

The Timisoara Times



Spring 2022

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Areopagus between pandemic and war

Life as we know it has changed so much in the past two years. It has been a constant challenge to adapt to the new COVID 19 reality and to retool our activities and projects to meet this new reality.

By God's grace, we have not been forced to stop any of our programs. On the contrary, we have discovered new opportunities and ways to serve the people in need, as well as other categories that we work with.

Moreover, the conflict from Ukraine and the large numbers of refugees coming to Romania and residing in Timisoara gives us the possibility to use our resources to help them:

- ◆ 20 refugees (adults and children) benefit weekly from our free Romanian language classes as they obtained their residence visas and will stay in Timisoara long-term.
- ◆ Our van has been a great resource since February 2022, transporting people from the Ukrainian or Moldavian border to Timisoara. These people have no financial means to travel on their own from Ukraine and go to a safe place.
- ◆ We have offered free counselling to the refugees that need emotional support as well as legal advice.
- ◆ Every week we provide food supplies to 20-25 Ukrainian refugees, thanks to a partnership that we have with the Food Bank from Timisoara.
- ◆ We also try to cover other needs that they have, such as clothing, shoes, toiletries, etc.



Here is a review of our ongoing projects, just to give you a refreshed perspective on Areopagus' work in Romania.

- ◆ 20 children from poor families participate in our after-school program. In addition, we offer individual/family counselling sessions, group activities, and monthly food supplies for their families.
- ◆ 20 HIV patients benefit from free counselling, support group and monthly food supplies. Areopagus is their community, it is the place where they feel safe and can look for help without being rejected or stigmatized.
- ◆ 6 elderly couples receive weekly visits and food supplies. These are people that do not have any family to look after them. During the lockdowns and quarantine, we were their only hope to get food and other supplies that they needed. Although the restrictions were cancelled, we continue to visit and help them with chores and food. They highly value our time together and the attention they receive.



Our van loaded with food arrived at the Ukrainian border

- ◆ 20 students enrolled in our Master's Program, Values-Focused Social Work Practice, in 2021. Last year in May, we celebrated 20 years of activity of this program within the West University of Timisoara. We are so proud of this achievement and of Christian values being promoted at such a high academic level.
- ◆ 30 people graduated from the Biblical Counselling Program in 2021, and another group of 35 people started their training in 2022. The program was offered online during the restrictions, but switched to in-person meetings at the beginning of this year.
- ◆ Family therapy training courses and therapy sessions were offered online, until May 2022, when they resumed face-to face trainings. Over 70 professionals are enrolled in our trainings.
- ◆ The Areopagus Library reached 60.000 volumes! More digital resources were added lately and we expect more students to show interest in our library now that the universities have resumed their courses.
- ◆ The Romanian language program for international students gathered more students during the pandemic than before. Offering online courses opened up the possibility for many people to study the language! It is one of the programs that will continue both online and in person.



After-school activities at Areopagus

Challenges:

One of the greatest challenges is to be able to cover the salaries of our staff. People work hard and are dedicated to Areopagus' mission, but they have to provide for their own families. It has been a constant concern to find financial resources for our staff's salaries. Without them, Areopagus' ministry would be impossible.

How can you help?

- ◆ **Share** our ministry with others. Tell them what we do and how they can help;
- ◆ **Connect** us with churches, pastors, NGOs that have the same values and vision;
- ◆ **Pray** for us regularly;
- ◆ **Support** our social projects (<https://www.areopagus.ro/en/cris-du/social-services/>);
- ◆ **Visit** us and see for yourself our work in Romania;
- ◆ **Donate!** It is an investment, rather than an expense!

Luminita and her husband, Babi live in Igris, 60 km away from Timisoara. They became Christians four years ago and since then they have continued to walk with the Lord and to trust Him with their lives and future.

The family used to live in a small house that Luminita inherited from her parents. There were only two rooms in the house that they could use, a bedroom for the 8 family members and a kitchen. There was no bathroom in the house and it needed urgent renovation.

By God's grace and people's generosity, we were able to add two more rooms and a bathroom to their house. The electric wires and the roof were replaced and we managed to get them some pieces of furniture.

The family is very grateful for their new home and is amazed by God's grace and love for them!



Please direct any support for the Areopagus Center to:

Areopagus Romania Foundation INC.

Attn: John Livingston , Email: john@anchorstorageusa.com
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