

# Heart and Hope

Fall 2020

Lake Christian Ministries

## Capps \$100,000 HOME BUILDING CENTER CHARITY & COMMUNITY CHALLENGE

### Capps and Community Join Together for a Collaborative Charity Challenge Effort to Benefit Lake Charities & Our Neighbors in Need

"During trying times, leaders step forward and do amazing things. A simple idea, blossoms and grows bringing people together to help those most in need. The team at Capps Home Building Center has done just that. They put the wheels in motion to launch a community challenge to help three local charities weather the storm and provide vital services for those most impacted by the pandemic," commented Jane Winters, LCM executive director.

Capps Home Building Center and a group of supporting sponsors (listed on Page 2) have joined together to issue a \$100,000 challenge to the SML community. Lake Christian Ministries, The Agape Center and SML Good Neighbors will share the proceeds of this effort, which runs from October 12 through October 17. The Capps & Community Charity Challenge will offer a \$1 for \$1 match for donations up to \$100,000 made through this online giving week.

Capps General Manager Bruce Shelton shares thoughts from the Capps Team. ***"Throughout the years our wonderful community has experienced highs and lows, and we have dealt with these events through our collective efforts. As the impact of this crisis began to unfold, we determined that if there were ever a time for our community to "rally", this was it. Current events have impacted our community in ways that we could have never imagined: joblessness, homelessness, hunger, and poverty. Throughout these turbulent times our community non-profits have continued their mission, even in the face of dwindling resources. This is where the idea of the "Capps & Community Charity Challenge" was born. The team at Capps Home Building Center is calling on our community to lend their financial support for the non-profits providing the greatest impact on the urgent needs of our area. We ask that you strongly consider how your personal contribution could provide the impact that is needed to help these non-profits continue their missions. The employees of Capps Home Building Center, and their families, would like to thank you in advance for your financial support of this critical endeavor as we work to strengthen these organizations. Please join us in supporting our Neighbors in need through the Capps & Community Charity Challenge!"***

The weeklong collaborative effort among challenge sponsors, the three charities and the community will raise funds to meet the emergency needs of our Neighbors in crisis during the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the pandemic, local charities have not been able to hold their annual fundraising events. Lake Christian Ministries, for example, cancelled the September 2020 SML Walk to End Poverty, which last year generated \$50,000 to fund services to those in need.

To make a donation during the week of October 12 through 17, go to [smlcharitychallenge.org](http://smlcharitychallenge.org) and follow the instructions on the website. "The three benefiting charity directors have enjoyed working together on this special event. We encourage our loyal supporters to use this online giving challenge to make any donations planned for the remainder of the year as these donations will be matched. We thank the generous lake community in advance for supporting our efforts to provide needed services to local residents who are struggling with the financial consequences of COVID-19," commented Jane Winters.



Lisa Lietz, SML Good Neighbors Director; Sue Lipscomb, The Agape Center Director; and Jane Winters, LCM Director join to plan this event. \*\*\*\*\*

## Capps & Community Charity Challenge benefiting

**Lake Christian Ministries  
The Agape Center  
SML Good Neighbors**

### Challenge Sponsor

Capps Home Building Center

### Supporting Sponsors

#### **Diamond**

David and Michelle Baldacci  
Riddick Home Services

#### **Platinum**

Patsy & John Smart Family  
The Windward

#### **Gold**

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Runk and Pratt

#### **Silver**

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Bayside Marina & Yacht Club  
Uttermost  
ReMax – Kim Thomas, Realtor  
Westlake Automotive Services

#### **Bronze**

Phil Hager Insurance Agency  
Bartlett Tree Experts  
Beacon Counseling Group  
Smith Mountain Lake Animal Hospital

## Many Neighbors Are Building a New Tomorrow

During the past four months of the pandemic, the New Tomorrows program has continued to operate. Jobs lists are generated and shared each week and volunteers and staff are working to direct Neighbors to local community resources based on needs. Participants in the program have accomplished specific goals or connected with needed resources, such as:

A single mother working with her New Tomorrows partner secured reliable transportation, received her driver's license, interviewed for jobs and began vocational training toward a career;

Another single mom was able to move out of a relative's home and secure safe housing for herself and her children;

Another program participant worked to pay down his micro-loan from LCM for used vehicle he purchased to get to work;

And, eight Neighbors were able to use grant funding from the Bedford Community Health Foundation to address medical needs.



New Tomorrows Neighbor checks in at LCM.



## A Simple Gesture Thrives with Community Support

A Simple Gesture SML, the Lake Christian Ministries food pantry pick-up program, continues to collect thousands of pounds of food and personal care supplies for our Neighbors in need. The June 12 pick up netted 2,030 pounds of toothpaste, toothbrushes, bar soap and shampoo from 231 donors. The August 7 pick up collected just under 3,000 pounds of canned green beans, carrots and corn from 262 households.

To date, the program has collected 11,427 pounds of food supplies in 1,192 special A Simple Gesture tote bags. The average bag contains about \$15 in requested products and the average collection equals 250 bags. That means that each quarterly pick up saves LCM \$3,750 in food assistance costs!

The program is sponsored by Centra Medical Group – Stroobants Cardiovascular Center. Many thanks to Centra and all the Neighborhoods and individuals who make this pantry pick-up program a resounding success. For more information about A Simple Gesture SML or to sign up to participate, go to [www.asimplegesturesml.org](http://www.asimplegesturesml.org).



## Volunteers Are the Heart & Soul of LCM

A warm welcome to the new volunteers who joined LCM during the summer months of June through August. The following volunteers are now part of the LCM Family!

Rosemary Traylor  
Butch Traylor  
Lendell Beverly  
Glenn Hudler  
Jim Mould  
Dick Ungerer

During the summer months we said goodbye to three longtime and dedicated LCM volunteers. We wish them well in the next chapter of their lives and will miss them dearly.

Nancy Cross  
Gale Taylor  
Tena Rex  
Sherry Griffin  
Barbara O'Buch  
Terry McNichol

During the pandemic, many of our volunteers have been unable to support our services. Volunteers are needed in the following areas:

**Front Office Service Coordinators**  
**Front Office Interviewers**  
**Food Pantry**  
**Clothing Check-Out**  
**Financial Aid**  
**Warehouse**  
**New Tomorrows Program Partners**  
**Relief Food Pick-Up Drivers**

*If you are interested in volunteering for LCM, please email Don Blanchard at [lcmdonblanchard@gmail.com](mailto:lcmdonblanchard@gmail.com) or complete a volunteer application on the LCM website [www.lakechristianministries.org](http://www.lakechristianministries.org).*

## Willard Companies' Food Drives Help Stock LCM Pantry



Lake Christian Ministries volunteer Jim Laseter loads food donations into the LCM van during the July 27 Willard Companies' Food Drive to support LCM's food assistance program during the COVID-19 pandemic. The company sponsored food drives on the last Saturday of April, May, June and July, which collectively supplied 4,022 lbs. of food for LCM's pantry.

"We want to thank the wonderful staff at The Willard Companies for organizing and promoting these community food drives during a time when demand was high and food was in short supply. Our deep appreciation also goes out to everyone who volunteered for the events and donated food to help those in need in the Smith Mountain Lake community," commented Jane Winters, LCM executive director.

## LCM Neighbor Builds A New Life with New Tomorrows



*Ryan DeJesus, LCM New Tomorrows Neighbor, and her daughter Ava Maria, check-in at LCM.*

*Ryan DeJesus was struggling with poverty and domestic abuse before she decided to take steps to change her life. Here is her story of how Lake Christian Ministries' New Tomorrows program has helped her move ahead and plan for the future.*

As a small child, Ryan DeJesus was shuffled between her parents in New York City. Her father assumed custody of Ryan when she was five years old. Ryan and her father moved to the Smith Mountain Lake area

Growing up, she had a good education in Virginia and felt happy and safe to be around family. After graduating from high school, Ryan moved to New Jersey, got involved in an abusive relationship and became pregnant. Ryan knew she wanted a safe and happy childhood for her baby. That desire gave her the courage to flee her abuser and become a single mother.

Her new situation was not without challenges. She now had an infant daughter, and she was suffering from physical health issues and depression. Ryan had no source of income and no driver's license for transportation. In February, a volunteer at Lake Christian Ministries suggested that Ryan go to LCM for food assistance. Once she came to LCM, Ryan learned about the New Tomorrows program. She was paired with a caring partner, who helped her set goals and supported her efforts to move ahead.

"Since working with Mrs. Kathy, I have accomplished so much in the past year," Ryan said. "Mrs. Kathy is so good spirited and understanding, and she helps me to plan ahead and organize and research things. That's why we make a good team."

Ryan's New Tomorrows partner helped her secure the health care she needed, receive legal assistance and support from LCM's onsite domestic violence counselor to address child support and safety, and register for an online course to become a certified medical assistant. Just as her online certification program was scheduled to begin, the COVID-19 pandemic shut-down postponed the course. Ryan did not let this setback hinder her progress. During this "stay at home" time, Ryan's LCM partner helped her obtain a driver's license, secure a used vehicle and locate a computer and printer for the online course. Soon thereafter, Ryan started classes toward a medical assistant certification (CCMA). Over the past few months, her physical and mental health has greatly improved. For the first time in years, Ryan is excited about the future.

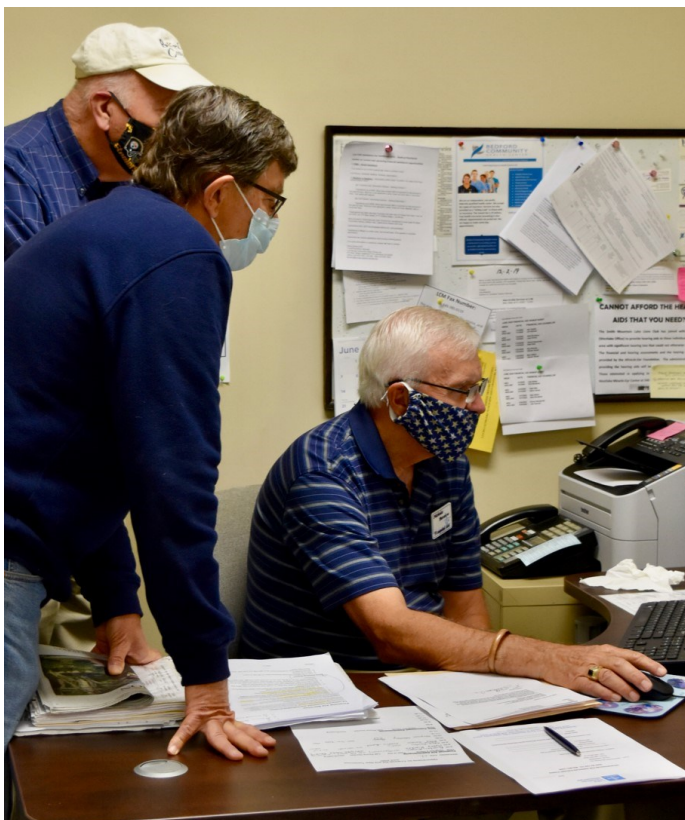
"My future plans are to get a job, get an apartment and continue providing for my daughter. I'm excited because I know that I did all of this on my own, with a little help. My daughter Ava Maria just turned one year old, and I want her to know when she gets older that her mother never gave up. I want her to know that we are strong and will keep going," said Ryan.

"I would strongly recommend the New Tomorrows program to anyone in crisis," Ryan continued. "It's okay to get help, especially if you are in an abusive situation like I was. LCM has helped me find protection for myself and my daughter and continues to do so. Yes, you will be afraid, because I was. But if you have a child, you have to think about what is best for both of you. If you want to help yourself, New Tomorrows can teach you to be focused, to set goals and have hope for a better life."



## LCM Responds to COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed so many aspects of everyday life in the past few months, including the way Lake Christian Ministries serves people in the SML region. Not surprisingly, the virus also has changed the number of people LCM serves.



*Volunteers provide financial aid requests at LCM.*

During April, May, June and July, LCM served an average of 67 families or 400 individuals a week. This number is 40% higher than the same period in 2019. In fact, nearly 25% of the people served over the past five months are new to LCM. These new families are coming to LCM for food assistance and financial assistance for utility bills or past-due rent. As the pandemic persists and people remain unemployed, LCM expects to see these numbers continue to rise.

To address the growing financial assistance needs, LCM has partnered with Bedford County. The county has allocated a portion of its CARES Act funding toward financial assistance for Bedford County residents who have suffered income loss or reduction due to COVID-19. LCM will serve as one of three local non-profits that will process applications and assist in the delivery of utility bill assistance from September 1 through December 31 or until funds are exhausted. LCM will make payments directly to the vendor and be reimbursed by the county.

During Phase 3 of the COVID-19 recovery period, LCM staff will continue to monitor the temperatures; those who are fever free are given a mask to wear inside the facility. All shopping carts, work surfaces, transport vehicles and service equipment are disinfected periodically during the service day. Food assistance, financial aid and New Tomorrows services are available; and clothing support, with capacity limits, is now offered Wednesday and Friday mornings.

Of course, LCM is not dealing with the pandemic alone. Donations, emergency food drives and grants have all helped LCM help our Neighbors in crisis.

“We truly appreciate all of the innovative ways our lake community is stepping up to help us serve our Neighbors in need during this unprecedented time,” said LCM Executive Director Jane Winters. “We couldn’t do all that we do without such strong community support and partnerships.”



*Volunteers provide curb-side food assistance.*



## Lake Christian Ministries

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### LCM Receives COVID-19 Response Grants

Our sincere thanks to the following organizations for grants totaling \$20,202 received by LCM to help those in need due to the economic consequences of the COVID pandemic:

**United Way Roanoke Valley and Franklin County COVID-19 Community Response Fund** - \$10,000 for financial aid for housing and utility support.

**United Way of Central VA and Greater Lynchburg Community Foundation COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund** - \$2,000 for food assistance.

**Bedford County Community Health Foundation's COVID-19 Emergency Fund** - \$2,000 for food assistance.

**EFSP (Emergency Food and Shelter Program) United Way Roanoke Valley and Franklin County** - \$3,285 from the CARES ACT/EFSP and \$2,117 from EFSP Phase 37 for food assistance.

**Virginia Synod Lutheran Disaster Response COVID-19** - \$800 for food assistance.

### General Grant Support for LCM Services

LCM is also grateful for the following service grants totaling \$33,445 received to date in 2020:

**Bedford Community Health Foundation** - \$5,000 for health services for New Tomorrows Neighbors and \$5,000 to support the implementation of the Apricot software system for New Tomorrows support for Bedford County residents in need.

**Food Lion Feeds Charitable Foundation** - \$2,000 for food assistance and milk vouchers for the LCM service area.

**The Greater Lynchburg Community Foundation** - \$10,945 for food assistance and financial aid and \$5,000 for New Tomorrows program support for Bedford County Neighbors.

**The Minnie and Bernard Lane Foundation** - \$2,500 to support the New Tomorrows program.

**United Way of Central VA** - \$8,000 for food assistance for Bedford County residents in need.