

Grant Name	"Giving Great Honor to the Least of These: Caring for people with Developmental Disabilities."
Mission/Project Summary	<p>The purpose is to help to provide spiritual, emotional and physical care to orphaned residents with intellectual and developmental disabilities(IDD) in Good Shepherd Lutheran Group home in the Dominican Republic. The cost of operating the home and giving this life-changing care is approximately \$85,819 per year/\$171,638/biennium. It is improvement of life-changing care, not only in the group home, but also to improve the spiritual, emotional and physical lives of all people living with IDD, as God's children, in the Dominican Republic. In addition, this project will serve to build societal awareness in the Dominican Republic regarding how they view and accept people living with IDD which in turn will help these living with IDD gain right to health care, education, rehabilitation , and vocational programs.</p> <p>The LCMS believes and promotes that ALL people are created by God and valuable in His sight. That God the Father sent His Son, Jesus Christ our Savior, to show us how to love ALL people and His death and resurrection for the forgiveness of our sins and assurance of eternal life is for ALL who trust in Him. They encourage congregations to see people living with IDD as gifted by God, to have them involved in their worship and activities as these "less Honorable " ones are an essential part of the Body of Christ. This on-going mission project fits into the Rocky Mountain District LWML's mission outreach criteria of sharing the Gospel message and Jesus' love in Word and Deed with those who are often overlooked and under-served. This project is part of the plans of the LCMS Office of International Missions. This is an LCMS approved project, and many district presidents and mission teams from many states have witnessed and been involved in the disability work being done.</p>
Project Description and Details	<p>When the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS) started mission work in the Dominican Republic in 2005, children born with IDD did not have a right to a government issued identity and could be denied a birth certificate. Without identity recognition, they were also denied educational services and health insurance. In addition, no governmental services in the areas of training and orientation for parents of children with IDD and no rehabilitation or educational services were available. This ultimately led to impoverishing parents in trying to care for their child with IDD or in many cases, causing parents to abandon their child to be cared for in a government orphanage.</p> <p>In 2007 Missionary Deaconess Danelle Putnam and the church members of the Dominican Lutheran missions and forming congregations started visiting orphanages and the government institutions to share God's Word and Jesus' love with the children and young adults. In the orphanages the children were confined or restrained to their beds and even placed in jail cells. They received no educational or rehabilitative care and were isolated from society. This is still the case today. The horrendous conditions that existed in the government institutions were shocking and led to the goal of educating society about those living with IDD. Weekly visits by church members to the institutions delighted the children and set an example for the staff who could see Christian love shown and the positive response of the children. Church members took the children out of their cribs and bed and held them, played with them, and read Bible stories and colored Bible story pictures with them. The children were treated by church members as precious people that God created and souls for whom Jesus died. They were treated with genuine care, respect and concern. These visits continued until the pandemic. A non-profit organization, Hogares Luteranos el Buen Pastor (Good Shepherd Lutheran Home), was formed to open the first group home in the country in 2011. Six children were rescued from government orphanages and have lived</p>

in the home since its beginning. A permanent group home was built with a National LWML grant voted for funding at the Peoria convention. Physical Care: There are no public special education programs in the country and there are no public rehabilitative services available for adults living with IDD. Rehabilitative services are being provided by the staff of the home or by partnering with other non-profits organizations which provide services at a low cost. Continued rehabilitation is important so that these young adults will not digress, but rather progress in their physical and cognitive abilities as current skills are constantly being reinforced and new skills acquired. Emotional care: The residents are cared for by loving church members and other Christians who treat them with dignity and respect. Everyday there are opportunities for the residents to interact with neighbors, friends, church members,, Dominican society and even visitors for other countries. Their loving and helpful natures reflect Jesus' love and the care they receive and the relationships they have. This has resulted in a fun and joyful family. Spiritual care: This special family receives care from their pastor, deaconesses, and seminarians, that have daily devotions with them. They attend divine service every week and participate in many other activities throughout the church year. The six young adults all active in the worship service with Francis lighting the candles and praying with the pastors; Junior and Moises helping setup the chairs, Ramona handing out bulletins, Estefani greeting people, and Randy sitting in the back, quietly repeating everything the pastor says, including the liturgy.

Missionary Deaconess Danelle Putnam is responsible for the project implementation and financial administration along with the Board of Hogares Luteranos el Buen Pastor. Deaconess Putnam and the Board are also responsible for the ongoing maintenance and long-term support.

The recipient must be affiliated with one of the following. Please select the one that applies to this request:

LCMS International

Amount requested:

\$7,500

Project Goals and Objectives

The goal is to be able to continue the work of the LCMS missionaries and the Dominican Lutheran Church members in caring for the body, soul, and spirit of those living with intellectual and developmental disabilities in the group home and in the country. A secondary, but equally important goal is changing the way the government and society view and treat people living with IDD. Individuals and their families need to be cared for through education and inclusion into society and into the church. The prayers and mites of the members of the Rocky Mountain District LWML members will help reach these goals, to the Glory of our God.

Budget Outline and Financial Plan

It is well Documented?

Good Shepherd Home reports twice a year to the Dominican Lutheran Mission partner forum. This includes written and financial reports. Newsletters, social media pages on Facebook and Instagram are available for people to see.

Budget Outline and Financial Plan

- Detail of the budget and accounting of funds.

Group home operating budget: approximately \$171,638 per biennium. Costs vary depending on exchange rate of the dollar to Dominican peso.

Budget Line Costs:

Salaries and benefits

\$43,184

Food, clothing, personal hygiene

\$18,000  
 Rehabilitation, education, recreation  
 \$ 4,000  
 Medical, dental, vision, mental health  
 \$1,600  
 Transportation  
 \$4,000  
 Maintenance and utilities  
 \$2,900  
 Training  
 \$1,000  
 Legal, administrative  
 \$ 1,600  
 \*Mission Advancement Services  
 \$9,535  
 TOTAL  
 \$85,819

\*Mission Advancement (MADV) services allocation not to exceed 12.5% has been added to this request per LCMS Board of Directors policy. For additional information and to view Donor Transparency Resources, please refer to <https://www.lcms.org/giving/transparency>.

The cost of operating the group home per year is approximately \$85, 819 or \$171, 638 per biennium. By comparison, it costs over \$70,00 per year just to care for one high-functioning person living with IDD in the United States.

Individuals and LCMS congregations also support the group home with their prayers and financially. At this time, a grant of \$6,500 has been submitted to the OR District LWML. The former Bethesda Auxiliary, now Bethesda Lutheran Disability Ministries has contributed significant funds from the time the group home was started.

This request for \$7,500 is for partial funding for the biennium. The Lord has been faithful for over 14 years in providing for the disability ministry in the Dominican Republic. Missionary Deaconess Danelle Putnam continues to pray for new sources of prayer and of financial support.

Funds must be raised for operation of the group home as Dominican Republic government funding is not forthcoming at this time.

Missionary Deaconess Danelle Putnam is responsible for the for the funding of this ministry and the ongoing maintenance and long-term support.

Additional Comments or Information

Scriptural support of the mission grant proposal: "Giving Greater Honor for the Least of these: Caring for People with Developmental Disabilities in the Dominican Republic."

In I Corinthians 12:24b-25, the Apostle Paul tells us: "God has joined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other."

Jesus said in Matthew 25:40 - "the King will reply, "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the LEAST of these brothers of mine, you did for Me."

Further in I Corinthians 12:22-27 -, Paul says: "On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor..... But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. Now you are a part of the

Body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it...have equal concern for one another." We the Body of Christ should care for one another's emotional, spiritual and physical needs.

As Rocky Mountain District LWML members, follow Jesus' words and care for Him as you care for the "LEAST of These!" May He receive the Glory.

#### Photo Descriptions:

Photo #1 - These are the residents of Good Shepherd Lutheran Group Home who were rescued over 14 years ago as children from the wretched living conditions in the government orphanages in the Dominican Republic. They have a loving group home family, church family, and form a part of the community in which they live. The group home was formed to put forth a model of care for people living with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Photo #2 - Randy is very helpful with daily chores. He has autism and while he does like connecting with people he does not like crowds. He stands in the doorway at church and listens to the service and sings along. In the group home, he is often heard singing the liturgy. By virtue of Randy's baptism, the Holy Spirit is active in Randy's life. He and the other residents give regular witness to the transformative love of Jesus through song, prayer, and loving actions towards others.

Photo #3 - Estefani is 26 years old and has cerebral palsy. She uses a wheelchair but can walk short distances with assistance. After many years of red tape, Estefani was finally able to get a birth certificate and her national identity card. This will allow her to have more opportunities such as studying and having a job, important factors in being included in society and having a sense of purpose. She is currently taking classes to get her high school diploma. Francis is also studying at the Santiago Deaf School. While both Estefani and Francis have learning disabilities, they continue to make progress as individuals and the Lord is guiding their steps in life.

Photo #4 - Good Shepherd Lutheran Homes and the Dominican Lutheran Missions has consistently advocated for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, reaching out to Dominican government institutions and working with local families in the community to support their emotional, spiritual and physical needs. The group home, the first and only one in the country, serves as a shining example of care for the residents, showing people that the residents are precious lives created in God's image and ones for who Christ died and redeemed.

Summary Statement: The funding of this grant will help provide spiritual, emotional and physical care to six orphaned residents with intellectual and developmental disabilities in the Good Shepherd Lutheran Home in the Dominican Republic. The cost of operating the home and giving this life-changing care is approximately \$85,819 per year/\$171,638 per biennium. In addition, this project will serve to build societal awareness regarding how they view and accept people with IDD, which in turn will help these living with IDD gain rights to health care, education, rehabilitation, and vocational programs.

Hogares Luteranos el Buen Pastor













# SOUTH WISCONSIN

## DISTRICT

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD

October 21, 2025

Dear Rocky Mountain District LWML Mission Grant Selection Committee Members,

I am writing to you with great enthusiasm to express my support for the mission grant application submitted on behalf of Casa Hogar, a group home dedicated to serving individuals with developmental disabilities. This noble work is a vital component in the broader mission of planting a confessional Lutheran national Church in the Dominican Republic.

Over time, I have had the opportunity to closely observe the transformative work carried out by Casa Hogar. Their efforts not only further the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ but have also significantly impacted the manner in which civil authorities address the needs and care of individuals with developmental disabilities. The dedication and compassion demonstrated by the team at Casa Hogar serve as a profound testament to their commitment and Christ-centered service.

The Casa Hogar and the work that extends out from them has earned the respect and cooperation of local civil authorities, showcasing the effective integration of faith-based initiatives and community well-being. Their work has already improved the lives of countless individuals. The continued support from the LWML will undoubtedly amplify these efforts, enhancing the effectiveness of the group home and advancing the mission to plant a thriving Lutheran Church in the region.

In conclusion, I urge the Rocky Mountain District of the LWML to consider supporting Casa Hogar through this grant, as it presents an exceptional opportunity to contribute to a meaningful and sustainable cause. The work Casa Hogar is undertaking is truly inspiring, reflecting the love and mercy of Christ in a tangible and impactful way.

Thank you for considering this application. May God bless your decision-making and continue to prosper the work of His church.

Serving Christ and You,

**Rev. Dr. Nathan Meador**  
*President*

*Confessing Christ  
for the Next Generation*

CC: Paul Reske, *SWD Business Manager*