

# THE COMMONS

Chicago Commons - Helping families **GO** further.

## Your Monthly News & Updates | August 2019

Greetings!

It is officially back-to-school season, which means Chicago Commons is gearing up for another school year filled with discovery, growth, and development for our children. As the summer winds down, we have seen a lot of excitement already at our early education centers in support of our children and families. This month, Mayor Lori Lightfoot visited our Nia Family Center in Humboldt Park and read a book by Toni Morrison to our kids. The Mayor created a special moment for our children to see and hear the words of two important African American women whose work and legacy displays a commitment to community, equity, and representation. The reading session was followed by a press conference where Mayor Lightfoot promoted enrollment into high-quality early learning preschools, and discussed the City's budget, which includes a **\$42 million dollar investment** for community-based early education partners. We are excited about what these investments mean for improving the quality and access to pre-K programs in Chicago.



In addition to the mayor's visit, Chicago Commons has felt the love and support from community stakeholders for our early education centers. With the help of our friends at **PNC Bank, the Chicago Bears**, Alderman Walter Burnett Jr. and the State of Illinois, we started a playground rebuild at Nia Family Center this month. We are thrilled about this project that will provide our children with a great new space for learning, playing, and exploring. These investments will not only improve the educational experiences and opportunities for our kids, but will also help uplift entire communities.

The support of community stakeholders and individual supporters has enabled Chicago Commons to continue to have a positive impact in our communities. But we also have a deep and long history in Chicago, which was featured this month WBEZ's "What's That Building". The segment explored the building that was once Chicago Commons' settlement house located on Grand and Morgan, built in 1901. Revisiting our history through the significance of this building that is now home to Bennett Day School, it serves as a physical marker how the City has changed over time, and how Chicago Commons has adapted to meet the needs of the people.

After 125 years, our mission today is to empower individuals, families, and communities to overcome poverty and systemic barriers, embrace opportunities, and thrive across generations. We want to celebrate our past and share our future

aspirations with you - please join us for our [125th Anniversary Dinner and Celebration](#) on Friday, November 15, 2019, at the Radisson Blu located at 221 N. Columbus Drive. The event, which will start at 5:30 pm with a cocktail reception, will include a program and awards ceremony and conclude with a commemorative Pour Out Your Heart for Chicago Commons after-party featuring the amazing [Chicago Players band](#). We hope that you will consider joining us on this night.

Best Wishes,



[DONATE](#)

## HIGHLIGHTS

### Mayor Lori Lightfoot Visits Nia Family Center

On Friday, August 9, Mayor Lori Lightfoot visited Chicago Commons' Nia Family Center in Humboldt Park. Joined by [Alderman Walter Burnett Jr.](#) and representatives of the [Chicago Department of Family and Support Services](#) and [Chicago Public Schools](#), Mayor Lightfoot encouraged parents and guardians to enroll their children in early education programs. This year, the city will increase its investment in early learning programs by **\$76 million** to provide all families, regardless of zip code, with options for high-quality early education.

Thank you Mayor Lightfoot for your visit to Chicago Commons and for your investment in early education programs based on quality, equity, and community need. These investments will set children on the right path towards kindergarten readiness and lifelong success.

Check out the Mayor's visit and press conference:

[WGN 9](#)

[Chalkbeat](#)



## PNC Bank and Chicago Bears Start Playground Rebuild at Nia Family Center

On Monday, August 12, we officially broke ground at our Nia Family Center playground in Humboldt Park! Our kids enjoyed ice cream and drew sketches of their ideal playground, while volunteers from [PNC Bank](#) and the [Chicago Bears](#) prepared the grounds for new equipment, an expanded play area, and landscaping to take place in the upcoming months.

We are thrilled to partner with [PNC Bank](#), the [Chicago Bears](#), Alderman Walter Burnett Jr., [Accel Construction](#), [Planning Resources Inc.](#), and the State of Illinois to build a new playground at Nia that will provide our children with a great new space for learning, playing, and exploring. Thank you to Craig Esko, Dorothy Abreu, Dani Swade, and the PNC's Diversity and Inclusion Council and Young Leaders Council for making this a reality.



[View the Photo Album](#)

### SAVE THE DATE

## 125th Anniversary Dinner: Generations of Generosity

Chicago Commons is marking its 125th anniversary with a celebratory event, [\*\*Generations of Generosity\*\*](#). We invite you to join us on this very special night as we celebrate our rich history and accomplishments while also looking ahead to our future.

The evening begins with a reception and silent auction followed by dinner. You'll hear inspiring stories about Commons' history, the accomplishments of our incredible participants, and help us honor some of our most ardent supporters.

Following the dinner program, stay for [\*\*Commons' Emerging Leaders Council's\*\*](#) Pour Out Your Heart after-party featuring [\*\*The Chicago Players\*\*](#) as well as some fun hands-on activities!

All proceeds benefit Chicago Commons' programs that support over 3,000 families annually through early childhood education, family-centered adult education, and senior services.

[Purchase Tickets](#)

[Sponsor the Event](#)



# GENERATIONS OF *generosity*



**SAVE-THE-DATE**  
**125TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER**

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2019**

5:30 pm - 8:30 pm

Reception and Dinner

Radisson Blu Aqua Chicago

221 N. Columbus Drive

Contact: Cheryl Wisniewski

(773) 826-4256

8:30 pm - 11:00 pm

Pour Out Your Heart for Commons

After-party Featuring The Chicago Players

Selected by the Citi Foundation's

**COMMUNITY  
PROGRESS  
MAKERS** FUND

to Accelerate Economic Opportunity  
#ProgressMakers

We at Chicago Commons are  
proud Citi Foundation  
Community #ProgressMakers

## What's That Building? Chicago Commons Settlement House Featured on WBEZ



**Morning Shift**

### 100 Years Ago, This West Town Private School Building Was A Center Of Social Reform

Dennis Rodkin  
August 1, 2019



On Thursday, August 1, Chicago Commons was featured on [WBEZ Morning Shift's "What's that Building?"](#) segment. They explored what was once Chicago Commons' settlement house located on Grand and Morgan, built in 1901. That building is now home to the [Bennett Day School](#), a private school that is coincidentally one of a handful of local schools along with Chicago Commons that offers the Reggio Emilia approach to learning.

Now celebrating 125 years, Chicago Commons provides early childhood education, family services, and senior care to over 3,000 people a year! To learn more about program offerings and how to get involved during this 125th anniversary year, please visit our website!

## SPOTLIGHT

### Cesar Represents Solar System With Recycled Materials

This month's spotlight is on Cesar, a student at one of Chicago Commons early education centers. Cesar has demonstrated a colorful imagination and knowledge about the universe and geology. Cesar takes any opportunity to represent his theories about the world around him using materials. In the art studio, Cesar always finds materials that are conducive to supporting his interests and serve as channels of communication for his ideas.

In this case, Cesar used a re-purposed candle holder and large marble with a bit of dry clay on it to represent the solar system and planet earth!



"This is the solar system and these are the planets."



"This one here is planet earth."

### Open Enrollment at Early Education Centers



Enrolling now! Come visit us at

### Job Opportunities Available



Interested in a rewarding career helping children, families, and

one of our centers in **Back of the Yards, Humboldt Park, or Pilsen**. Set your kids on the right path. We offer year-round early childhood education focused on kindergarten readiness, STEM, and the Reggio Emilia approach to learning. **Call us today** to learn more or schedule a tour.

To read more about the Reggio Emilia approach to learning, [click here!](#)

seniors succeed? Visit us online to explore career opportunities with Chicago Commons! This month we are featuring the following opportunity:

- **ERSEA Family & Mental Health Support Coach**

[Click here to explore job opportunities.](#)

## EVENTS

### Bud Blossom Golf Outing



**When: Monday, September 23, 2019**

**Where: Shoreacres**

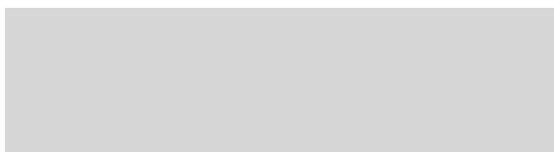
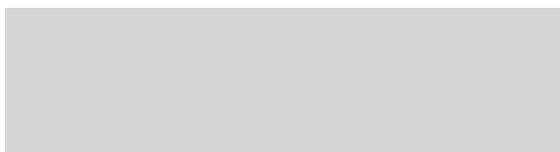
**Lunch: 10:00 AM**

**Shotgun Start: 12:00 PM**

Due to inclement weather, our annual Bud Blossom Golf Outing is rescheduled to **September 23, 2019**. Questions? Please contact Cheryl Wisniewski at 773-826-4256 or [cheryl@chicagocommons.org](mailto:cheryl@chicagocommons.org).

We would like to thank our hosts Annette and David Dezelan for making this event possible. Thanks also to our Golf Committee members, Amit Mehta, Phil Kenny, and Dan Chavez.

## SOCIAL MEDIA CORNER





May Pole Dance



In our early years, Chicago Commons hosted an annual May Festival. This celebration highlighted the diverse cultural traditions of the community through song, dance, crafts, and food. This picture features children performing a May Pole dance in 1906. Today, Chicago Commons is still a welcoming presence in neighborhoods for people of all backgrounds, valuing their strengths and building upon them to ensure an equal chance at success.

#Commons125 #FlashbackFriday

## DID YOU KNOW?

# 1,293

Number of seniors living at home who receive support from our Home Care team



Chicago Commons' Home Care team supports seniors in their home to help provide a life with independence, dignity, and respect. A caregiver visits daily or weekly to provide assistance, friendship, and support. Services are available seven days a week, 24-hours a day and can be scheduled based on the needs of each participant. To learn more about our Home Care services, please visit us

at:<https://chicagocommons.org/programs/senior-services/>.

#Commons125 #SeniorsGOFurther #ProgressMakers

Follow us on social media for more updates like this



## STAY INVOLVED



Looking for other ways to get involved? Make a donation or become a volunteer today!

Donate

Volunteer



---

*Thank you for helping 3,000 kids, families and seniors GO further. Because of you, kids are prepared for kindergarten and lifelong learning; families have access to education, employment and financial services; and seniors and adults with disabilities maintain their quality of life and stay in their homes.*