

Report to the Delegates and Future Church Summit Orlando 2017

MHS is a network of 76 health and human services organizations in 17 states and Puerto Rico affiliated with Mennonite, Mennonite Brethren US and Brethren in Christ. These nonprofit ministries include a hospital system, intellectual and developmental disability services, mental health programs and healthcare and housing for seniors. The mission of MHS is to support the board and staff leaders of our member organizations, offering resources to strengthen them to be faithful and effective in their work of compassion and hope in the name of Christ.

Stories of Resilience

Anabaptist health and human services organizations are facing many uncertainties in healthcare delivery, changing demographics, scarcity of workers, and churches in a state of unsettledness. In such times, boards and senior leaders are re-visiting their fundamental missions and core convictions as they respond and plan for the future. Here are three examples, all members that are nationally sponsored by MHS, where board and staff leaders made significant changes in how the mission is carried out.

- **Adriel**, in West Liberty, Ohio, has been serving children since 1896. Adriel has been an orphanage, a school, a foster care agency, a program for adolescents with low IQs and a residential treatment program for youth with severe emotional and behavioral challenges. Adriel recently faced licensing issues with its residential treatment program and the board made the difficult decision to close the program while continuing with its thriving foster care and family preservation services. In order to evaluate how to continue, Adriel is reaching out to connect with multiple stakeholders, seeking input from congregations, pastors, foster parents, staff, state officials and community leaders. With the assistance of MHS, the board and senior leaders are re-imagining how Adriel can respond to new unmet needs in the communities where they serve.
- **Kings View Behavioral Health Systems** was founded in California in 1951 by Mennonite Central Committee to address the need for treatment of mental health. Kings View was primarily known as the hospital in Reedley. In the 1990s, changes in public funding drove development of new programs, and the Reedley campus was eventually closed in 2001. Over the next decades, Kings View's scope of services has expanded to include drug and alcohol treatment, adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, Tele-Psychiatry, management information systems, services to homeless people and more. Now based in Fresno, Kings View's focus is serving communities where health resources are often limited.
- In Eureka, Illinois, **Maple Lawn** has been a retirement community for nearly 100 years, supported by an association of congregations. Faced with an unsustainable business model, the board of Maple Lawn sold the nursing home and low-income apartments in 2016 to be run by other organizations. A beautiful retirement living campus and a child

care center continue to be operated by Maple Lawn Homes and its association of churches. Beyond that, the board is taking time to consider what else God might be calling them to do.

Activities

- The Values-based Leadership Program, led by eight sponsoring groups, graduated 29 leaders in the 2016-2017 class. Participants gained self-awareness and an Anabaptist perspective on leadership. Registration is open for 2017-2018 at www.vblp.org.
- Mennonite Health Assembly met in Jacksonville, Florida in March 2017 along with the Mennonite Education Leaders Gathering. In addition to keynote speakers, workshops and networking, the conference included a special seminar featuring models for creativity and collaboration to help organizations and institutions stay healthy and strong.



- ValuedLeadership.org is a website framed around themes of Character, Collaboration, Culture and Change to help leaders explore beliefs and practices of Anabaptist organizations today. Quarterly webinars and resources on the website are free and available to anyone who is interested.

- Around the Globe – In April 2017, we participated in an interfaith eldercare conference in Beirut, Lebanon where administrators of Shia, Sunni, Druze, Maronite, Latin Catholic, Armenian Christian, and Protestant Christian communities met for education and mutual support. We collaborate with China Christian Council to support the development of senior care services in China, including an Executive Residency Exchange and a learning tour by Chinese leaders planned for fall of 2017.
- Executive Circle and Great Transitions Retreat are programs designed specifically for the chief executives of member organizations, equipping them for the unique responsibilities of working with a nonprofit board and leading a team, with an Anabaptist frame of reference.

For Thanksgiving and Prayer

- We lift up the board members and staff who embody Christ's love, hospitality and healing through MHS member organizations.
- We pray for wisdom for our elected leaders in Washington D.C. as they consider changes to health care and public assistance programs, and for the leaders of MHS organizations as they advocate for vulnerable people in our communities.
- We give thanks for the wise counsel of our national board, which is thoughtfully preparing for new executive leadership next year.

Submitted by Rick Stiffney, President/CEO

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