

THE COMMONS

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

Your Monthly News & Updates | December 2019

Greetings!

Happy holidays! I cannot believe how quickly this year has flown by, and all that we have accomplished together. As I reflect on Chicago Commons' successes in 2019, I am thankful for supporters like you who made it all possible.



I am also thankful for our families, who have shared moments of growth, opportunity, quality care, and more. At our 125th anniversary celebration, which brought together over 500 supporters, Chicago Commons parent Aleli Vargas shared her journey. After Aleli enrolled her three children in Chicago Commons' Guadalupano Family Center, she saw many doors open for her family and for herself. Aleli enrolled in our Pathways for Parents pilot cohort, which provides college classes at no cost for parents who wish to become early education teachers. To read her inspiring story, please [click here](#).

I am especially thankful for our supporters who are giving from the heart in the month of December, making sure that all of our participants have a wonderful holiday. Leading the pack is **Macy's** who provided toys for all 265 of our three-to-five-year-olds at our four early childhood education centers. In addition, **HSA Commercial Real Estate**, **John Burns Construction**, **Peoples Gas, Toys for Tots**, and **Tristan & Cervantes** all generously donated toys, hats, gloves, and scarves so that each child at our four centers will receive at least one present this holiday season! **PNC Bank** volunteers wrapped hundreds of presents for children, and **JPMorgan Chase** is bringing gifts to all 100 of our Adult Day Services participants.

This month we had the sad news that two former board members, Donald C. Lisle and James DeVries passed away. We honor Don and James for their support, leadership, and dedication, which were essential to Chicago Commons, and we will miss them dearly.

It is only with the help of our supporters that Chicago Commons celebrates 125 years of service. Thank you for helping to make 2019 a success.

Best Wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Edgar Ramirez".

[DONATE](#)

HIGHLIGHTS

Macy's and Several Other Supporters Step Up to Ensure that Families Have a Happy Holiday



We are grateful to have the support of many donors this month who brought holiday gifts and cheer to all of our participants! Many thanks to **Macy's** for generously providing toys for all 265 of our three-to-five-year-olds at our four early education centers. Thank you to **HSA Commercial Real Estate, John Burns Construction, Peoples Gas, Toys for Tots, and Tristan & Cervantes** who held drives for toys, hats, gloves, and scarves to make sure each child at our four early childhood education centers will receive at least one present this holiday, and will stay nice and warm in the upcoming months. Thank you also to **PNC Bank** for helping wrap hundreds of presents for our kids, and **JPMorgan Chase** for bringing gifts to all 100 of our Adult Day Services participants!

Chicago Commons Video: 125 Years of Service



Chicago Commons' mission is to empower individuals, families, and communities to overcome poverty and systemic barriers, embrace opportunities, and thrive across generations. For 125 years, our programs have been helping children, families and seniors GO further to live richer, more fulfilling lives. See our **latest video** for a glimpse of our programs in action!

Chicago Commons Celebrates 125 Years



[View Photo Album](#)

[Watch Honoree Videos](#)

More than 500 civic, corporate, and community leaders came together on Friday, November 15 at the Radisson Blu Aqua Hotel to celebrate the 125th anniversary of Chicago Commons and our impact within underserved communities in the region.

The Generations of Generosity dinner and celebration was an amazing night. We recognized individuals and partners from the corporate, foundation, and government sectors who have been influential in their support and advocacy. Together we are advancing high-quality early education and other key social support services at Chicago Commons.

The celebration included leadership from Honorary Co-Chairs: J.B. Pritzker, Governor, State of Illinois, and Lori Lightfoot, Mayor, City of Chicago; and attendance by Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton; City Clerk of Chicago, Anna Valencia; State Representative Theresa Mah, and Senior Advisor to Governor JB Pritzker Nikki Budzinski; and Dinner Co-Chairs: Charles Matthews, President & CEO, Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas, & Scott Swanson, PNC President of Illinois and several others. **Click here** to see the full list of leadership.

[Read More](#)

Pathways for Parents Program Featured in Institute of Women's Policy Research

Chicago Commons' Family Hub program, Pathways for Parents, was featured in a report about partnerships between Head Start programs and colleges. The report, by the **Institute for Women's Policy Research**, describes how Head Start helps parents attain educational goals by providing comprehensive family supports and child care. Pathways for Parents provides the stepping stones for a career in Early Childhood Education through fully subsidized college courses and family supports.



HEAD START-COLLEGE PARTNERSHIPS AS A STRATEGY FOR PROMOTING FAMILY ECONOMIC SUCCESS:
A Study of Benefits, Challenges, and Promising Programs



Center for
Equity in
Higher Education

[Read The Full Report](#)

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

Financial Coaching Pilot Program with LISC and Peoples Gas



Chicago Commons' Family Hub program staff were selected to assist in a new pilot program with LISC Chicago and Peoples Gas, which seeks to address issues of financial stress among employees. The pilot program provided personalized, one-on-one financial coaching as a free benefit to Peoples Gas workers. Financial coaches from Chicago Commons, North Lawndale Employment Network, Metropolitan Family Services, and Center for Changing Lives met with Peoples Gas employees at the Aon Center to share budgeting tools, financial knowledge, and helpful resources. Thank you to LISC Chicago and Peoples Gas for this innovative pilot. [Read the article](#) to learn more about the employees' experience in the pilot program.

[Read The Full Article](#)

SOCIAL MEDIA CORNER



Congrats to Chicago Commons Board Member James Hill III for getting featured in [Crain's Chicago Business](https://www.chicagobusiness.com/wards/james-hill-iii) list of notable minorities in accounting, consulting, and law!
<https://www.chicagobusiness.com/wards/james-hill-iii>



Everyone Counts! Our CDO Julio Paz was delighted to join a panel discussion on the U.S. 2020 Census that also included Dr. Cristina Pacione-Zayas, Erickson Institute; Christa Hamilton, Centers for New Horizons; and Choua Vue, Illinois Action for Children. [#CensusEDU](https://twitter.com/CensusEDU)



Thank you to Jackson National Life Insurance Company for your generous support of Chicago Commons' Family Hub! A grant from Jackson will help support financial wellness services that give parents the tools they need to achieve their financial goals. [#FamiliesGOFurther](https://twitter.com/FamiliesGOFurther)
[#Commons125](https://twitter.com/Commons125)



Thank you to the Red Nose Day Fund/Comic Relief Inc., a donor-advised fund of the Chicago Community Foundation, for their grant in support of our Early Childhood Education programs! Comic Relief: Red Nose Day is helping to ensure all children have access to high quality education that prepares them for kindergarten and lifelong success. [#KidsGOFurther](https://twitter.com/KidsGOFurther)
[#FamiliesGOFurther](https://twitter.com/FamiliesGOFurther) [#Commons125](https://twitter.com/Commons125)



In Memoriam



Chicago Commons mourns the loss of former board members Donald C. Lisle and James DeVries.

Donald C. Lisle joined the board in 1988 and served for over a decade. He was a great supporter of the organization as a member of the associate board long after his board service concluded. Don was instrumental in the implementation of the Bud Blossom Golf Outing, which continues to be one of Commons' largest fundraising events each year.

James DeVries served on the board from 1999 until 2009. He was a consultant and retired lawyer, and served on our governance and fundraising committees during his time on the board. His work to increase awareness about Chicago Commons led to many new partnerships that continue today.

We thank Don and Jim for their support, leadership, and dedication to Chicago Commons and send our most sincere condolences to their friends and loved ones. Click here for [Donald C. Lisle's obituary](#) or [James DeVries obituary](#). For service information, please contact Cheryl Wisniewski at cheryl@chicagocommons.org or 773-826-4256.

STAY INVOLVED



Looking for ways to get involved? Consider becoming a volunteer! You can also support us by following us on social media and sharing our news with your network.

[Volunteer](#)

[Donate](#)



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.