



SOAR! NOTES

Support Our Aging Religious

A NEWSLETTER

OF SUPPORT OUR AGING RELIGIOUS, INC.

SUMMER 2014

SOAR! Awards Nearly \$1.2 Million in Grants

At the May meeting of the SOAR! Board of Directors, 65 grants totaling almost \$1.2 million were awarded to religious congregations of women and men in 18 states and Puerto Rico. These grants will benefit over 3,000 aging religious men and women whose average age is 81.

Through your generosity, SOAR! grants assist religious congregations in caring for their elderly and infirm members. Grants help cover expenses for practical needs and insure the safety and dignity of these women and men religious as they live out their lives of prayer and service. Needs such as renovation of space for accessibility, lift chairs, hospital beds, medical equipment and handicap accessible vans are met, thus allowing these faithful men and women to remain in their communities.

Sr. German Contreras, S. de M., Mother Superior of the Sisters, Servants of Mary in Bronx, New York, wrote:

"Our loving Lord is accomplishing His work through the good efforts of organizations like SOAR!"

In a recent study, the cost to care for elderly religious amounted to \$1.1 billion dollars a year. There are over 34,000 religious women and men in the United States over the age of 70. That is almost 60% of all religious. By 2023, 79% of all religious will be over 70*. The next decade is crucial as congregations across the United States prepare to take care of more elderly members.

Many religious congregations struggle financially and have limited capacity to build resources to care for elderly and infirm members. For years, religious, particularly Sisters, worked without receiving a just wage or retirement benefits. It is only within the last 20 years that Sisters have been paid wages based on experience and education.

Your goodness makes these grants possible. The Sisters, Brothers, and Priests you help remember you in their daily prayers. The SOAR! Board of Directors joins them in gratitude for your continuing kindness.

See Page 3 for a full listing of congregations that received grants in 2014.

*Statistics from a 2012 study by the National Religious Retirement Office.



L to R: Sr. Lorraine George, OSP, Sr. Alexis Fisher, OSP, General Superior, Oblate Sisters of Providence, SOAR! board member Lucretia Coates and Sister Canisius Hansberry, OSP.



L to R: Sr. Peg Sullivan, RSM, Sr. Lindora Cabral, RSM, President, Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Northeast Community, SOAR! board member Joan Farrell, Beth Watson, Director of Development.

Top photo credit: Lee Braggs. Second photo credit: Cathy Walsh.

The SOAR! Los Angeles dinner was held June 22 at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels. See story and pictures on pages 2 and 4.



L to R: Msgr. James Loughnane, Bishop Joseph Sartoris, Seton Honorees Tim & Steph Busch, Archbishop Gomez, Seton Honoree Kathleen Aikenhead & husband David, Sr. Kathleen Lunsmann, IHM, and Bishop Kevin Vann.

Dear Friends of SOAR!,

Does your parish have the custom of asking people to introduce themselves to people in nearby pews at Sunday Mass? I visited a parish recently where that happened. I dutifully introduced myself to the family in the pews in front of me, and to the gentleman sitting behind me and to the two women seated next to me. By the time the opening hymn had begun, I had already forgotten the names of the people I had just met. At the sign of peace, the gentleman seated behind me said, "Peace be with you, Kathleen." I was touched by the way he looked me in the eye and said my name. We were no longer strangers. When Jesus called his disciples, he called them by name and he called them friends.

When I visited the Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement, the Maryknoll Sisters and the Dominican Sisters last month, I met many sisters whose lives are impacted by your generosity. And, I want you to know their names. Sister Catherine is able to access the shower by herself because you helped SOAR! to install a roomy shower where she can bring her walker. Sister Mary Edward can stand from her chair simply by pressing a button to ease the chair to standing because you helped SOAR! purchase power lift recliner chairs for the Sisters. Sister Patricia can walk down the hall without the fear of falling because you helped SOAR! line the hallways of the convent with new handrails.

Your contributions to SOAR! are making a difference to Sister Catherine, Sister Mary Edward and Sister Patricia and to many other men and women religious. So I offer my gratitude and prayers for you – David, Jan, Ramcel, Thomas, Lucy -- and all of you who support our ministry to aging religious. Peace be with you.

In gratitude,



Sister Kathleen Lunsman, IHM



Celebrating SOAR! in Southern California

On Corpus Christi Sunday, June 22, 2014, a special celebration of SOAR! and its mission took place at Our Lady of the Angels Cathedral and the Cathedral Plaza in Los Angeles. Archbishop José Gomez of Los Angeles and Bishop Kevin Vann of the Diocese of Orange celebrated Mass with a number of Priests. This was followed by a delightful al fresco dinner. Highlights of the dinner included the presentation of the prestigious Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Award to Kathleen Aikenhead of the William Hannon Foundation and to Tim and Steph Busch.



LA dinner committee member Carol Page.

SOAR! also presented the Saint Katherine Drexel Award to the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation in honor of its national and international efforts to support Catholic Sisters.

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Sharing Our Stories



SOAR! Board member Mary Etta Mills.

Religious Sisters, Brothers and Priests are an important part of the social structure of so many communities in this country and around the world. They give unselfishly to improve the quality of life of countless people. The positive impact of these faithful women and men extends to all parts of our lives – education, health care, social justice, and spiritual and pastoral care. Their contributions cannot and should not go unrecognized.

I've been privileged to learn from the Sisters of Charity at CCD, who helped form my faith, and the Sisters of Mercy, who taught and encouraged me by their selfless love of their students, their patients, and their mission. They are people like you and me. They have feelings, hopes, and dreams, but their extraordinary commitment to serve and to service, without thought for themselves, underlines their specialness.

SOAR! gives us an opportunity to say "thank you" to these special people. The sacrifices made by elderly religious can't be taken for granted. They have given so much to so many, and in their advancing years, they deserve the peace of mind that comes with living in a safe and familiar environment. SOAR! helps us do that and honor them.

Dr. Mary Etta Mills serves on the SOAR! Board. She is a Professor of Health Services Leadership and Management at the University of Maryland, Baltimore, School of Nursing and has held numerous past positions including Vice President for Nursing at University of Maryland Medical Center and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at the School of Nursing.

If you would like to share a story about how religious have nurtured you and why you support SOAR!, drop us a note, call us at 202-529-7627, or email info@soar-usa.org.

2014 Grants

CALIFORNIA

Guadalupe Missionaries of the Holy Spirit, Los Angeles
Accessibility renovations of building and outdoor area for retired Sisters
Daughters of Mary and Joseph, Ranchos Palos Verdes
Accessibility renovations for the Sisters' dining area
Sisters of Notre Dame, Thousand Oaks
Handicap accessible dining room tables and chairs
Carmel of St. Teresa of Los Angeles, Alhambra
Water pipe replacement
Sister Servants of the Blessed Sacrament, Bonita
Recliner lift chair, tray table and lift chair mechanism
Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, California Province, Belmont
Handicapped accessible van
Dominican Sisters of Mission San Jose, Fremont
Sisters' infirmary upgrades

CONNECTICUT

Apostles of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Hamden
Replacement of tubs with handicapped accessible showers

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Little Sisters of the Poor, Washington
Purchase wheelchairs and specialized bed

FLORIDA

Benedictine Sisters of Florida, St. Leo
Handicap accessible doors

ILLINOIS

Sisters of the Living Word, Arlington Heights
Home modification for assisted living
Sisters of Christian Charity, Wilmette
Replace bathtub with walk-in tub and shower
Passionists of Holy Cross Province, Park Ridge
Rebuild exterior entrance for handicapped access
Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Wheaton
Medical alert units for the Sisters
Benedictine Sisters of Chicago, Chicago
Walk-in tub and installation for our infirmary

INDIANA

Brothers of Holy Cross, Notre Dame
Repair ceiling in chapel of retirement house
Sisters of St. Benedict, Ferdinand
Electronic door openers, treadmill and lift recliners

MASSACHUSETTS

Sisters of St. Joseph of Springfield, Holyoke
Replacement of stairlift
Sisters of St. Anne, Marlborough
Purchase seven electric beds
Glastonbury Abbey, Hingham
Replace windows for the monastery

Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston, Brighton
Purchase of specialized low rise beds

MARYLAND

Missionary Servants of the Most Holy Trinity, Silver Spring
Partial roof repair on retirement residence
Oblate Sisters of Providence, Baltimore
Replace electronic hospital beds/mattresses
Benedictine Sisters of Baltimore, Lutherville
Upgrade bathrooms for accessibility
St. Joseph's Society of the Sacred Heart, Baltimore
Replace furnishings for Priests' infirmary

MISSOURI

Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, St. Louis
Motorized scooters for retired Sisters
Sisters of St. Francis, Savannah
Chair lift system for basement stairs

NEBRASKA

Mount Michael Benedictine Abbey, Elkhorn
Purchase and installation of automatic doors

NEW JERSEY

Capuchin Franciscan Friars, Union City
Installation of hydraulic lift
Sisters of Charity, Convent Station
Replacement of windows in motherhouse

NEW YORK

Missionary Society of St. Paul the Apostle, New York
Renovations to assist senior Priests
Daughters of Divine Charity, Staten Island
Renovations due to convent fire
Medical Missionaries of Mary, City Island
Replacement of worn carpeting
Sisters, Servants of Mary, Bronx
Oil-to-gas conversion in infirmary
Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement, Garrison
Upgrade tub stalls to walk-in showers
Maryknoll Sisters of St. Dominic, Maryknoll
Replacement of 26 windows
Edmund Rice Christine Brothers North America, New Rochelle
Electronic medical records system for infirmary
Dominican Sisters of Sparkill, Sparkill
Purchase of beds and mattresses for infirmary
Ursuline Sisters of Tildonk, Jamaica
AC/Heating unit repair
Dominican Sisters of Amityville, Amityville
Install smoke/carbon monoxide alarms
Sisters of St. Joseph, Brentwood
Electronic medical records database for retired Sisters
Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, Latham
Purchase of an Alenti lift chair and whirlpool unit
Sisters of St. Francis of the Neumann Communities, Syracuse
Purchase and installation of Hoyer Lift
Sisters of St. Joseph, Clarence
Convection steamer for infirmary kitchen

Missionary Sisters of St. Columban, Silver Creek
Central air system for the convent third floor
Sisters of St. Mary of Namur, Buffalo
Installation of fire system in two wings
Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester, Rochester
Purchase of new kitchen equipment

OHIO

Dominican Sisters of Peace, Columbus
Nurse call system
Sisters of St. Francis of the Congregation of Our Lady of Lourdes, Sylvania
Electric beds, vital signs monitor
Ursuline Convent of the Sacred Heart, Toledo
Recumbent exercise machine
Sisters of Notre Dame, Christ the King Province, Chardon
Full mechanical lift and stand-up lift equipment for Sisters
Sisters of St. Francis, Tiffin
Boiler room roof replacement on assisted living residence

PENNSYLVANIA

Sisters of St. Joseph, Baden
Boiler replacement
Benedictine Sisters of Erie, Erie
Replace carpeting at monastery
Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius, Danville
Remodel two bathrooms for handicap access
Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Scranton
Replacement of resident monitoring system
Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia, Aston
Nurse call system
Sisters of the Order of St. Basil the Great, Fox Chase Manor
Purchase of handicapped accessible mini-bus
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, Mid-Atlantic Community, Merion Station
Creation of safe area for Sisters with dementia

PUERTO RICO

School Sisters of Notre Dame, Gurabo
Renovate bathrooms in the retirement house

RHODE ISLAND

Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, Northeast Community, Cumberland
Purchase of handicapped accessible mini-bus

TEXAS

Dominican Sisters of Houston, Houston
Large print hymnals
Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, San Antonio
Install air conditioning in the retired Sisters' residence

VIRGINIA

Benedictine Sisters of Virginia, Bristow
Replace infirmary beds and lift chairs

WISCONSIN

School Sisters of St. Francis, Milwaukee
Whirlpool tubs

To view more photographs from the awards dinners, please visit www.soar-usa.org and click on Events.



220 people attended the dinner.



SOAR! Board member Bill Lyons with dinner committee member Cindy Bobruk and her husband Jonathan.

Los Angeles Dinner photo credit: Belle n' Beau.

Ways You Can Help

To donate now, please visit our website: www.soar-usa.org and click on **Donate Today** or send your donation in the enclosed envelope.

If you are considering including SOAR! in your will, our legal title is Support Our Aging Religious, Inc. (SOAR!) and our federal tax ID number is 52-1485481.

To make a gift of stock/securities please call our office at 202.529.7627 for specific instructions.

For additional ways to help please visit us at www.soar-usa.org and click on **Give** or call us at 202.529.7627.

UPCOMING AWARDS DINNERS

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2014

New York, NY



FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2014

Washington, DC

For further information, contact Sr. Kate Clancy, IHM at 202-529-7647 or kclancy@soar-usa.org or visit www.soar-usa.org/events

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This is only the third time in SOAR! history that the award, which recognizes outstanding service on the national level, has been presented.

The event, SOAR!'s first in the area since 2007, highlighted the critical need for funding needed for elderly Catholic Sisters, Brothers, and Priests throughout the United States.



Kara Lemma received the Saint Katharine Drexel Award on behalf of the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation.

Archbishop Gomez, in his homily, said, "Religious are great leaders in the mission of spreading the Gospel. Their lives are living Eucharist." He further noted that all of us, as Christians, are meant to live our lives rooted in the gift of the Eucharist and in sharing our lives and gifts with each other. Your support of SOAR! makes you a partner in reaching out in love to these faithful servants who have been the face, hands, and heart of Christ to us.

SOAR! is grateful for the many friends it has in Los Angeles and Orange Counties. The continuing generosity of SOAR! donors ensures the safety, dignity, and quality of life for our elderly and infirm Sisters, Brothers, and Priests.

To read more about the event and to see a slideshow, please visit: www.soar-usa.org/events and click on "Los Angeles Dinner."



The purpose of this newsletter is to communicate the mission and needs of SOAR! and to express our gratitude to our donors.

President: Sister Kathleen Lunsmann, IHM
Editor: Elizabeth Góral-Makowski