network is fostering ideas to extend the conference and has committed to a webinar to draw more chaplains together.

LSA Communicators Network (LCN) has begun conducting a series of webinars to be shared throughout the LSA system. Forty-eight people registered for the first one, *Lutheran Identity: Blessings and Pitfalls*, which received positive evaluations. This session also served to increase expertise with the webinar format. A Communicators Network pre-conference will be held in conjunction with the 2009 LSA Annual Conference.

Council for Human Resource Management (CHRM) will hold a pre-conference in conjunction with LSA's 2009 Annual Conference around the theme, *Minimizing Risk through Effective HR Management*. The conference will feature two speakers on the topics of complying with regulatory changes and trends

The 2009 Report of President and CEO

to the LSA Board of Directors and Membership

Lutheran Services in America, April 2009

of risk management. An open panel discussion will focus on the impact of the turbulent economy and its challenges for human resource professionals.

Health Care Mission Leaders (HCML) Rather than a conference this spring, HCML held a very well attended conference call in which members shared strategies being used in the challenging economic times. They also responded to the redraft of the Lutheran Hallmarks, a year-long project of the network, in conjunction with LSA. The Hallmarks work of HCML will be the basis for the Annual Conference breakout session and will launch a broader discussion across LSA.

LAN: A Lutheran Adoption and Foster Care Alliance (LAN) is in the midst of significant transition. Susan Myers ended her time as staff to the network last summer and LSS-Wisconsin and Upper Michigan now provides administrative support to the network. LAN is struggling to re-evaluate its role and purpose as the external environment for both SMOs and international adoption is shifting. LAN is exploring the development of a teleconference curriculum with the direct input of member organizations, specifically at the program level.

Lutheran Services in America Disability Network (LSA-DN) hosted a spiritual life conference, *One God, Once Call*, in the Twin Cities in late October. The assembly counted more than 130 participants from SMOs, congregations and other groups. LSA-DN has recruited four new member organizations and is working with organizations like Lutheran Family Services of Virginia to help them explore opportunities to add disabilities supports to their portfolio of services. In partnership with its core team and the Director of Policy and Advocacy, LSA-DN continues to move forward with advocacy strategies at the state and national levels.

Lutheran Services in America – Ohio (LSA-OH) continues to work on statewide inter-Lutheran cooperation in Lutheran Disaster Response and is discerning the shape of a shared statewide approach to advocacy. Utilizing a whitepaper based on the LSA-DN model, the network is crafting the appropriate model for work in Ohio. The Quarterly meetings provide opportunity for information sharing and mutual support.

**Make Connections
Bloom –
Join a Network!**

Lutheran Services in America – Pennsylvania (LSA-PA) recently held its caucus at the Pennsylvania Lutheran Network Assembly. They, too, are wrestling with how best to move ahead with disaster response in Pennsylvania. They also discussed their work with Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania and shared perspectives with LAMPa staff on issues that matter to SMOs. The network leadership is identifying ways to most effectively energize work together.

Lutheran Financial Managers Association (LFMA) is working to connect to as many financial managers as possible across LSA, and is figuring out the best ways to engage people. The network leadership is quite active and is soliciting information on SMO financial challenges as well as planning for the fall educational event.

Lutheran Information Technology Network (LITN) is hosting a spring conference in May 2009 in addition to a fall gathering in conjunction with LFMA. The robust agenda includes topics such as cloud computing, outsourcing, Linux v. Windows applications, budgeting, hiring, non-computer-related

The 2009 Report of President and CEO

to the LSA Board of Directors and Membership

Lutheran Services in America, April 2009

technologies, and LITN's own wiki and database. Formal and informal discussions foster great knowledge sharing.

NEW WAYS TO CONNECT AND MOBILIZE SMOs

This year LSA and SMOs have experimented with several new ways to connect and mobilize social ministry organizations for results:

- The Martin Luther King, Jr. Day volunteering initiative
- A response to "shovel ready" projects requests by Independent Sector
- The preparation of a paper on the effects of the economy on SMOs
- The Aging in Community Initiative
- Peer consultation
- Network initiatives aimed at the broader social ministry system
- The use of Web 2.0 technology
- A new approach to Action Alerts to call attention to rapid-breaking education, advocacy, information sharing, events, or grant opportunities
- Teleconferences convened at member request to share specific information to problem solve
- Increased time at leadership events building a common understanding and vocabulary for networking and action
-

looking forward

"The Lutheran social ministry system has integrated, results-driven capacity." This End drives toward the time when the component parts of the system are mobilized to work together to produce results. It assumes lever and gears harnessed in established ways for long-term results and also the periodic magnetic mobilization of piece parts for short-term campaigns.

The cornerstone of a system with integrated, results-driven capacity is SMO engagement. In the next year, LSA will work to engage a broader range of members. With a strong existing base and many new community development organizations becoming part of the system, LSA will work to find ways to engage and mobilize that capacity. Experiments with use of technology to form communities; regional gatherings; learning circles; grassroots advocacy; SWAT teams; advisory groups; and other lower cost mechanisms will be the order of the day.

LSA believes that collaboration can become a signature skill for Lutheran social ministry. Already known in many places for being good partners, this is a strength that can be built upon. Collaboration will be a theme for the coming year. LSA will lift up examples of interesting collaborations, will teach and model collaboration skills, and will begin to lay the groundwork for the development of this signature skill area.

LUTHERAN SOCIAL MINISTRY ORGANIZATIONS LIVE OUT THEIR LUTHERAN IDENTITIES.

CULTIVATING LEADERSHIP

Healthy and vital social ministry organizations need faithful and effective leaders. LSA cultivates leaders by offering opportunities to learn and to benefit from the wisdom of others.

Executive Retreat, CEO Academy, Leadership Academy

The November **Executive Retreat** gathered CEOs in Charleston, SC to explore the theme of *Leadership for the Future*. The Rev. Dr. John Johnson, who provided theological perspectives, and Allison Fine, author of *Momentum: Social Change in the Connected Age*, both received strong positive evaluations as did the intentional time set aside for structured and informal discussions.

Dan Roam, author of *The Back of the Napkin*, a best-selling business book, conducted a day-long seminar at the January **CEO Academy**. Rick Stiffney, of Mennonite Health Services Alliance, and the LSA president facilitated a day-long consideration of how social ministry organizations might work together as LSA to fulfill the new Ends. There are moments when the struggles to form and mobilize collective Lutheran social ministry capacity seem to be well worth it. At the close of that session, one person said, "Wow! I finally get it – LSA isn't some national organization out there – I AM LSA and what I do makes a difference!"

The second **Leadership Academy**, held in January 2009, gathered senior leaders to focus on: the vocation of Lutheran organizations; financial management; leadership from the inside out; personal leadership journeys; and a leader's cultural mojo!

Something extraordinary happens when leaders come together with a good mix of presentation, structured discussion, informal networking and social interaction. This year, in particular, evaluations of the Executive Retreat, CEO Academy and Leadership Academy reflected the value participants place on being with others who share similar challenges and opportunities, and, perhaps more importantly, a faith-rooted mission. Since 2005, 111 different SMOs have participated in one of these three events. This year, about 60 organizations sent people to these three events. Many of these organizations return year after year, but some are only able to attend when scholarships pave the way. Lutheran Retirement Ministries of Alamance County this year again provided LSA with funds to offer scholarships to the CEO Academy for all new CEOs and to assist with the Leadership Academy.

New Leaders

LSA offers a robust **portfolio of services for SMOs at the time of executive transitions**:

- Guidebooks on Succession Planning and Executive Transitions for Boards of Directors
- Consulting services to Boards as they establish search committees, assess leadership needs and bring new CEOs on board

Cultivate
Leadership –
Learn Together
Through LSA!

The 2009 Report of President and CEO

to the LSA Board of Directors and Membership

Lutheran Services in America, April 2009

- Discounted relationships with search firms
- Sample installation services
- CEO compensation guidebook and yearly salary survey
- Scholarships for new CEOs to the CEO Academy
- Personal peer phone calls to invite new CEOs to the CEO Academy, Executive Retreat and Annual Conference
- Consultations with Boards and new CEOs

This past fall, a notebook filled with information about the Lutheran social ministry system and ways to contribute to and benefit from connections to others through LSA was mailed to every CEO. It is now sent to each new CEO and social ministry organization as they come on board and is followed by other forms of outreach.

Collaborating for Leadership Cultivation

For many years LSA has partnered with other national faith-based organizations to offer a year-long program for senior management leaders, the **Faith-Based Leadership Institute**. It emphasizes the exploration of vocation in relationship to employment within a faith-oriented organization. The program has proved valuable as it has grown and changed over the years and there is always a sizeable Lutheran SMO cohort participating.

LSA also **engages actively with leadership development efforts in both the ELCA and the LCMS**. The Intersections Institute, Project Connect, Theological Education with Youth, the Western Mission Network and the Vocation and Education Program Unit have all engaged LSA in ELCA initiatives. The Florida-Georgia District of the LCMS convened church works around the theme *Into the World*, and invited LSA to have a key role.

looking
forward

LSA's challenge, especially to engage smaller and increasingly resource-constrained organizations, is finding new ways to bring more people together to experience the learning and fellowship that strengthens both the individual leaders and their organizations, but also powers the system and the commitment to Lutheran social ministry. LSA's Leadership Development Plan 2.0 will be formulated in the coming year.

While there are many other educational resources and experiences for leaders, LSA will focus its leadership development on developing faithful and effective leaders for the Lutheran system, and leaders who are equipped to be collaborative partners, future-shaping innovators, and advocates for social change. Good governance is critical to the vitality of SMOs. In the coming year, LSA will lay the groundwork for major initiatives targeted to SMO boards of directors in the following year.

This spring, LSA will begin Tuesdays Together in the Spirit. This weekly fifteen minute teleconference, hosted by a variety of leaders, will offer scripture, reflections and prayer for SMO leaders.

The 2009 Report of President and CEO

to the LSA Board of Directors and Membership

Lutheran Services in America, April 2009

Lutheran Hallmarks

It is an exciting time to be thinking about Lutheran identity in social ministry. And, with so much at stake, there has never been a more important time for the discussion. The meetings of the **Health Care Mission Leaders Network** have been energized over this past year working on Lutheran Hallmarks.

Just as a craftsman identifies a work by a hallmark embedded in the product, so the work of Lutheran social ministry has identity embedded in what we have called Lutheran Hallmarks. These **identity markers** are vital for what it means to be Lutheran and Christian in social ministry.

At last year's Annual Conference, the Health Care Mission Leaders began the important work of identifying hallmarks. At a day long decision accelerator meeting hosted by Alegant Health in Omaha, the network reacted to an initial draft of a document identifying Lutheran Hallmarks. It has been working since then on fine tuning and defining hallmarks as well as generating questions which might be asked by organizations as they live out this identity in social ministry.

As this year's **LSA Annual Conference approaches, the conversation will be launched more broadly.** What distinguishes Lutherans in the work of social ministry? What do these hallmarks look like and how do we recognize them? Social ministry leaders will be talking together about such things as God's love for all people, our response in faith to love our neighbors, and the pursuit of wholeness and well-being for all people. They will explore what it means to be called by God in Christ to this good work in the world, and what it means to have a vocation of care and service. And, there will be some probing questions that push this discussion into daily life and practice.

Get to the Root of
Things –
Explore
Lutheran Hallmarks!

looking
forward

There will be opportunities to be part of the next steps, at the Conference, via the LSA website, in discussion groups, conference calls, and a variety of ways.

These Hallmarks will be translated, echoed and lived out in diverse ways. Stay tuned in to this important work and contribute to its development.

**GROW CONGREGATION/
SMO PARTNERSHIPS**

Porcupine Project

At the April 2008 LSA Annual Conference, Professor Stephen Wernet taught a breakout session that explored the differences in cultures between **congregations and SMOs**. That was followed by an intensive breakout session with Luther Snow who used an **asset mapping approach** to launch the Porcupine Project aimed at gathering SMOs and congregations in an online community to share, explore and

Find Organic Connections -
Build Partnerships
between
Congregations & SMOs!

The 2009 Report of President and CEO

to the LSA Board of Directors and Membership

Lutheran Services in America, April 2009

experiment together. The sessions were well-attended and well-received and staff continues to experiment with ways to keep the project moving forward.

The online community has not caught fire so LSA and Wheat Ridge Ministries are exploring some new approaches which include a breakout session at the 2009 Conference, teleconferences, convening SMO church relations officers, and perhaps a regional gathering that would include both congregations and SMOs.

looking
forward

Social ministry organizations continue to express a growing desire to be in partnership with congregations and they also express frustration at the difficulty of that partnership. LSA staff members see the Porcupine Project as a way to learn and experiment together with ways of partnering that don't proceed from pre-defined roles and expectations. So, they will push forward on that initiative.

The Aging in Community Initiative has developed at least two replicable models that have SMO/ congregation partnerships as the core. In the next year, SMOs will partner with LSA in a replication initiative to begin to disseminate those models to new places.

And, as always, LSA will identify and lift up both experimental and successful partnerships between congregations and SMOs so that others might learn from them.

**BUILD AWARENESS OF
LUTHERAN SOCIAL MINISTRY**

LSA Communications

The past year witnessed an **enormous leap forward for LSA's communications** as months and months of planning and effort came to fruition. LSA's **new website** was launched in September as was a **new e-letter, LSA Together**, with a circulation list of 4,000 people and growing. The website and the e-letter contain information ranging from information about members, to resources to use, to information about how to become involved with LSA. Website and e-letter analytics allow LSA to see more clearly what it is audiences find interesting, and to shape presentation and content accordingly.

**Tell Your Story –
Broadcast the News
about Lutheran Social
Ministry!**

LSA Washington and Six of One (the CEO to CEO newsletter) were converted to an updated format. A **new general LSA brochure and a new series called Conversations** were released this year. A brief **Action Alert** format was developed to convey late-breaking opportunities, calls to action, or other time-sensitive information. LSA's advocacy department led the way with the use of new technologies, introducing **Ning, Twitter and a LSA YouTube channel**. LSA's goal is to make sure that all SMOs have the opportunity to benefit from and contribute to the wider Lutheran social ministry network.

looking forward

With new tools in place, LSA is experimenting with new ways to tell the story of Lutheran social ministry, one that most people feel is not well-known. LSA is updating its media plan to reflect the new Ends and topics most likely to be newsworthy. To create and capture opportunities to tell the social ministry story, LSA must have rather specific knowledge of SMOs and their work. Quite frankly, this is often a challenge. So, LSA is experimenting with a variety of ways to gather information:

- *Partnering with the Communicators Network to gather information and develop messages that can be echoed*
- *Scanning SMO websites, newsletters and e-publications*
- *Creating incentives for SMOs to share stories by featuring them in LSA publications and on the website*
- *Sending out Action Alerts for specific information for short turnaround media requests*

As the Lutheran Hallmarks project proceeds, those Hallmarks will be translated into ideas for practice in daily life, but also into messages for various audiences. Throughout the next year the groundwork will be laid for a major Lutheran Hallmarks push the following year.

Church Relations

LSA continues to **work closely with alliance partners the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (LCMS)**. The Executive Director of ELCA's Church in Society program unit (CS), and the Executive Director of LCMS World Relief and Human Care (WRHC) sit on the LSA Board of Directors and regularly report on activities and issues within the church bodies and the implications for LSA.

Barbara Below and Ruth Reko, **staff liaisons to LSA**, have responsibility for social ministry organizations within WRHC and CS respectively. They attend LSA staff calls and meetings and serve as responsive connectors between the work of LSA, the work of the church bodies, and the work of SMOs.

Each of the **church bodies** is completing a process of **reviewing and revising the criteria by which social ministry organizations connect formally to the church bodies**, and through that process, to LSA. While there is overlap in criteria for ELCA affiliation and LCMS recognition, each of the church bodies will have a separate process and some specific requirements SMOs. This represents a departure from the practice of the previous decade. Changes to the criteria by the LCMS, particularly, have raised anxiety on the part of some SMOs.

This year the LSA Board of Directors will bid farewell to Paul Middeke and Bishop Gregory Pile who are completing their terms. LSA has learned that Bishop David deFreese has been chosen by the Conference of Bishops to succeed Bishop Pile. The LCMS is working to name a successor to Paul Middeke.

Both the **ELCA and the LCMS have featured social ministry themes at District and Synod sessions**. The LSA president has been asked to speak to and to facilitate gatherings within both denominations. LSA is working on several leadership development initiatives within the ELCA. Advocacy work in Washington, DC is closely coordinated with the ELCA Washington office, as well as with Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service and Lutheran World Relief. ELCA and LCMS communications and publications have worked with LSA to highlight topics in social ministry.

The 2009 Report of President and CEO

to the LSA Board of Directors and Membership

Lutheran Services in America, April 2009

Each of the church bodies is facing **turbulent environments** related to both internal and external challenges. Uneasiness within the denominations and between them can translate to challenges on the ground for social ministry organizations. The ELCA and the LCMS have recently announced the need to reduce financial support to LSA as a result of their own economic situations. Similar reductions are taking place at the local level through synods, districts and congregations.

looking
forward

LSA appreciates the support and engagement of the ELCA and the LCMS and invites all constituents to identify additional opportunities to strengthen relationships and to identify opportunities for collaboration. The surface has only been scratched in exploring the possibilities for mutual engagement in social ministry.

LUTHERAN SOCIAL MINISTRY EXPRESSES A SPIRIT OF POSSIBILITY AND A WILL THAT SHAPES THE FUTURE.

**A SPIRIT OF POSSIBILITY AND
A WILL THAT SHAPES THE FUTURE**

By creating this new future-oriented mandate for LSA, social ministry adopts a **proactive stance**. It is not enough to react to change and to work day-by-day as partners with people as they struggle through challenges and transitions. Rather, the intent is that with LSA as a catalyst, **the strengths and imaginations of 300 organizations will be mobilized** to make longer-term differences for individuals and communities. The challenge is to **envision a new future**, to embrace and shape change, and to think and act in new ways.

Throughout the Vision for the Next Decade process, LSA members asked that LSA scout the future and help SMOs turn those insights into opportunities. LSA is creating strategies to cultivate this spirit of possibility and this future orientation. Each issue of *LSA Together* contains a **Clues to the Future** column. LSA tracks trends in the wider environment, interprets them to SMOs and seeks ways to help SMOs turn them into opportunities.

Technology for Independent Living

An area of keen interest, across a variety of service lines, is the use of assistive and monitoring technologies to help people with impairments in the activities of daily living to function independently. Many SMOs have begun to make, or are in the process of exploring, investments in new technology in these areas and in the area of electronic medical records. **Technology is an area rich with promise** for the LSA system to work together. Rather than redundant processes of exploration and due diligence resulting in a wide variety of retail purchases of equipment, software and consultation, this is the time to work together. By sharing information and bringing the power of the system to bear, efficiencies and economies of scale can be achieved.

The 2009 Report of President and CEO

to the LSA Board of Directors and Membership

Lutheran Services in America, April 2009

As LSA has explored its best role in this arena, one area of promise is gathering information about what is or is likely to be available, how providers of services might use or integrate products and services and what the implications might be in what time frames. Armed with this knowledge, LSA can equip SMOs and can identify opportunities for group purchasing or investment.

United Cerebral Palsy has gathered several partners, including LSA, to engage in **sponsored research** spearheaded by HealthTech, a subscription medical technology research firm. The research has been conducted over the last several months and included literature review, stakeholder analysis, product review and expert interviews. Preliminary results of the research were released to the partners in late March. A series of papers and webinars to assist organizations in understanding and preparing for ongoing market changes is being planned. LSA will alert members to these and will spearhead joint Lutheran exploration of emerging opportunities.

Social Enterprise

Given the vagaries of funding from government, foundations and donors, many SMOs are turning to **earned revenue ventures and other forms of social enterprise**. LSA members own durable medical equipment companies, invest in technology firms, vend their expertise, perform back office services, and operate catering and landscaping businesses as part of job skills training. LSA serves as a **conduit to help members learn** from emerging experts and from one another.

Examples from the 2009 annual conference include:

- Keynote and conversation breakout - Ami Dar, CEO of Idealist.org and Action without Borders.
- Sessions on both green workplaces and e-fundraising - Ted Hart, the CEO of GreenNonprofits and also the founder of ePhilanthropy
- Session on young leaders, social enterprise and nonprofits of the future - Dan Cardinali, CEO of Communities in Schools and a nationally recognized social entrepreneur
- Session on non-market economies/ time banking/ care banking - Edgar Cahn, founder of TimeBanks, USA
- Session on new hybrid corporate forms and new hybrid financing mechanisms for social enterprise - Criterion Ventures
- Sessions on the elements of social enterprise – Scott Leff, Bayer Center for Nonprofit Management and Leaders from LSS Western PA and LSS- Minnesota

**Look Outward and
Think Big –
Shape the Future!**

**looking
forward**

LSA is exploring strategies to translate this somewhat ephemeral End into concrete action steps to achieve it, along with ways to measure progress. A greater linking of service and advocacy presses on systemic change for and with people who know best what isn't working now. LSA is exploring the use of web-based social networking technologies. On the drawing board for the future, LSA anticipates:

- *identifying ways to stimulate innovation*
- *finding new ways to work with volunteers*
- *forming new partnerships with non-traditional partners*
- *borrowing from many different disciplines and fields*
- *creating social enterprise opportunities for LSA and for its members*

LSA AND ITS MEMBERS, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OTHERS, ARE LEADING A MOVEMENT OF HOPE AND GRACE TOWARD A SOCIETY THAT VALUES GENEROSITY, INCLUSION, JUSTICE AND MUTUAL CARE.

FRESH LANGUAGE

LSA and many SMOs are exploring the ways in which language shapes perception and action. Subtly patronizing ways of describing social ministry work; words that have become flat or misappropriated; insider's jargon; and terms that may unwittingly suggest political bias need to be pruned or reclaimed more clearly. Language that is simple, straightforward, faithful, person-oriented, and compelling needs to be crafted. In the coming year, this exploration will accelerate toward a focus the following year on **fresh language**.

CREATING MOVEMENTS AND FOSTERING SOCIAL CHANGE

This is a tall order, but one that Lutheran social ministry organizations individually have been furthering for nearly two hundred years. Called to work toward a **vision of community** that recognizes the worth of each person in God's eyes and assures that all people can meet their needs and contribute their talents. The vision of inclusion requires deep listening and significant change. While we hold no illusions that human efforts can make the world perfect, God calls us to **work together to love and serve our neighbors**.

Making progress toward this end will require new skills of both LSA and its members. To fulfill the roles of **movement stimulators and social change agents** on a broad scale, LSA has begun to craft strategies that will equip LSA and its members for those roles.

**Build a Movement –
Sow the Seeds of
Change!**

The **first steps** will be:

- to study the wider history of movements and social change
- to identify others who are currently engaged in work that echoes the hopes this End articulates
- to create operational definitions of these terms by asking a wide range of people what such a society would look like
- to collect "like that" examples of these principles in action

LSA and its members will need to find ways to **create circles of learning and action** that can be knit together into a movement.

LSA INFRASTRUCTURE AND CAPACITY

LSA at the National Level

As LSA has designed strategies to pursue the new Ends, it has become clearer that LSA at the national level should be structured similarly to a professional services firm. LSA has committed to **core process competencies** of:

The 2009 Report of President and CEO

to the LSA Board of Directors and Membership

Lutheran Services in America, April 2009

Facilitating

- Knowledge exchange
- Collaboration, joint ventures, affiliations, mergers
- Open source and replication processes
- Linkages of service, advocacy, organizing
- Social change efforts
- Relationships of influence and opportunity

Partnering

- Preferred relationships for goods, services, revenue, member benefit
- For advocacy with members, coalition partners, others
- With government, national organizations, corporations, foundations

Consulting

- Effective governance
- Portfolio of SMO-related areas
- Broker system expertise

Convening

- For learning and knowledge building
- For collaboration
- For tasks and for networking
- To meet challenges and opportunities

And, LSA will focus its own **knowledge competencies** in the following areas. For many other areas, LSA will scan and broker the expertise of others, including people and organizations within the SMO system.

Lutheran

- Hallmarks
- System
- Congregational partnerships
- Leaders who understand Lutheran

Leadership Development

- Leaders who understand and value "Lutheran"
- Leaders who value engaging in the Lutheran system
- Leaders who collaborate
- Leaders who link effective service and advocacy
- Leaders who are oriented toward the future
- Leaders who pursue social change

Emerging Opportunities

- Volunteers and volunteer management
- Aging population
- Technology for independent living
- Social enterprise
- Innovation
- Future trends as opportunities
- Public policy in aging, housing, disabilities, children's issues, health care, nonprofit, domestic spending
- Nonprofit management including member support in finance, accounting, communications
- Social change

To accomplish this and to drive aggressively toward the new Ends, **LSA needs a professional staff highly skilled in these competencies**, able to craft and drive strategies and to engage the strengths and energies of SMOs and other partners. And, as in professional services firms, they must be able to rely on individuals who provide high quality support. LSA will be migrating in this direction and restructuring roles moving forward.

Capacity Building

LSA has been negatively affected by the economic recession, just like many social ministry organizations, denominations, associations and the entire range of not for profit and for profit businesses.

The 2009 Report of President and CEO

to the LSA Board of Directors and Membership

Lutheran Services in America, April 2009

Reduced church body contributions and reduced grant funding have meant reductions in staff capacity. However, LSA is committed to using this as an opportunity to continue its trajectory toward a **more diverse revenue base**. LSA will focus aggressively on **initiatives that bring value to members and revenue to LSA**. LSA is also cultivating funders for special projects and will form an advisory group to consider how best to pursue fundraising.

LSA is committed to building collaborative relationship capacity and making sure Lutheran social ministry is at key national tables and providing leadership within organizations and coalitions including:

- AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF HOMES AND SERVICES FOR THE AGING
 - Schumann – Board Secretary
 - Snyder – Faith-Based Cabinet
- COUNCIL ON ACCREDITATION
 - Schumann - Board of Directors until Dec 2008
 - Schumann – Sponsor Advisory Council
- NATIONAL HUMAN SERVICES ASSEMBLY
 - Schumann – Board Chair
- JOHNS HOPKINS CENTER FOR CIVIL SOCIETY STUDIES LISTENING POST PROJECT
 - Holford, Schumann – Steering Committee
- LEADERSHIP 18
 - Schumann
- NATIONAL COLLABORATION FOR YOUTH
 - Osborne, Hassenstab, Schiller
- CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS WITH DISABILITIES
 - Ansley
- AMERICAN SOCIETY OF ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVES
 - Schumann
- ROUNDTABLE OF NATIONAL FAITH-BASED HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS
 - Schumann - Secretary
- MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS
- INDEPENDENT SECTOR
- WASHINGTON-BASED ADVOCACY AND POLICY COALITIONS

Staff Transitions

In the past year, LSA said goodbye to William Evans who served as Vice President for Finance and Administration. In November, Bruce Croft began as Vice President for Finance and Business Development. Prior to joining LSA, Bruce served as Director of Business Operations with AARP and has had rich experience in consulting, as head of corporate finance for Jiffy Lube and in a variety of other settings.

Cynthia Nelson, a long-time LSA employee most recently serving to facilitate the work of networks and events, will be leaving LSA this summer for full time graduate studies in social work. Kirsten Jensen, who worked on an aging strategies and an aging services report for LSA, has returned to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

THE MAIN THING

It is often said that organizations are most effective when they know what the top priorities are and focus on them, or as is often quoted, “make sure the main thing is the main thing”. For LSA, at the national level **the main thing is to know, value and mobilize the diversity of all of the LSA alliance partners**. To do that LSA must build relationships, act in ways that are fair, neutral and responsive, and develop a reputation for credibility and quality. It must deliver concrete results in the short term while making sure that all initiatives and strategies accomplish multiple purposes and serve as building blocks for the future.

VI. TRACKING TRENDS – WHAT’S COMING UP?

The LSA Board of Directors requests that a portion of each year’s Report of the President and CEO discusses emerging trends likely to affect LSA and its social ministry organization members. Each year **three issues** are selected that are **likely to have direct and near-term impact on SMOs** and that seem to be gaining the greatest momentum as viewed from a national perch.

The 2007 report identified:

- The focus and locus of control is moving to the individual consumer
- Technology brings new opportunities
- Perspectives on nonprofits are changing

In 2008 key trends were:

- Economic issues color both the present and the future
- Participation and professionalism contend with one another
- Demographics drive challenge and opportunity

While the economic downturn was very much in evidence a year ago, its effects have deepened and widened significantly in the past year. It leads the issues that will have both short and long term effects on social ministry organizations.

The three trends of note for 2009 are:

- **Economic challenges force changes and open opportunities**
- **New communities gather momentum**
- **Engaging others creates power**

ECONOMIC CHALLENGES FORCE CHANGES AND OPEN OPPORTUNITIES

A very limited number of SMOs say that they are holding their own in a sea of troubles. Most report that they are experiencing:

- **Increased demand for services – more and more people are struggling**
- **Decreased, delayed and declining government investments in services**
- **Decreased private funding from individuals and foundations**
- **An external economic environment that further exacerbates that trio of challenges**

In early 2009, the **Nonprofit Finance Fund** conducted a survey of nonprofits nationwide. The results, from nearly 1,000 respondents across a wide range of organizations and fields, concluded that the **economic recession is hitting the sector hard**. Key findings include:

- Only 12% of all respondents expect to operate above break-even this year
- Just 16% anticipate being able to cover their operating expenses in both 2009 and 2010
- Thirty-one percent don’t have enough operating cash on hand to cover more than one month of expenses, and another 31% have less than three months’ worth

The 2009 Report of President and CEO

to the LSA Board of Directors and Membership

Lutheran Services in America, April 2009

The **primary recourse** for LSA members and many other human service organizations has been to close programs, to implement hiring freezes, to lay off staff, to optimize lines of credit, to reduce salaries and benefits, and to dismantle capacity in order to try to save at least some of the programs. *All this in the face of growing need.*

At the same time, the **economic situation is prompting other sorts of changes** – trends likely to gain momentum, especially:

- **Discipline** – Already lean organizations will find it imperative to focus clearly on their core missions, to set priorities, to require maximum effort from every staff member and to execute efficiently.
- **Advocacy** – More organizations must become active in advocacy. Many whose services are government-funded work to educate decision makers about the human costs of budget cuts and to offer solutions to make fragmented systems more efficient and effective. Others advocate for and with individuals who are struggling through difficult times and painful transitions.
- **Collaboration** – As resources become scarcer, collaboration becomes more essential. SMOs have begun to collaborate with a variety of new partners to stretch resources and to explore the opportunities inherent in changing circumstances. SMOs are creating structural integrations with others to achieve economies of scale, depth of expertise, access to funds, and/ or stronger operations. Distressed organizations are turning to more stable SMOs for guidance, management, programmatic or back office consolidation, or absorption. This trend will escalate.
- **Creativity** – Building social enterprises and new sources of earned revenue; engaging a broader range of volunteers in new ways; facilitating and brokering the strengths of individuals and communities rather than doing things for them; identifying unusual new partners; using technology rather than travel; encouraging staff members to innovate... Just a few of the ways in which SMOs will need to exercise creativity.

Lutheran
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Depending upon the trajectory of global economic woes, trends such as steeply plummeting resources and censuses, a rise in SMO dissolutions, and a host of other more extreme issues may follow. Lutheran SMOs will be wise to **face their situations realistically and lean in to these challenges together.**

And, as people of hope, Lutheran SMOs also believe that **in the midst of this turmoil, there is opportunity** to ignite the spark of change across the country. In the midst of the current challenges lies remarkable opportunity to move toward a **society that is more generous, more just, and more inclusive** – recognizing that ALL people have needs and also have something to contribute to the common good. Less a me, mine and more attitude. Instead, a greater emphasis on we and ours, and a sufficient and sustainable future for everyone. **This is a trend that Lutheran SMOs together can help to shape**, rather than simply reacting to economic distress one blow at a time.

NEW COMMUNITIES GATHER MOMENTUM

People are coming together to organize themselves in new ways. Cooperative ventures are springing up. Here are a few examples:

- Care cooperatives loosely fashioned after the Beacon Hill model
- Time and care banking systems
- Peer to peer lending arrangements
- Barter brokers
- Community Supported Agriculture programs
- Shared housing initiatives

In addition, the **internet** allows people with similar interests to find one another across time and space. This **asynchronous meeting ground** can **create small niche communities and can also mobilize broad ranks of people to enact major change.** A few examples:

- The engagement of online and on-the-ground supporters during the 2008 presidential campaign
- Online interest group communities for everything from cancer support, to knitting, to software development, to folk music to healthy eating
- Social networking tools that connect friends to friends and colleagues to colleagues and connect strangers in myriad ways
- Online gathering places that supplement face to face communities
- Action-oriented groups that work to influence everything from politics to financial support for causes to public attitudes and behaviors.

The economic situation is likely to escalate the trend toward **self-forming and online communities.** Kasper and Searce, in a 2008 article from the Monitor Institute and David and Lucille Packard Foundation, "*Working Wikily: How Networks are Changing Social Change,*" compare "Web 2.0" tools and technologies to the early days of the printing press. "*There is often a long period during which new technologies are used, but their full potential isn't yet realized, because people are still thinking about things in the old ways.*" They go on to articulate some of the **implications of the new tools:**

- Efforts can be decentralized including distributed labor and decentralized decision-making
- Connecting people and ideas is getting faster and faster
- Coordination and collaboration are easier
- Networks are open and transparent
- Our ability to tap expertise and share knowledge is expanded
- Effectiveness is equated with mobilization
- Organizations are no longer the only way to organize effort

As the future unfolds there will be **significant focus on** issues such as:

- Balancing the need for control with the productivity of networks
- Translating online networks into action in the real world
- Shifting the balance of power between experts and amateurs
- Juggling privacy and security with open sharing
- Figuring out the roles of a variety of associations and organizations.

SMOs must jump in and figure out how to join forces with these communities rather than competing with them or resisting them.

SMOs must **jump in and figure out how to join forces with these communities** rather than competing with them or resisting them. There are great opportunities to engage these pockets of energy and ability in complementary and synergistic ways.

ENGAGING OTHERS CREATES POWER

The **future requires leaders who can engage and mobilize the talents and energies of others over whom they have no real control**. Social ministry organizations will need to be able to develop and motivate a cadre of people, groups and organizations in support of their work. Those who are able to do that will discover the **power in those affiliations**. A few examples:

- Donors that can, and want to, do more than simply write checks
- Volunteers that can, and will, bring leadership level skills
- Grassroots advocates that can, and should, influence public will and political change
- Activist communities of people who care about the issues that SMOs address
- Foundations that want to be engaged beyond providing funding
- Networks of organizations that by joining together can do more and do it better
- Venture philanthropists who see themselves more as angel investors and less as donors
- Collaborative partners, from businesses to congregations to other nonprofits to governmental agencies, who can complement, expand, fund and endorse the work of the SMO.

If SMOs are able to lead in these new ways they will be able to create the sorts of power that produces real change on a greater scale.

Cultivating these relationships and managing them is complex and time consuming, especially in the early phases. However, who better to do this than SMOs which began when people in Lutheran congregations identified a need and mobilized others to meet it? Lutheran social ministry organizations recognize the many vocations people have, recognize that everyone has gifts to contribute, understand the value of diverse communities, and know that they are stewards, not owners of their missions and organizations. That's a great starting point for engaging people and partners in new ways.

Lutheran social ministry organizations recognize the many vocations people have, recognize that everyone has gifts to contribute, understand the value of diverse communities, and know that they are stewards, not owners of their missions and organizations.

There are many organizations and businesses entering the fields in which SMOs work, often competing for resources and attention. If SMOs are able to lead in these new ways they will be able to create the sorts of power that produces **real change on a greater scale**.

V. FUTURE SEASONS

Abundant life together might seem like a strange title for a report written during a prolonged economic recession. Most social ministry organizations are challenged with increasing needs and decreasing resources, forcing painful decisions. People around the globe are suffering through hardships. It feels more like a time of scarcity than of abundance.

But **abundant life is about more than economic and material resources**. “I came that they might have life and have it more abundantly” says Jesus in John 10:10. Abundant life is first and foremost about relationship to God.

And it is also about relationships between people. It is clear that when people and organizations fight the natural tendency to hold on tight to what is theirs and **work together in a spirit of generosity, creativity and mutual engagement** there are resources available. This is the future for LSA.

Here is an example that begins to point to the kinds of possibilities that might emerge.

In the midst of the Christmas holidays, LSA received a call from the Obama transition team. The team planning the inauguration had just decided to use the January 19th Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, occurring the day before the inauguration, to highlight the incoming Administration’s commitment to service in the community. What they wanted from LSA, within two days, was a list of at least 20 January 19th projects which could be advertised as volunteer opportunities on the new Administration’s website. LSA sent a quick alert to its members. Realizing that if LSA and its members could deliver solutions to the Obama administration it would position us well, LSA members responded quickly and within those two days LSA had not 20, but 70 volunteer sites! The LSA network came through.

The network of contacts developed throughout the Obama campaign was mobilized by the Obama folks. Regional coordinators sent emails urging supporters to check out the website and volunteer. Lutheran Services in Iowa sent a quick email to us on January 19th – “Just wanted to let you know that our MLK volunteer opportunity is happening even as we speak! Ross Fackrell and Jillian Kelsey (our VISTAs) had about 20 people sign up and they are cleaning and wiping and disinfecting and moving and rearranging and sorting and throwing out and doing all kinds of wonderful things in the Refugee Community Center! What a blessing! We even found someone who is going to ‘adopt’ the center and come every Monday to clean and organize. God is good! “ New volunteers, mobilized by the campaign organizers, showed up at Lutheran organizations from one end of the country to the other.

In only three weeks a variety of human networks were mobilized through technological networks to make entirely new connections in service of community.

The 2009 Report of President and CEO

to the LSA Board of Directors and Membership

Lutheran Services in America, April 2009

THANKS TO MANY

This year, as always, LSA owes a debt of gratitude to so very many people and organizations. LSA is blessed with a talented and highly engaged Board of Directors. LSA's small staff accomplished a remarkable amount on a shoestring budget. In addition to financial support from the ELCA, the LCMS and the social ministry organizations; several organizations have provided funds for special projects. Lutheran Retirement Ministries of Alamance County, through the Norman C. Berg fund, provided scholarships to the CEO Academy for new CEOs and helped to keep costs reasonable for the Leadership Academy. Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries, Liberty Lutheran Services, Lutheran Social Services of South Central PA and LUTHERCARE hosted 200 people at LSA's reception at the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging fall conference. The social ministry organizations in North and South Carolina provided sponsorships for the fall Executive Retreat in Charleston. And, for the spring 2009 Conference, LSA thanks all of the sponsors, including LSA members:

- World Relief and Human Care, The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod
- Church in Society program unit, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
- Thrivent Financial for Lutherans
- Board of Pensions, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
- CDW Nonprofit
- Council on Accreditation
- Mission Investment Fund, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
- Lutheran Life Communities
- Bethesda Lutheran Homes and Services
- KenCrest Centers
- Krumholz Wind Whiting Fund
- Lutheran Family Services of Virginia
- Lutheran Homes Society
- Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry
- Lutheran Social Services of New England
- Lutheran Social Services of South Dakota
- Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota
- Lutheran Social Services of Illinois
- Lutheran Social Services of Michigan
- Luther Manor
- Lutheran Trust
- Mill Neck Family of Organizations
- National Lutheran Home and Village
- Stevens Worldwide Van Lines
- Tacoma Lutheran Home and Retirement Community
- Unemployment Services Trust
- Berends Hendricks Stuit Insurance

Network leaders, event planning and advisory committee members, task forces, volunteers and committee members not only provided the leadership to make things happen, but reached out and engaged others. Countless people filled in surveys, provided data for Growing Connections, attended teleconferences, webinars and events, offered consultation, shared stories and knowledge, wrote checks to support the shared ministry, and, in sum, participated. Thank you to everyone who gave work, wisdom, wealth and wit! **This is the abundance we share.**

NEXT YEAR AND BEYOND

As the LSA staff develops strategies, work plans and measurable outcomes through which to pursue the new Ends, it is clear that prioritizing and sequencing will be important. The challenge of planning aggressively for leaps of capacity and results, while also scaling to current reality requires that LSA is tending things in the right order. LSA needs to focus on revenue generation and capacity-building, particularly in light of the current economic environment. The opportunities are legion and the Ends

The 2009 Report of President and CEO

to the LSA Board of Directors and Membership

Lutheran Services in America, April 2009

require new skills, expertise and capacity and those require resources. But always, the highest priority is helping social ministry organizations to be healthy and vital parts of a dynamic Lutheran social ministry system working to shape the future.

Aligning LSA's strategies and structure to support the new Ends, launching a robust portfolio of communication vehicles, and engaging social ministry organizations in new ways were key themes for the past year.

Looking forward to the coming year **key themes** will be:

- Financial strategies for difficult economic times
- Linking service and advocacy
- Technology as an enabler
- Collaboration as an art and science
- And laying the ground work for an emphasis in the following year on:
 - Fresh language and new ways of talking about social ministry
 - Good governance
 - Replication of proven models
 - Hallmarks of Lutheran social ministry organizations
- And, for the year after that:
 - Volunteers
 - Innovation
 - Knowledge management
 - Social Change

AN INVITATION

Luther Snow, author of *The Power of Asset Mapping* and friend to LSA, often reminds the groups with whom he consults that "it is not a zero-sum game." Relationships, talents, skills and human energy are assets that grow when shared. Sharing resources expands opportunities. People who participate in asset mapping exercises are often amazed by just how much there is to mobilize – they have a sense of abundance when they see that they can combine their own strengths and resources with those of others in new ways.

LSA is the place where strengths and resources come together in new ways to expand social ministry. Collaboration within the LSA system and beyond offers not yet imagined possibilities to shape the future. **Consider this an invitation to become engaged --- *Together We Can!***

