

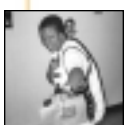
# CHICAGO COMMONS 1894 TO 2004

*One hundred ten years of building well-being*

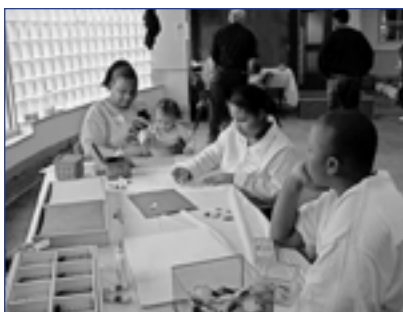
## Chicago Commons Celebrates 110 Years of Service

Chicago Commons celebrated the official kick-off of its 110th Anniversary Commemoration on Thursday, October 28, with festivities at four Commons' locations; Nia Family Center; West Humboldt Park; Senior Services and New City Family Center. Activities

included a Chicago Commons trivia game, music, tours of the facilities and refreshments. Participating in the festivities were Commons' program participants, local businesses, staff, members of Commons' Board of Directors, local government officials and major funders.



*Doris Brown, Special Projects Manager, and Kathy Brocks, Special Projects Assistant, welcome Alderman Walter Burnett to the 110th Kick-Off Celebration at West Humboldt Park.*



*Commons' client families participate in the 110th anniversary kick-off celebration festivities.*



## Anniversary Event Honors Chicago Commons' History

Nearly 300 guests enjoyed an inspiring program, an elegant meal, and the uplifting music of the Bacchus Group Global Jazz Quartet at the Chicago Historical Society recently in celebration of Chicago Commons' 110 years of Building Well-Being. The event raised more than \$200,000 for Commons' programs and services.

from several adult participants. The dance troupe from Mile Square reprised their production of Circle of Life, complete with colorful, handmade costumes and energetic choreography.

*Continued on page 6*

The entertaining program highlighted Commons' services with music and dance numbers performed by youth program participants, along with testimonials

*Take a look inside on pages 6 and 7 to see our special photo section from the 110th Anniversary Commemoration!*

Building Well-Being™

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## Message from the President & CEO

Fiscal 2005 is a landmark year for Chicago Commons. Our agency was founded 110 years ago during a time of recession, high unemployment, labor unrest, and domestic strife. As a safe harbor for various immigrant populations, Chicago Commons was a place where people could assimilate into the social and economic life of Chicago. While our neighborhoods, services, and clients have changed over many decades, our mission has not: to partner with individuals, families and communities to overcome poverty, discrimination and isolation.

I would like to thank our many supporters: individuals, foundations, corporations, public officials, community partners and parents, as well as our dedicated board of directors and staff in this 110th anniversary year. We take pride in our accomplishments and in our vision for a bright future of compassion and service.

To date, Chicago Commons has experienced several significant events. On August 24, 2004, Mayor Richard M. Daley held a press conference at our Nia Family Center to announce his dedication to Head Start and his position on welfare reform.

On October 9, staff members Janice Woods, Veronica Gonzalez, Denise Romo and I appeared on ABC's "Chicagogoing" hosted by Bill Campbell. Bill highlighted the work we are doing in the neighborhoods, our history and the November 9th Commemoration of 110 years of service through Building Well-Being since our founding by Graham Taylor.

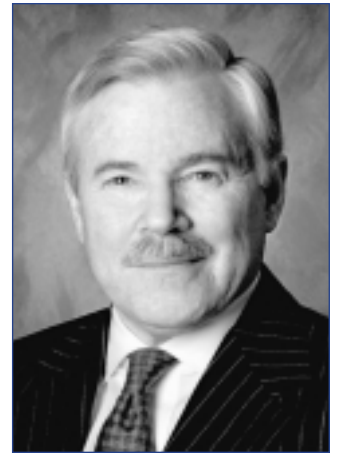
By the time of this publication, we will have completed the physical improvements at our West Humboldt Park facility that will prepare us for major growth of Senior Home Care and Adult Day Services. This use of our headquarters, which is also a place of service delivery for Child Development and Adult Learning, will strengthen its role in this community.

Chicago Commons is committed to improving the quality of life for those individuals, families and communities that we serve. Our efforts and intensified focus during the year will position the agency to continue building well-being for thousands of children and families in neighborhoods of Chicago that face the greatest needs.

Again, we thank our many constituents and supporters who make our mission possible.

**Frank C. Schell III**

President & Chief Executive Officer



*Frank C. Schell III  
President & Chief Executive Officer*



*27th Ward Alderman Walter Burnett, Mayor Richard M. Daley, and Frank C. Schell III*

## Chicago Commons Mission:

Chicago Commons partners with individuals, families, and communities to overcome poverty, discrimination and isolation. Chicago Commons creates programs that build self-sufficiency, strengthening individuals at key stages of their lives.

# Continuing a Legacy

Chicago Commons is grateful for a generous \$25,000 leadership gift from Esther and John Benjamin, long-time supporters and enthusiastic boosters of our agency. “When you have a comfortable life and are aware that there are others in need, you feel an obligation to try to improve their quality of life,” said Esther Benjamin.

Esther and John, volunteers, philanthropists and a leading donor team intensely support one another’s efforts to live out their philosophy of giving back to the community. “Our parents instilled that in us,” said Esther. “We both had fathers who were very involved in their communities. My father, Ben Rosenthal, lived in Fort Worth, Texas where he was active in Jewish philanthropy. He, along with my siblings, set an example by being very active in a wide range of charitable, service and cultural organizations.”

Esther, who in 1988 earned a Ph.D in sociology from Northwestern University, has been actively involved with Commons for 12 years, serving as Chair of the Development and Second Century Society committees and heading two Commons’ Uncommon Auctions. She is currently the Co-Chair of The Graham Taylor Society. “I started by working on the auction and development using expertise I had gained from fund raising and event planning for other organizations,” said Esther. Prior to joining Commons, she had served on other boards including the Midwest Women’s Center and Centers for New Horizons, groups that work with populations similar to our own.

John said, “My dad, Jack Benjamin, was on the board of Michael Reese Hospital where my great uncle had been their first intern.” John, following in the family footsteps, also became involved with the hospital. He served on its board for thirty years until it was sold in 1991. John has served on the board of the Michael Reese Health Trust since its inception and has been its chairman for the past six years. His interest in health and community needs led

him to become involved in Community Health, a free clinic on Chicago’s west side, and eventually to assume leadership in that organization as chairman of its board of directors. He still serves on its executive committee.

“We planned to leave gifts to our respective organizations through a foundation we are creating in our wills,” said Esther. “We realized, however, that there is a great need for funds right now. Therefore, we decided to donate part of our future gift at this time, and hope others will follow our lead.”

Chicago Commons gratefully acknowledges the generosity of this loyal couple.



*John and Esther Benjamin*

## Sara Lee Foundation Leads Corporate Support for Chicago Commons' Employment Training Center

For more than 20 years, Sara Lee Corporation has had a distinguished history of supporting the communities in which employees live and work. The focus areas of the Sara Lee Foundation, the philanthropic arm of the corporation, are closely tied with Sara Lee Corporation's mission "to feed, clothe, and care" by supporting organizations that help to alleviate hunger and homelessness, affordable housing, job training and domestic violence prevention, along with cultural programs.

The Foundation was created more than 20 years ago to firmly establish Sara Lee's dedication to community service. The Foundation has touched millions of lives, helping those in need and fostering artistic expression. It concentrates support on organizations and causes in Chicago, home of its corporate headquarters.

### *Community Initiatives*

Sara Lee's Community Initiatives Program is committed to innovation, collaboration, excellence and development of the full potential of individuals and communities. Sara Lee concentrates support on organizations in its focus areas that serve people of color and underserved populations of need in Chicago.

### *Job Training*

The Sara Lee Foundation supports programs that train people for employment. Currently it is the Lead Corporate Sponsor of Chicago Commons' Employment Training Center (ETC). ETC has been redefined to focus on providing services to all of our participants over longer periods of time, and minimizing the number of participants who receive short-term job placement services that can be obtained at a nearby State facility.

### *ETC's goals for FY2005 are to:*

- Design and implement a new modular curriculum,
- Expand English as a Second Language component to two Chicago Commons child care locations where demand is high,
- Integrate employment services collaboration with education services, and
- Pursue employment services collaboration partners.

Chicago Commons is pleased to partner with the Sara Lee Foundation this year in its support of the Employment Training Center.

## United Way to Support Child Development and Child Welfare Programs

Under its "Kids Impact" funding area, United Way (UW) has awarded Chicago Commons' child development program \$350,000, along with \$65,000 each year to child welfare for the next three years. These awards reflect UW's new program specific funding method. UW now focuses on one of three program areas each year for awarding grants: youth, children or adults. United Way then evaluates the proposals and grants funding for a three-year period.

Since the introduction of its new funding method, competition for UW dollars has increased tremendously. Approximately one out of three proposals submitted for "Kids Impact" were funded. Jim DeVries, Commons' board member; Dan Cantillon, volunteer at New City and former board member; and child development and child welfare staff assisted in the United Way pre-award site visit at our New City Family Center.

# FORE in 2004!

Contracting and Material Company joined other supporters and friends of Chicago Commons as sponsors of our 2004 Golf Invitational on June 28. We hit the greens on a beautiful day, in a world-class setting at Shoreacres in Lake Bluff, Illinois. Participants helped raise over \$120,000 to support the programs and services of Chicago Commons. This all-day event included a welcome reception, golf clinic, and an 18-hole game with contests, lunch, award dinner reception and silent auction.

The 2004 Invitational Champions, which included Chicago Commons board member and Golf Chair, Willard Evans, Jr, Alderman Walter Burnett, John Just, and Dave Lazzaro, led the way to fun and excitement at this event. There were

2nd and 3rd place winning teams, along with men and women closest to the hole and long-drive winners. Attendees and sponsors included participants from Guardian Security Services, IBM, Northern Trust, Peoples Energy, Quaker Foods & Beverages, Verizon and Waste Management. The evening culminated with a silent auction chaired by board member Don Lisle, with offerings of American Airlines international and domestic tickets, sporting goods, and weekend get-a-ways to a foursome day of golf at a number of private golf courses.

Thank you to all of the participants and supporters of the 2004 Golf Invitational. Mark your calendar for our 2005 Golf Invitational on Monday, June 27.



# Commons CONNECTION

Chicago Commons's 110th Anniversary Celebration



## Anniversary Event

*(continued from page 1)*

The program also included the Dance of Nations performed by school-age children from the child development program, and a video presentation of artist Bob Klunk's work with school-age children from the Guadalupano

Center, as they learned about art and architecture in their own community.

The 110th Anniversary Commemoration celebrated the accomplishments of Chicago Commons, which has been a leader in social services in Chicago since opening its doors in 1894. Chicago Commons has met the changing landscape of the communities it serves by continuing to develop and implement high-quality programs and services aimed at strengthening individuals at key stages in their lives.

"Through my journey with Chicago Commons, I have discovered the power of me, the power of learning, and



# CHICAGO COMMONS 1894 TO 2004

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the power of reading,” said Cecelia Stuckie, an ETC participant since 2002.

Carmen Romo, a long-time employee at Chicago Commons, said, “Both Taylor House and Emerson House were safe, happy places for my children as they attended the child development and youth programs. Chicago Commons has certainly been a support system in our lives.”

“We were the friend of the ‘old’ Chicago,” said Commons’ President and CEO Frank C. Schell III, “a place where people gathered, a safe harbor, a place to learn skills and find common ground with their neighbors. We are also the friend of the ‘new’ Chicago. The people have the same hopes now as they did way back then. It’s still all about building well-being.”

Schell made a special presentation to event co-chairmen Art Velasquez, President and CEO of Azteca Foods Inc., and Jesse Ruiz, partner at Gardner Carton and Douglas LLP to thank them for their leadership and support. He also thanked the board of directors, whose generous support made the event successful.



## For Your Health

Chicago Commons' New City Center Health and Fun Fair brought all stages of life together for an informational and fun-packed day on July 22. The event attracted parents and children from the neighborhood and beyond. Common Ground for Youth teens organized games for the younger children, and families received free immunizations, lead screening and HIV screening from the Chicago Department of Public Health. Marie Billingsly Wellness Center provided free blood pressure and cholesterol check-ups. Other participating organizations included Chicago Public Schools, La Rabida Family Nutrition Program, Chicago Domestic Violence Help Line, BankOne and Illinois Department of Human Services.



*New City Center Health and Fun Fair attracts neighborhood residents and community organizations.*

## Loyola University Law Students and McDowell Kids Honor Outstanding Parents

For the second consecutive year, 30 Loyola University law students from the Public Interest Law Society (PILS) spent a recent Saturday with the children and youth of the Mary McDowell Project Elevate program. The day began with Samantha Nugent, PILS president, honoring Englewood parents Tony and Lela Young for their commitment to children and education. With fifteen children in their family, the Youngs have already supported seven offspring through college. Six are currently enrolled in various colleges and universities. The Youngs have never been in the police station or a disciplinarian's office for any of their children. Mrs. Young is an avid volunteer in the community. Both participate in various programs available for young people.

The law students and Mary McDowell kids gardened, played basketball, painted Sherman School, and challenged each other with Illinois history trivia questions. At the end of the day, the group collected goods for victims of the Florida hurricanes.



*A piggy-back break after a morning of gardening.*

*Josephine Robinson, Director, Mary McDowell Settlement House;  
Tony and Lela Young; Samantha Nugent, PILS President;  
Teresa Moore, Senior Community Prevention Specialist;  
Richard Ware, Program Coordinator.*



# COMMON GROUND FOR YOUTH

## Commons' Youth + Gallery 37 + Muntu = A Story



This summer, Chicago Commons' Mile Square collaborated with Gallery 37 and The Muntu Dance Theater to offer a pre-apprenticeship program in African-American storytelling for youth aged 14-15. The participants came from Commons' Mile Square, West Humboldt Park, and Mary McDowell youth programs. Youth were immersed in the historical and cultural context of storytelling, and exposed to creative writing, the spoken word and other elements such as visual, movement and sound. The six-week program ended with a spectacular event connecting all of the elements to tell the African folk story of "Anansi the Spider," plus other personal stories.

## Quaker/Pepsi Gives \$15,000 Grant

Over 230 students in four of Chicago's most underserved neighborhoods will receive help and assistance to reach their full potential because of Chicago Commons' Common Ground for Youth Program and a new, \$15,000 grant from Quaker/PepsiCo Beverages and Foods. Designed to nurture youth's passion for learning, and to help them develop a strong sense of identity, Common Ground for Youth also advocates for students at their elementary schools by establishing relationships with teachers and counselors, and helping students and their families work through truancy, behavior and academic performance issues.

## Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry Foundation Gives \$5,000

Chicago Commons was selected to be among the 21 Chicago area educational, arts and civic organizations to receive grants totaling \$120,063 from the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Chicago Foundation. Foundation President, Mr. Yoshihiro Ozawa of Japan Airlines International, formally presented the \$5,000 grant award to Chicago Commons at an award ceremony on Tuesday, October 19 at the Chicago Club.

"These grants will help us better serve our students, their parents and the community at large," said Eduardo Anguiano, Director of Youth Services. "We deeply appreciate the support of our new funders, as well as the continued support and commitment of our current donors."

## Advisory Council Steers Kids Toward Financial Literacy

The Youth Investment Club Advisory Council held its premiere meeting in October at West Humboldt Park. Designed to build financial literacy among 15 to 20 youth from West Humboldt Park, the three-year Youth Investment Club project has been awarded a start-up grant through the Humboldt Park New Communities Project. The grant was facilitated by Bickerdike Redevelopment Corporation through the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC). Franklin Williams, local businessman and owner of Head Liners Barber Shop, has also pledged financial support.



Freida Curry, Quentin Sampson, Cedric Howard and Gregory Smith, Youth Investment Advisory Council members.

## UPS Cleans Up and Gives Back



*UPS volunteers spruce up NIA Family Center.*

On May 25, 2004, Chicago Commons NIA Family Center hosted the UPS staff kick-off for their 2004-2005 United Way fundraising campaign. Those attending the meeting were so impressed with our program and facility that Rick Picardi and Karen German, from the Jefferson Street UPS office, coordinated a group of UPS volunteers to provide landscaping and clean-up work at three of our childcare centers. About 25 volunteers came together on June 26 to plant, weed, mulch, and mow at our NIA Family Center. Another volunteer day was held on September 18 at Paulo Freire and New City child development centers. Following the two volunteer days, staff at UPS went the extra mile and secured a \$9,000 general operating expenses grant to support Chicago Commons' programs.

## Seniors and Builders Harvest Fun

Amid the setting of a garden harvest, Chicago Commons' seniors sported plaid shirts, blue jeans and western hats at the Senior Care "Yahoo" Western Day, September 8, 2004. Music and the aroma of barbeque filled the air.

While the garden provides an external beauty, "Rebuilding Together," a volunteer group from Bell, Boyd and Lloyd headed by Bill Price, committed to renovating the Commons Adult Day Service Center. The improvements include the nature room, complete with park bench, rocking chair and fish tank, plus new window replacements and carpeting in Home Care.



*Ride 'em Senior Cowboys!*

# Cin & around CHICAGO COMMONS

Future Events

## *Spring Event*

Pour Out Your Heart for Commons – Wine Tasting/Art Auction  
Thursday, April 21, 2005 @ 6-9 p.m. at Industrial  
19 East 21st Street

## *2005 Annual Meeting*

Tuesday, May 17, 2005 @ 4-6 p.m., Location TBD

## *2005 Golf Invitational*

Monday, June 27, 2005; Lake Bluff, IL at 10 a.m.



## *A Friendly Reminder from the Second Century Society*

Bequests are the most popular form of planned giving. Please consider including Chicago Commons in your estate plans. For information, or to notify us of your gift, please call Sue Mitchell G'sell at 773-826-4256.



SECOND CENTURY SOCIETY  
OF CHICAGO COMMONS

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## THANK YOU!

*As we celebrate 110 years of providing service to the people of Chicago, we thank you for your dedicated support of our programs and services.*

*With your ongoing support and participation, Chicago Commons will continue the legacy of "Building Well-Being" one person and one neighborhood at a time.*

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# CHICAGO COMMONS 1894<sup>TO</sup>2004

*One hundred ten years of building well-being*

Visit the Chicago Commons website and make your contribution online today at [www.chicagocommons.org/donate](http://www.chicagocommons.org/donate).



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