



NEXT LEVEL CHANGES FOR THE UNHOUSED

In its third year, the **Healthy Shelter Initiative** prioritized safety and security, which entailed the installation of a new exterior security camera system and a complete renovation of our office space. The redesigned office layout provides staff with a clearer view of the facility, enhancing monitoring capabilities during overnight operations. Looking ahead, we're preparing for additional upgrades, such as installing more durable, bug-resistant flooring that's simpler

to clean. Furthermore, we've relocated the **Winter Warming Station** to the same facility as the **Emergency Shelter**, fostering enhanced collaboration among staff and ensuring a safer environment for volunteers, staff, and guests. Since its inception in 2021, this initiative has introduced various enhancements, including new beds, mattresses, outdoor lockers, an upgraded elevator, a zero food waste program, and easier-to-clean tables and chairs.

MEET MASON—NEW TEAM MEMBER

Mason McConnell Curry (they/them) is the new director for LUM **Homeless Services**. They are responsible for the LUM **Emergency Shelter** and **Winter Warming Station**.

Mason comes to LUM with extensive experience with the unhoused & unsheltered. They were born in Athens, Georgia, and grew up in Atchison, Kansas, with their mother, father, and younger brother and sister.

Mason earned a bachelor's and Master's degree in Sociology from *Saint*

Louis University (St. Louis, MO). They have experience in homeless services working as the program manager at *City Hope*, overseeing the operations, services and staff of five shelter sites in the city of St. Louis, MO; and as the cofounder of the *SLU Winter Emergency Shelter*, providing a safe & warm space for the unsheltered.

Mason volunteered as the director of communications with the *St. Benedict Joseph Labre Homeless Ministry*, event marshal for the *March of our Lives* -

St. Louis, and communications lead with *Ceasefire* - St. Louis. **Mason's** native language is English but they are fluent in Spanish. At LUM, they have volunteered at the **Community Thanksgiving Feast**.

LUM is fortunate to have **Mason** join the LUM leadership team.



FRIDAY, APRIL 12 | 6:30 P.M.
 ST. ANDREW UMC, WEST LAFAYETTE
 LUMSERVE.ORG/WEVE-GOT-TALENT

Join us for the live show & support the LUM Good Samaritan Fund.

Tickets are limited and only \$35 each.

Don't miss this event.

REFLECTIONS FROM WINTER VOLUNTEERS

LUM is doing such important work in our community. It is a blessing to be allowed to help. Thank you for this opportunity.

This has been a humbling experience! I have a servant's heart for my community. I will continue to serve with LUM!

The warmth that LUM generated from helping others overcomes the winter chill!

LUM allows me to do several things that I love – cook, feed and serve the unhoused in the community – which are in alignment with the teachings of Jesus to feed the hungry!

I have been very blessed in my life and feel fortunate that I can help LUM with its mission.

I often think when helping clients: There but for the grace of God go I.

I'm glad to have these volunteer opportunities at LUM to give back to our community.

I've had a chance to get to know many fine people - LUM staff, volunteers, and clients.

Working at the food pantry or preparing & serving meals at the shelter makes LUM a great place to volunteer with your spouse!

It is very rewarding to be able to help others.

I feel fortunate to be in a position to volunteer at LUM.

It is such a privilege to be able to help members of our community. It reminds me daily of all I have been blessed with.

We are to be the hands and feet of Jesus. I find volunteering at LUM enables me to do that in a very rewarding way.

LUM quietly goes about the business of changing lives every day, and I am privileged to be a part of it.

COMMUNITY STRONG

In times of financial hardship, many of our neighbors find themselves facing the daunting prospect of eviction or utility disconnection.

At LUM, we recognize the importance of keeping families housed and utilities connected, which is why we are proud to operate the LUM **Financial Assistance Program**. This program, fueled by the LUM **Good Samaritan Fund**, provides critical support to individuals and families struggling to afford rent and utilities, offering them a lifeline during challenging times.

Your contribution to the LUM **Good Samaritan Fund** ensures that **100% of your donation goes directly towards covering these vital expenses for our neighbors in need**. By giving to this fund, you are making a tangible difference in the lives of those we serve, providing them with stability and security when they need it most. Whether it's keeping the lights on or ensuring a roof over their heads, your generosity offers hope and assistance where it is needed most.

The impact of your donation extends far beyond immediate relief.

By preventing evictions and utility shut-offs, you are helping to preserve the fabric of our community and prevent the devastating cycle of homelessness. Stable housing is essential for individuals and families to thrive, and your support helps create a foundation for long-term stability and self-sufficiency. **So far in 2024, LUM has distributed \$24,913 in aid to more than 317 households.**

As we continue to navigate the challenges brought on by societal issues and economic uncertainty, the need for support from donors and volunteers like you has never been greater. Your generosity allows us to meet the growing demand for financial assistance and ensure that every member of our community has a safe and stable place to call home. Thank you for your dedication to serving others and making a positive impact on our community.

To invest, go to **LUMserve.org/donate** and make a donation to the LUM Good Samaritan Fund.

Feeling Inspired? Get engaged today. There are lots of opportunities for volunteering, from working one-on-one with a student to helping out at the 48-bed shelter for the unhoused. Some volunteer positions require training; others require only a willing heart and a helping hand.

Interested? Go to **LUMserve.org/volunteer** or scan the QR code above.



LUM
IMMIGRATION
CLINIC

MATCH CAMPAIGN

Take part in the **LUM Immigration Clinic Match Campaign — NOW through April 12**. This campaign gives you the opportunity to double your donation and double your impact. Several local businesses have pledged to match up to **\$16,500** for each dollar you give in support of the **LUM Immigration Clinic** services for our community. To participate, go to LUMserve.org/ICmatch or scan the QR code to the left.

EMPOWERING NEW BEGINNINGS

FINDING SAFETY IN AMERICA: A FAMILY'S JOURNEY WITH LUM — WRITTEN BY COLE CRIDER



In the wake of unprecedented turmoil and conflict, families like **Nataliaa and Serhii's family** (pictured) from Ukraine have found solace and support through the compassionate efforts of organizations like **Lafayette Urban Ministry**. Their journey, marked by uncertainty and danger, underscores the critical role that the **LUM Immigration Clinic** plays in providing a lifeline for immigrants seeking refuge and stability in the United States.

Arriving in America on December 1, 2022, Nataliaa, Serhii, and their children—Karina, Matvii, and Andrii—were thrust into a new reality, fleeing the turmoil of their homeland under the United for Ukraine Program with Riverside Covenant Church (West Lafayette, IN) as their sponsor. Nataliaa, Serhii, and their children, attend church events and gatherings, serving as pillars of support and connection in their new home. Nataliaa also leads a bible group for Ukrainian girls in the West Lafayette, IN area.

Their story echoes the plight of many Ukrainian families torn between the safety of a new land and the heart-wrenching worry for loved ones left behind. Nataliaa, once a kindergarten teacher, and Serhii, a furniture designer, faced harrowing circumstances back home, with several military targets in their town and daily life overshadowed by the constant threat of violence. The family recalls a gas station near their home being bombed, serving as a stark reminder of the peril they escaped.

“Nobody is safe in Ukraine because nobody knows when rockets will come down,” says Nataliaa.

Despite the physical safety found in West Lafayette, IN, emotional scars persist as they grapple with concerns for family and friends still in Ukraine. The United States visa process brought its own challenges, but the LUM Immigration Clinic emerged as a beacon of hope, offering vital assistance in navigating the complexities of this system.

Extending their stay in the United States by six months, LUM eased the burden of uncertainty, allowing the family the flexibility to travel to loved ones in Ukraine without fear of jeopardizing their immigration status. The streamlined process provided by LUM spared Nataliaa and Serhii from the daunting task of deciphering intricate legal procedures, affording them precious time to nurture their family bonds while continuing to work.

Karina, speaking on behalf of her family, expresses profound gratitude for the unwavering support they received from LUM. *“We’re really thankful for the people who have helped us,”* Karina affirms. *“The work that LUM does for immigrants is important.”*

As the world continues to witness the plight of displaced families seeking refuge, organizations like Lafayette Urban Ministry stand as examples of compassion and hope. Through their commitment to serving immigrant communities, the **LUM Immigration Clinic** exemplifies the transformative impact of empathy and assistance in rebuilding shattered lives and nurturing newfound dreams of a brighter tomorrow.



Christian Gallo, LUM Immigration Clinic director, working tirelessly on this case.



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INSIDE SEED

- ❁ HOMELESS SERVICES
- ❁ MEET NEW STAFF
- ❁ GOOD SAMARITAN FUND IMPACT
- ❁ WE'VE GOT TALENT
- ❁ A FAMILY'S JOURNEY WITH LUM
- ❁ IC MATCH CAMPAIGN
- ❁ VOLUNTEERS SPEAK

Feeling inspired? Ready to invest in others? Here's your opportunity! Whether you're investing in youth programs or supporting the shelter, your contribution matters — no matter the size. Interested in making a real impact? Get inspired, read this newsletter, and then visit LUMserve.org/donate or scan the QR code above for more information.

LUM CAMP NEEDS YOU

LUM Camp planning is underway, and we're calling on you to help make it extraordinary. Counselors are needed to create life-changing experiences for local children aged 8 to 10. Your time and dedication can make a world of difference.

Additionally, LUM is seeking donations for camper scholarships, ensuring every child has the opportunity to attend regardless of financial barriers.

Join us in shaping futures and creating unforgettable memories. Visit our website to volunteer or donate today!

Thank you for your support.



BE A PART OF SOMETHING SPECIAL

Join LUM
online

