

Signal Mountain Social Services

2017 Annual Report

Signal Mountain Social Services consistently provided exceptional services to those in our community who experienced complex needs during 2017. Following its mission to “address the needs of individuals living within the 37377 zip code during times of financial challenge and crisis, with a longer-term focus of uniquely supporting each client on their path to self-reliance”, SMSS generated new partnerships to maximize resources available to clients. The executive director and two additional social workers strive to follow this mission with the guidance of the Board of Directors consisting of 11 dedicated individuals overseeing the direction of the agency. Our Council of Representatives includes 23 members who act as our liaisons to their various community organizations. These representatives are an invaluable link to community resources and volunteers, which allows us to maximize the use of our funds. SMSS volunteers total 100+ individuals providing invaluable manpower in The Clothes House, the Food Pantry, Christmas Baskets, support for clients, and other special projects for the agency.

During 2017, 165 Signal Mountain households received services in the form of assistance with food, rent, utilities, counseling, education, home repairs, daycare, medical, dental, vision, vehicle assistance, Christmas provisions, and senior services. Our goal for the clients we serve is for each to reach self-sufficiency and manage resources wisely. In many cases this goal is achieved through life skills counseling with the social workers. We act as a bridge to a stable future for clients who may have lost jobs, are experiencing medical and dental issues, are senior clients with no family to help with their many needs, are students struggling with difficult classes, or those with transportation issues. 130 households participated in life skills counseling receiving education in areas such as budgeting, job search, resource allocation, goal setting, accountability, and parenting from one of our social workers.

The SMSS Emergency Services Program is a critical component of this agency. We are very fortunate to be able to customize the assistance granted to individuals based on their documented need. Home visits are customary to not only address the current household needs, but also to further develop relationships with the clients we serve. With heightened awareness of needs, social workers are better equipped to address the emergency at hand and strategize with clients on a positive path going forward.

During 2017, we have assisted senior households with utility assistance keeping them warm and safe during the winter months, single parent households with rent assistance when there has been a job loss or medical issues, dental assistance with painful infections, vision assistance with eye exams and new glasses necessary for work and school, prescription assistance for necessary medications, household repairs to water heaters, leaky roofs, and washers and dryers for families, and emergency food distributions.

The SMSS Food Pantry saw an increase in emergency food needs during 2017. Serving 97 households this past year, the 30+ pantry volunteers not only graciously greeted clients, but bagged 1,548 bags of groceries and hygiene supplies. The Pantry relies on numerous food and hygiene drives throughout our community including schools, churches, and community groups to stock the pantry as well as individual donations and food purchases as needed. We anticipate at least similar food needs during this current year as our Signal Mountain community continues to grow.

The total funding provided for direct services to families and individuals in need was \$110,085.00 as shown below. Office and Administrative expenses totaled \$28,059. Total agency expenses were \$138,545.00.

The following table outlines the number of households assisted in each service category.

2017 Services Provided		
<u>Type of Assistance</u>	<u>Households Served</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Utilities	40	\$ 4,640.00
Rent/Mortgage	9	3,720.00
Emergency Home Repairs	1	445.00
Assessed Home Repairs	5	7,638.00
Medical/Dental/Vision	8	2,115.00
Vehicle Asst.	1	518.00
Food	97 households 263 visits/ 1,548 bags Estimated value: \$32,854	3,810.00
Christmas	50	541.00
Misc.	4	378.00
Life Skills Counseling	130	20,344.00
Education (7 categories)	87 (represents individual students - may have received asst. w/more than 1 category)	65,936.00
	Total Direct Client Services	\$110,085.00

Generated income covered all agency expenses. The Clothes House, our thrift shop, provided 65% of our income. We greatly appreciate the community's donations to The Clothes House and the regular volunteers who assist in staffing which help to keep costs down allowing us to provide the invaluable services to those in need in the community. Financially we also rely on churches, civic and school groups, community businesses, and individual donations. We are so fortunate to live in a community where our clients' needs are met so generously. All of our funding sources are critical in our mission to maximize the investments we make in our Signal Mountain families.

We look forward to a productive 2018, and to providing strategic services aimed at client stability, improvement, and self-sufficiency as we continue to develop strong relationships with our community partners, allowing client outreach to be fully encompassing.

Mary Lee Ziebold, Executive Director
Signal Mountain Social Services