

# West Coast Style Midwest Values – Social Entrepreneurship

## Author:

Andrea Albanese Denning

LifeCare Alliance

E-mail address: [adenning@lifecarealliance.org](mailto:adenning@lifecarealliance.org)

## Brief Description:

Over the past several years, there has been an increased demand for services, and a decrease in traditional funding sources. LifeCare Alliance has taken a proactive role to ensure our client's needs are met.

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*This submission was selected as part of a national challenge issued to leaders in all communities seeking new "best practices" and "best possibilities" for the future of nutrition and aging.*

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LifeCare Alliance is a not-for-profit organization that provides a comprehensive array of health and nutrition services to residents of Central Ohio. LifeCare Alliance's mission is to lead the community in identifying and delivering health and nutrition services to meet the community's changing needs. Founded in 1898 as the Instructive District Nursing Association (IDNA), LifeCare Alliance was Columbus' first in-home health care agency and Ohio's first Visiting Nurse Association.

LifeCare Alliance pioneered the delivery of community health and nutrition services. With a staff of approximately 201 dedicated individuals and 7,600 volunteers, LifeCare Alliance continues to assist residents in Franklin and Madison Counties through its signature programs: Meals-on-Wheels, Senior Dining Centers, Wellness Services, Help-at-Home, Visiting Nurses, Columbus Cancer Clinic, Project OpenHand-Columbus, Groceries-to- Go, and IMPACT Safety.

Over the past several years, there has been an increased demand for services, and a decrease in traditional funding sources. LifeCare Alliance has taken a proactive role to ensure our client's needs are met. Recent trends in not-for-profit agencies indicate that greater number of charitable organizations recognize the need to offset annual operating expenses through active social entrepreneur enterprises. Similarly, private and community funders alike understand the importance of not-for-profits "helping themselves in order to help others." LifeCare Alliance is committed to a stream of compatible fee-based services, to increase agency revenues so more individuals can be helped.

LifeCare Alliance recognizes the need for self-sufficiency and is committed to further developing a stream of compatible fee-based programs to increase agency revenue to continue to assist all those in need.

Currently, LifeCare Alliance offers social entrepreneur enterprise programs that help serve our clients in need while offering services in the community. These services include:

- L.A. Catering offering full-service catering using the culinary expertise of LifeCare Alliance kitchen staff. Being recognized as the 15th largest caterer in central Ohio, proceeds from L.A. Catering served an additional 500 clients last year.
- Catch the Corporate Wellness Spirit Program designed to meet the wellness needs of employers and employees at their work sites through health, nutrition, and education services. The wellness team provides on-site services including all of the same services provided in the community setting as well as personal face-to-face coaching at the worksite with the registered nurse and dietitian. Health fairs for community organizations and businesses are a recent addition to the wellness program. In 2011, the Corporate Wellness program served thirty- seven corporations.
- Meals-for-Kids Program, delivering meals to after-school care sites for school age children and to daycare centers and charter schools. Meals-for-Kids provides more than 2,000 meals per day to predominately lower-income and at-risk children at 43 sites in central Ohio.
- IMPACT Safety Programs, is a statewide fee for service program that provides tools to overcome violence. It offers low-cost training to women, men, teens and children to strengthen their resolve, expand their choices, and transform fear into courage. IMPACT offers community education programs, community workshops, Teen classes, 25-hour Basics personal safety classes for women, advanced classes, and classes for children. Additionally IMPACT provides 2-3 day courses for organizations and businesses that focus on organization safety policy, protocol implementation, and safety awareness skills for professionals.

Due to our social entrepreneur efforts, LifeCare Alliance has continued to service all those in need, especially in the basic needs food programs such as Meals-on- Wheels, where 1,030,884 meals were prepared and delivered to homebound clients living in Franklin and Madison counties. LifeCare Alliance is one of only a few major cities in the United States, which does not have a waiting list. Waiting lists in some cities total more than 1,000 people, and it takes a year or more to start service. This is for food, the most basic of needs.

LifeCare Alliance stays on mission through social entrepreneurship. The vision of Catherine Nelson Black, wife of Samuel Black, a judge and mayor of the City of Columbus, the IDNA became Ohio's first home healthcare program, organized in 1898 to bring medical care and health education to the homes of the sick poor and immigrant populations – those with high infant mortality rates. Mrs. Black noted that she wanted to establish an organization, which would “take care of the people who nobody else paid any attention to.” We still take care of those individuals today.