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Although difficult to quantify, here are some basic statistics from 100 individuals and/or families referred to Atlas:

- 82% of all referrals receive some form of help from Atlas
- 18% of referrals originally make no contact or break the first appointment
- 28% receive minimal help – but do not return
- 14% receive help relocating to another community or a homeless shelter in a nearby city.
- 44% receive help dealing with their current life crisis situation
- Of the 44%, 30% display a genuine interest in real life change
- Of the 44%, 11% have actually made positive life changes through the process
- 34% of the clients currently still have some sort of relationship with Atlas
- 20% have left the area and are no longer in contact with us
- 40% have faced current homelessness or the possibility of eviction
- Of the 40%, we have helped 65% apply for and receive state funding for their situation.
- These clients have received approximately \$85,000 in rental grants or back rent payments.

As people come, often with few assets and in a state complete hopelessness, we can always find a way to begin the helping process. Just as each person is unique, their individual situations are also unique. We begin with each client where they are and together see what can be done to begin working toward life change. Perhaps the greatest gift we offer is renewed hope for the future.

Atlas of the Lakes Area at a Crossroads

During the first year and a half of ministry, I have served as volunteer Executive Director and the only Atlas staff member. This arrangement has kept the ministry budget remarkably low and easily met. God has provided the funding and in-kind donations that have allowed for continuous ministry growth while being securely financed. Atlas needs additional staff so the ministry can better provide on-going mentoring assistance to clients as they seek to improve their lives. Administrative staff can also better share ministry awareness across the community.

I am excited to share that the long-promised staff search is progressing well. We currently have four applicants who have interviewed extensively with me and who either have submitted applications or are in the process. With added staff we will be better able to handle increased client referrals, improve mentoring relationships, expand administrative duties, and provide office staffing and clerical assistance. Our goal is to hire four people as quickly as possible to accomplish the Atlas mission. Achieving this goal will result in the increase of the 2022 Atlas expense budget from \$22,500 to a projected annual budget for 2023 of approximately \$150,000. We currently have cash reserves to cover such an increase in payroll cost plus operating expenses for 2022 although it is unlikely that this level of hiring will actually happen that quickly. We trust God to provide the people and the total funding needed for the total annual budget needs as the staff grows into the future.

The Intangible View of Atlas Success

The true success of Atlas of the Lakes Area is impossible for us to discern. From my desk chair in the Atlas office and many ventures into the community to serve others, I have a remarkable view of God's direction in the ministry. As God's plan for Atlas unfolds, the true measure of the ministry success is continuously revealed.

Daily I witness the miraculous presence of God in the lives of those we serve. Although His presence may not be obvious to them, introducing Him to them as their loving creator and helper begins to open their eyes. This growth is rejected by some, recognized by others, sought by most, and claimed by a few. Each step is a part of their individual journey and represents an evolution toward a future with Christ.

Thank you to each of you who has been involved with Atlas of the Lakes Area in any way. In fact, if you are still reading this Newsletter at this point, your interest makes you a member of the Atlas ministry team. Is God calling you to become even more involved in sharing his love with others, no matter where he has placed you?

Prayer Requests for Atlas:

- Pray that ministry hires begin in September and all positions are filled by mid-2023.
- Pray that the Board of Directors rely on their faith in Christ in the scope of hiring staff.
- Pray that God demonstrates His provision for the financial needs of staff expansion.