



Family Promise: Grants at Work

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Family Promise: Grants at Work



A multiyear relationship had gone sour, essentially putting the woman and her children on the street.

“If you had asked me a year ago if I thought I would be homeless now, I would have said, ‘No way.’ I would have thought I would be one of the people giving the help, not one of the people receiving that help,” says the mother of two.

Yet the family’s difficult journey has been made easier by the compassion offered by Family Promise of Berks County, nearly 30 interfaith host and partner congregations that provide meals and overnight respite to guest families. Many of the congregations are Lutheran.

“The kindness and compassion we received has helped make this ordeal more tolerable,” says the mother. “It does my heart good to see there really are still people out there who care about other people.”

Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries, based in Allentown, recently provided a grant of \$8,750 to support Family Promise, the third year a grant has been provided by Diakon to the organization. A third-year grant of \$5,250 also was provided to Western Berks Free Medical Clinic, associated with St. Daniel’s Lutheran Church, Robesonia.

The two Berks-region grants were among seven provided by Diakon in 2008. To promote congregational-based, community-focused social ministry efforts, Diakon annually provides small stipends to assist a range of organizations in meeting local needs.

“The idea is to assist congregations and organizations with their initial efforts in creating services, especially in a type of service or



a region where we see unmet needs or where the funding may help those in need without unnecessarily duplicating existing services,” says the Rev. John Richter, Diakon vice president for church relations, who oversees the funding process.

While Diakon provides a range of social services requiring grants and other contributions, “We are able to use some organizational resources as a healthy way for Diakon to be involved in congregational social ministry,” says Pr. Richter. “These resources, not acquired through grants or recent contributions, are funds designated to support the work of local congregations.”

More information on the other grants can be found on Diakon’s website at <http://www.diakon.org/NewsDetail.asp?ID=237>.

