

## **DISCIPLES CARE NETWORK, INC.**

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**History**—Disciples Care Network (DCN) grew out of eighteen health and social services care providers meeting at the 2005 Portland General Assembly. DCN is grateful to the National Benevolent Association board for a generous grant in 2007 for the organizational phase of the Network. Before DCN used up the NBA grant in January 2008, DCN applied to the General Church and some foundations for operating fund grants, all of which were declined. For the past year, DCN has operated solely on membership dues paid by eighteen of the various care ministries.

Now, 87 social and health ministries, in covenant with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), have agreed to be part of DCN Resource Directory. These ministries have 215 ministry sites (different physical locations to serve) and serve more than 41,000 persons annually, on your behalf. Such ministry is worthy of heartfelt celebration within our Church! The upcoming Resource Directory will include program codes as well as listings by state.

### **DCN Purposes are to:**

Increase awareness and encourage celebration among Disciples of the significant compassionate care provided.

Help shape the future direction of social and health care services among Disciples. Be a team member in discussing and determining the reorganization of Disciples structure for social and health care ministries.

Call ourselves, as leaders and organizations, to a life with responsibility and accountability.

Encourage members of our Church to act as catalysts in the formation of new ministries of care to meet needs.

Provide collegial consultation to congregations, regions, DCN agencies and groups of churches considering programs to address unmet needs.

Provide support, consultation and improve communication among all Disciples care ministries.

Offer training to aid DCN agency leadership and others to remain current in every changing service delivery environment.

Provide opportunities to Disciples throughout the US and Canada to support Disciples Care Network and its ministries.

**Accomplishments**—The 2007 Fort Worth General Assembly voted to accept Disciples Care Network as a “Recognized Organization” of the Christian Church. From input of persons meeting during the Fort Worth Assembly, DCN implemented priorities leading to: (1) a website: [www.disciplescarenetwork.org](http://www.disciplescarenetwork.org), (2) a membership sliding fee scale, to make membership equitable to ministries of all sizes, (3) incorporation and bylaws, with the least possible organizational structure, and (4) leadership training sessions at the DCN annual meetings open to persons outside social and health service delivery and our denomination.

**DCN role in fulfilling 2020 Vision Priorities of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)**—Through Scriptures, God requires new, transformed and all other congregations to “...care for the orphan and the widow” and be “...devoted to good works and acts of charity.” DCN contacted a diverse group of clergy to get their views of the value to the congregation of relationships with Disciples care ministries.

The survey input bolsters the thoughts of DCN board and membership and will help guide our future work. The responding Disciples clergy believe relationships with Disciples care ministries help congregations: (1) understand the conditions of others in challenging circumstances, many of whom are outside the church fellowship, (2) have hands-on approaches to ministry, filling a need to make ministry tangible and, through such, develop “ownership,” satisfaction and motivation to partner with Disciples care ministries, which is seen by the respondents as greater than with other deserving ministries not conducted by “our church,” (3) connect with the larger church by being involved in ministry beyond the congregation and local community, (4) live out the Gospel and put into practice the teachings of Jesus, stay grounded and involved, and prevent worshipers from escaping from the pains of the earth in focusing on heaven, and (5) receive some direct benefits, such as being transformed personally, becoming residents, or clients, which carries an increased trust and security feelings for those users of service. When members are invited to be volunteers and board members of Disciples care ministries it gives the congregation an increased level of understanding and feeling of participation.

**How has DCN collaborated with other expressions of the church and general ministries?**—This past year, in keeping with the Mission Alignment policies and process and with the suggestion of Dr. Sharon Watkins, DCN Board of Directors initiated conversations with Disciples Benevolent Services to determine ways our two organizations might collaborate to reduce duplication and maximize compassionate care delivery. At the 2009 General Assembly on Saturday, August 1, Dr. Fred Craddock will speak at the DCN dinner at the Marriott Hotel on the theme “The Church’s Role in Social and Health Services.” DBS (a member of DCN) will co-host this event along with other member ministries.

In 2010, DCN and DBS will jointly sponsor a national leadership training conference to help meet the needs for congregations, regions and care providers to maintain current competence in services delivery. Other ways to work together are part of ongoing discussions. It is the positive conviction of DCN Board that the last chapter of Disciples social and health services should not be the NBA bankruptcy. As painful and damaging as that was, DCN believes it is time to focus on the future and assure continuation of the justifiably proud history of Disciples meeting human need wherever it is.

DCN is in consultation with Disciples Home Missions regarding services to congregations providing social services as a part of their ministries.

Since 2006, DCN has piggybacked its annual meeting with the Christian Church Foundation and Pension Fund sponsored Disciples Development Conference. This arrangement helped save travel and accommodation expenses.

#### **Leadership—BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Elected and confirmed at DCN Annual Meeting in San Antonio, January 25-26, 2009: (term ending year)

**Ralph Allen**, Vice President Mission Advancement, Christian Care Communities, Louisville, KY ('10)

**Bob Mooty**, Board Vice President, The Summit, Lynchburg, VA ('10)

**Sue Cherney**, Executive Director, Southern Christian Services for Children & Youth, Jackson, MS ('12)

**Bob Cooper**, President, Tennyson Center for Children at Colorado Christian Home, Denver, CO ('10)

**Kay Ellis**, President, Juliette Fowler Homes, Dallas, TX ('10)

**Wanda Gottschalk**, Chief Development Officer, Child Saving Institute, Omaha, NE ('11)

**Linda Hill**, Director of Development, Kansas Christian Home, Newton, KS ('11)

**David Lundeen**, CEO, Cleveland Christian Home, Cleveland, OH ('12)

**C. Mark Palmer**, CEO, Woodhaven, Columbia, MO ('11)

**Don Stump**, President, Christian Church Homes of Northern California, Oakland, CA ('12)

**Karen Wardlaw**, Administrator, Disciple Homes, Gladewater, TX ('11)

#### **2009 CORPORATE OFFICERS**

President, Bob Cooper, Denver, CO

Vice President, Sue Cherney, Jackson, MS

Secretary/Treasurer, Don Stump, Oakland, CA

STAFF—Don D. Brewer, Director

#### **Ministries paying 2008 DCN membership dues:**

Child Saving Institute, Omaha, NE

Christian Care Communities, Louisville, KY

Christian Church Homes, Oakland, CA

Christian Manor, West Palm Beach, FL

Cleveland Christian Home, Cleveland, OH

Disciple Homes Management Group, Gladewater, TX

Disciples Benevolent Services, St. Louis, MO

Florida Christian Center, Jacksonville, FL

Inman Christian Center, San Antonio, TX

Juliette Fowler Homes, Dallas, TX

Kansas Christian Home, Newton, KS

Kentucky Appalachian Ministries, Berea, KY

Manistee Manor, Glendale, AZ

Serra Center, Fremont, CA

Southern Christian Services for Children

& Youth, Jackson, MS

Tennyson Center for Children at Colorado

Christian Home, Denver, CO

The Summit, Lynchburg, VA

Woodhaven, Columbia, MO

**Future**—There is much yet to do to reach the potential of the Network. Many in the pews say they never heard of most of the Disciple care ministries. Most of the providers think and feel their work is unnoticed and unappreciated by the whole church.

**What barriers hinder DCN Ministry?**—Coordinating the Network solely on the level of dues that ministries can take from their stringent budgets is difficult in these economic times with increasing demand for services and care.

**Thank you!**—It is our humble privilege to serve the whole Church in trying to fill the gaps in understanding and service delivery with and for persons with needs. Thank you!

PLEASE join DCN for dinner on August 1, in Indianapolis and visit the DCN website [www.disciplescarenetwork.org](http://www.disciplescarenetwork.org).