

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LANCASTER REFUGEE SERVICE ACHIEVES IMMIGRATION ACCREDITATION

LANCASTER, PA (APRIL 28, 2008) – Lutheran Children and Family Service (LCFS), an affiliate of Liberty Lutheran Services (LLS), is pleased to announce their recent Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) accreditation for the Lutheran Refugee Services of Central Pennsylvania office which was approved April 23 by the Department of Justice Executive Office for Immigration Review. Lutheran Social Services of South Central Pennsylvania, who partnered with LCFS to start this service, provided funding which enabled LCFS to lay the groundwork for this service, paying for staff time and immigration law trainings, an immigration law library, and immigration software needed for accreditation.

The BIA accreditation allows trained non-profit to assist clients with immigration law for nominal fees. The office in Lancaster, located at 123 E. Vine Street, will assist refugee and asylee clients with green card applications, replacement documents, family petitions and citizenship applications. Victoria Harris, Immigration Program Coordinator, who was previously accredited by the BIA to serve clients in LCFS's Philadelphia office, has now been approved to serve clients in Lancaster. Eric Kennel, Site Coordinator for the Lancaster office, is also working towards BIA accreditation at this site.

“In today's immigration climate, the services the BIA will allow us to provide are absolutely crucial for our refugee and asylee clients,” says Janet Panning, LCFS Refugee Program Director. “Fleeing persecution and danger in one's home country is so unfathomable to most of us, and yet it's just the tip of the iceberg for so many refugees. We look forward to easing the transition of making their home in the United States in whatever ways we can.”

For more information about this accreditation and the services of the LCFS Refugee Resettlement Office, please contact Eric Kennel, Office Coordinator, at 717-397-4757, extension 15 or via email at erick@lcsinpa.org.

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Lutheran Children and Family Service (LCFS) of Eastern Pennsylvania, an affiliate of Liberty Lutheran Services, has been bringing hope and opportunity to children and families in need since 1922. LCFS offers an array of services to vulnerable children and families including foster care, group care, adoption, in-home services, after-school programs, parenting education, immigrant services and resettlement of refugees. By strengthening thousands of families, LCFS builds stronger, more caring communities throughout the Delaware Valley.

Liberty Lutheran Services is a broad array of faith-based services delivered by a team of world-class employees. Comprised of the non-profit organizations of Artman Lutheran Home, Paul's Run Retirement Community, Lutheran Children and Family Service, and Liberty at Home, LLS serves approximately eighteen thousand individuals annually throughout Southeastern Pennsylvania. The organizations of LLS have a combined 200 years of service for children, families, and older adults. Caring communities are built by Lutheran congregations to serve all people, regardless of age, gender, race, religion, country of origin, ethnicity, disability, or sexual orientation. For more information about Liberty Lutheran Services and their mission, please visit www.libertylutheran.org.

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