



# 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. *(cont. on page 4)*

## 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](mailto: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 handicap 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 handicap 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 handicap 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 handicap 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](http://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](http://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](http://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](mailto:kclancy@soar-usa.org) or visit [www.soar-usa.org/events](http://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](http://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