

Responding to Community Needs in Turbulent Times LSS Housing Services' Donation Drive



A large number of Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota's (LSS) services are provided in the neighborhoods and in support of individuals most profoundly impacted by systemic inequity and systemic injustice – and by the events of the weeks following the death of George Floyd in May 2020.

The Center for Changing Lives (CFCL) in Minneapolis was buzzing with activity in June, 2020 when people from across the Twin Cities and Greater Minnesota dropped off supplies to meet basic needs of area families affected by grocery store closures, damaged businesses and transportation challenges following the unrest from the killing of George Floyd. Some 200 cars and vans drove through the CFCL parking lot to donate an estimated 7,500 items, including diapers, baby formula and paper products – along with financial gifts and 200 gift cards for grocery stores and transportation.

“Just to see the outpouring of support was incredibly heartwarming,” said Jaime Stampley, senior director of Housing Services, whose team organized the donations drive. “Churches brought truck loads, and people were bringing cases of diapers and cleaning supplies. It was amazing!”

Employees from many lines of service stepped forward to help with the event, contribute supplies and offer financial gifts. More than 65 volunteers were on hand for the drive, including people LSS supports and from as far away as Brainerd and Duluth. “It



was so uplifting and filled our hearts with joy to see community building taking place and so many people coming forward,” Jamie said.

With huge needs in the community, the donations drive became an immediate distribution center as word spread among area residents in south Minneapolis. Elderly residents from two nearby high rises that serve our older neighbors shared that they had not been able to get out into the community and were so grateful to receive needed supplies.

Additional donation drives were held on August 6 and 20. Remaining supplies supported families participating in LSS services and will be distributed to area families.

