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As many of you know, in 2020, Chicago Commons concluded our 125th anniversary year, officially marking 126 years on May 1. We certainly didn’t expect at this milestone to find our four early education centers and Adult Day Service center closed for in-person programming during the spring months of 2020 due to a global pandemic.

But we’ve learned a lot in 126 years.

Throughout our history, Chicago Commons has faced innumerable challenges that have tested us as an organization. These include recessions, depressions, wars, political strife, and even the 1918 influenza pandemic. Just as we provided emergency food and services in 1918, here we are providing relief to the communities we serve over 100 years later.

While our centers experienced temporary interruptions of in-person programming, our services never stopped. Our early education teachers provided lessons, storytime, and even meditations to children and parents through Zoom and social media. Our Family Hub staff compiled free resources for families, sourced employment opportunities, and helped parents secure unemployment benefits. Our Adult Day Service staff placed calls to 110 seniors every other day to provide wellness checks and address their needs. And throughout the pandemic, our Home Care Aides continued to provide direct in-home services to seniors with safety modifications. The efforts of our staff this year were nothing short of heroic.

In March, Chicago Commons established our own COVID-19 Relief Fund. This fund helped us offset additional costs related to deep cleaning, facility adaptations, acquiring PPE and hand sanitizer, and to help our families pay for their basic needs such as rent, food, baby necessities, and more. We reopened our early education centers in July and our Adult Day Service center from September to the end of November, while Home Care never stopped. We are grateful to the huge community of supporters – including our donors and board as well as foundations, corporations, and public grants – who provided crucial financial support for keeping our communities as safe and secure as possible during the worst of this pandemic.

COVID-19 laid bare the health, income, racial, and other inequities of our society – inequities that Chicago Commons works to address every day. As the vaccines offer hope to eliminate the virus, we will continue to work in Chicago’s most under-resourced communities to eliminate barriers and help them build the life they want and deserve.

Together, with your support, we are creating a future where all children, families, and seniors have equitable opportunities for success, generation after generation.

Thank you for your commitment to our vision.

Edgar Ramirez  Willard S. Evans, Jr.
President & CEO  Board Chair
While no plan could have predicted the COVID-19 pandemic, Chicago Commons is moving forward, continuing to invest in our programs, people, and future growth. In this fiscal year, we plan to invest nearly $3 million toward initiatives that put us on a pathway to accomplishing our goals, including:

• Enhancements to our staffing to extend our multi-generational service model
• Wage parity and professional development for our staff
• Enhancements to technology, communications, and data systems
• Improvements to facilities and supplies to provide a safe environment for all
MISSION STATEMENT

To empower individuals, families, and communities to overcome poverty and systemic barriers, embrace opportunities, and thrive across generations.

VISION STATEMENT

We envision a future where all children, families, and seniors have equitable opportunities for success, generation after generation.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. Remain a leader in high-quality Early Childhood Education, while expanding Chicago Commons’ programming, increasing mixed-income classrooms, and exploring private-pay centers.

2. Become known as a premier multi-generation provider by expanding and enhancing the Family Hub.

3. Expand Senior Services to reach a broader segment of the Chicago metropolitan region’s aging market through both subsidized and private-pay models.
Chicago Commons has been a cornerstone in Chicago’s most under-resourced neighborhoods for 125 years, preparing us to meet the challenges of COVID-19 with experience and resiliency.

Throughout the pandemic, Chicago Commons adapted our programs to ensure they continued for the benefit of our families. Even while our centers were temporarily closed, our work never stopped. Teachers and family and Adult Day Service workers adapted to a new normal, while Home Care Aides delivered uninterrupted in-home services.

With the help of donors and supporters, Chicago Commons raised crucial emergency funds to adapt to the pandemic and provide direct financial support to the communities we serve.

- $365,000 Distributed to families through our COVID-19 Relief Fund and the Chicago Resiliency Fund
- 75% Provided direct economic assistance to families
- 25% Supported Chicago Commons facility and operations safety

- 700+ Families received support for rent, food, diapers, and other basic needs
- 800+ Essential workers provided with PPE and hand sanitizer
Chicago Commons adopted **Ready Rosie**, an educational platform for teachers to share educational games and expert videos to support parents in teaching their children at home.

**Early Education Centers** adapted to remote learning by providing story time, daily activities, and even family meditation classes on social media.

**Senior Services** activity aides supported seniors from afar to prevent feelings of isolation, even exercising with those who had the technological capability.

**Centers reopened safely** in the summer, with PPE and heightened cleaning and distancing protocols.

**Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot** addressed an audience of nearly 150 Chicago Commons supporters at our virtual Annual Meeting in June and provided words of encouragement to our staff.

**Cradles to Crayons**, Latino Policy Forum, and Robert R. McCormick Foundation provided Chicago Commons with a supply of diapers and baby wipes to distribute to the families in our care.
ACTIVATING CHILDREN’S INHERENT POTENTIAL

At Chicago Commons, we believe in and nurture children’s intrinsic abilities. Using the Reggio Emilia approach, we empower children to author their own learning processes through self-directed, experiential learning in an environment that emphasizes respect, responsibility, and parent engagement.

In a city where only one out of four children is sufficiently ready to enter kindergarten, students in our centers routinely meet or exceed widely-held expectations across various educational domains. Through our four centers and 7 community partners, we reached 949 children in fiscal year 2020, most of them in Head Start or Early Head Start.
**OUR CHILDREN**

- **Number of Children Served:** 949
- **Average Income of a Family at our Centers:** $14,968
- **Children from Single Parent Households:** 87%

**AGES**

- 0 - 2: 25%
- 2 - 3: 19%
- 3 - 5: 46%
- 5 - 12: 5%

**CHILD OUTCOMES**

Chicago Commons achieved CLASS ratings from the Office of Head Start that were higher than the national average in all three domains.

**2019-2020 PRE-K CLASS SCORES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Chicago Commons</th>
<th>National Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Support</td>
<td>6.66</td>
<td>6.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Organization</td>
<td>6.54</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Support</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>2.94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) is an observation tool designed to assess the quality of teacher-child interactions across several dimensions such as instructional formats, teacher sensitivity, and language modeling. Scores on a scale from 1 to 7 indicate the effectiveness of supports being provided to children in the classroom.

**OUR LOCATIONS**

- **Chicago Common Centers**
  - Back of the Yards
  - Garfield Park
  - Humboldt Park
  - Pilsen

- **Community Partner Programs**
  - Austin
  - Calumet Heights
  - Chatham
  - Little Village
  - Rogers Park
  - South Deering
  - Washington Park

Data on this page reflects period from July 1, 2019, to June 30, 2020.
A GIFT THAT INVESTS IN OUR CHILDREN’S FUTURE

Chicago Commons launches Little Scholars Fund to help students continue their early education, even during difficult times.
The Chicago Commons board of directors wanted to alleviate this burden, so they established the Little Scholars Fund. On average, each donation of $1,000 to the fund eliminates a child’s co-pay for an entire year. Supporters can sponsor one or more children, alleviate a financial constraint on our families, and ensure that our early education classrooms have the resources they need for maximum impact.

Donations to the Little Scholars Fund of any size are gratefully accepted. In return, donors receive a personalized thank you and updates from the kids in the classrooms. Donors of $1,000 and more join the Graham Taylor Society, earning special recognition and receiving briefings on our early education programs and the progress of the fund.

At only 4 years old, Dai’jour has a love of computers, is already writing his ABCs, and is excited about learning new things each day. Thanks to the Little Scholars Fund, students like Dai’jour will be able to continue their enrollment at Chicago Commons.

The families of 235 children make co-pays that, while modest compared to the full tuition cost, can present a significant financial challenge.

Chicago Commons serves nearly 1,000 children annually in its Early Education program. With an average household income of about $15,000, most of these families are fully subsidized through the federal Head Start Programs. But the families of 235 children make co-pays that, while modest compared to the full tuition cost, can present a significant financial challenge, even without the economic pressures of the pandemic.

Before he began attending Chicago Commons’ Nia Family Center, Dai’jour was shy and had trouble communicating, according to his mom, Chenequa. Within a year of his enrollment, she noticed that her 4-year-old had become very talkative and learned to interact with his classmates in thoughtful and caring ways.

Then, in July, Chenequa faced a new challenge when, like many of our parents, her hours were reduced due to COVID-19. As a single parent and the sole provider for her household, Chenequa struggled to meet her expenses, including her co-pay for Dai’jour’s education.

< LEFT Chicago Commons’ curriculum utilizes a variety of materials to help children develop fine motor skills.
Through its Family Hub program, Chicago Commons addresses the multifaceted needs of families with young children. The Family Hub brings health and wellness, employment services, and financial wellness to over 300 families with children in our Early Education programs.

This two-generation approach exceeds what can be achieved through separate services for parents and children. The two-generation approach is an anti-poverty strategy that seeks to integrate intensive human capital investments across financial coaching, post-secondary education and career coaching for parents, and high-quality early education for children.
Over 50% of parents across early education centers participated in Family Hub services.

- 70% of parents reported eating healthier and reading nutrition labels.
- 80% of individuals in Financial Capability Programming reduced debt.
- 95% of parents at Chicago Commons completed at least one service referral.

Over 50% of parents across early education centers participated in Family Hub services.

- 180 individuals participated in Health and Wellness programming.
- 122 individuals served by Financial Capability programming.
- 129 individuals served by Employment Services.

60% of participants reported making connections within their cohort that helped them succeed.

Pathways helps parents build social capital.

90% of Pathways for Parents participants report Chicago Commons supports were critical to their success.

Pathways for Parents enables parents in college to overcome barriers to success by providing coaching and help with transportation, meals, and childcare. Through a partnership with City Colleges of Chicago, courses are fully subsidized.

72% of Pathways for Parents participants completed their first year of the program.

Pathways for Parents provides the stepping stones for a career in early childhood education. Starting with two courses at one of our centers, Pathways gives parents with young children the opportunity to launch a career as an early childhood educator.

Data on this page reflects period from July 1, 2019, to June 30, 2020.
FROM HUB TO HOME

Family workers and the COVID-19 Relief Fund help families access crucial resources, including one family’s first apartment.
Chicago Commons compiled a list of over 150 verified resources for families, including food, housing, financial assistance, health care, and more. Employment coaches amassed a list of over 120 local businesses of all sizes accepting applications, from restaurants to Amazon and everything in between. They also worked with families to file unemployment claims.

With support from the COVID-19 Emergency Fund, the mother experiencing homelessness was able to secure a job with the US Postal Service and move with her daughter into their very first apartment. Mom is continuing to work with family workers and Family Hub’s financial coach to ensure that her finances stay on track to keep their apartment. In addition, Nia Family Center was able to buy her a Ventra card to help her get to and from her job and pick up her daughter from Nia.

Mom said her favorite aspect of Nia is “the passion you guys have to help mothers in need,” adding, “I really did appreciate you helping us get to where we are today.”

“The passion you guys have to help mothers in need [is my favorite aspect of Nia]. I really did appreciate you helping us get to where we are today.”  

Family Hub Mother
PROMOTING INDEPENDENCE, DIGNITY, AND RESPECT

Chicago Commons’ Senior Services help seniors and adults with disabilities maintain their independence and quality of life, allowing them to stay in their homes and preventing or delaying the need for institutional care.

As one of the largest non-profit providers of senior care in Chicago, our Senior Services consist of Adult Day Service and Home Care programs. Home care aides provide assistance, friendship, and specialized care for loved ones who may be isolated, while the day services program provides therapeutic care in a community-based group setting along with recreational and social activities.
Chicago Commons’ Adult Day Service and Home Care programs serve nearly 1,500 seniors combined throughout the greater Chicago area.

- Communities where Adult Day Service clients reside
- Communities served by the Home Care program

Data on this page reflects period from July 1, 2019, to June 30, 2020.
A COMMITMENT TO CARE

A Home Care Aide’s commitment to her client grows during COVID-19.
When asked why she believes her client has chosen to continue in-home services amid the pandemic, Ethel explains that she has worked with her client for eight years and has built a close relationship with them and their family, who trust and depend on her.

She added that she doesn’t work alone, and the team at Chicago Commons has rallied to keep Home Care Aides and seniors safe during these times.

“One thing I love about Chicago Commons is how well they have responded to the coronavirus and changed how they are doing things to make sure we are all okay. We are now getting alerts on our phones, they are supporting us, calling to check-in, doing PPE distributions, and making sure nobody is sick or around people who are sick,” she said. “It has really brought us together.”

Even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Ethel Watts exuded passion for her work as a Home Care Aide on Chicago Commons’ Senior Care team. For over 16 years, Ethel has been supporting seniors in their home, meeting a great need for senior care in our community. In 2020, her commitment to her work only grew.

Like many of our Home Care Aides, Ethel is driven by Chicago Commons’ mission.

“I really like taking care of seniors because I consider them a part of my family,” she says. “If I live to be my client’s age, I will want someone to provide that care for me, too.”

During this trying time, Ethel continues to support her client, a visually impaired senior over the age of 80. She visits them five days a week for six hours to assist with cleaning, personal care, preparing meals, and checking in to make sure her client is well.

“I really like taking care of seniors because I consider them a part of my family. If I live to be my client’s age, I will want someone to provide that care for me, too.” Ethel Watts, Home Care Aide

< LEFT Care for our older adults is crucial to all of Chicago Commons’ programs.
**FINANCIALS**

**JULY 1, 2019 – JUNE 30, 2020**

**Assets**
- Cash and cash equivalents: $4,734,043
- Accounts Receivable, net: $5,086,749
- Other Assets: $130,775
- Contributions Receivable: $71,610
- Investments: $99,338
- Property & Equipment, net: $4,075,799
- Beneficial Interest in Trusts: $3,452,162

Total: $17,650,476

**Liabilities**
- Accounts Payable: $1,401,333
- Accrued Expenses: $1,047,656
- Accrued Settlement & Retirement Obligations: $10,000
- Notes Payable: $2,952,005

Total: $5,410,991

**Net Assets**
- Unrestricted: $7,958,149
- Unrestricted Valliere Sustainability Fund: $240,000

Total Unrestricted: $8,198,149

With donor restrictions:
- Time restrictions: $135,025
- Purpose restrictions: $377,147
- Perpetual in nature: $3,529,161

Total Restricted: $4,041,333

Total Restricted and Unrestricted: $12,239,482

Total Liabilities & Net Assets: $17,650,476
Revenue
- Corporations, Foundations & Individuals: $832,973
- Special Events: $424,597
- Total Support: $1,257,570

Fees & Grants
- From Government Agencies: $24,483,100
- Fee for Service Revenue: $3,802,303
- Client Fees & Other Support: $161,873
- Investment Income, net: $8,837
- Other Income: $32,004
- (Decrease) Increase in Beneficial Interest in Trusts: ($50,831)
- Total Support and Revenue: $29,694,856

Expenses

Program Services
- Child Development: $12,945,566
- Senior Services: $12,634,629
- Family Hub: $201,582
- Total Program Services: $25,781,777

Supporting Services
- Management and General: $2,716,462
- Fundraising: $555,669
- Total Supporting Services: $3,272,131
- Total Operating Expenses: $29,053,908
- Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets: $640,948
We are thankful for every person, family, corporation, foundation, and public sector funder that supports Chicago Commons.

**JANUARY 1, 2020 – DECEMBER 31, 2020**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bracket</th>
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<td>Chicago Community COVID-19 Response Fund</td>
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<td><strong>$9,999-$5,000</strong></td>
<td>University of Chicago Service League, Waste Management, Inc., Winnetka Congregational Church</td>
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Torrence and Kimberly Hinton
Nadia Ivanova
Ann and David Jones
Frederick W. Joosten & Elizabeth Burn Joosten
Diana and Neil King
Robert J Krug
Bruce Litt
Jordan Lowe
Daniel Luff
Marquette Bank
Brian Marquez
Clyde McGregor and LeAnn Pope
Amit and Rati Mehta
Miner, Barnhill & Galland, P.C.
James and Suzanne Neaylon
Julio Paz and Veronica Reyes
Ofelia Potter
The Resurrection Project
RSM US LLP
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Robert and Patricia Smietana
John Snyder and Mignon Dupepe
Steven and Michele Sparks
Michael Tadin
Mary Timmons
Jaime Torres
Ultimate Software
United Conveyor Foundation
Paul and Marjorie Valliere
Kiran and Meena Vidak
Iris Witkowsky
John Yeager
Thomas and Amy Ziegenfuss

**$999-$500**
Anonymous
Anonymous
Anonymous
Bob Burns
Lamont Change
Patrick Chew
Kate Connor
Nyla Diab
Douglas, Wendy, and Heather Jordan Family Fund
Jewish Federation of Metro Chicago
Meggan Kehrli
Frank Kelly
Mary Eileen Kennedy
Katheryn Meagher
Jacqueline Parks
Michael Pratt
John and Lucille Ruth
Michael Salvati and Charlotte Rubinstein
John and Ann Snyder
Dan and Joanna Valliere
Chase Zaputil

**$499-$100**
Elizabeth Adkins
Susan Adler
Veronica Altier
Anonymous
The Benevity Community Impact Fund
Lesley and Spencer Bloch
Rebecca Carlbs
Anika Carlson
Annette Champion
Cecilia Chong
Samantha Chow
Stephen and Jane Coley
Gordon Copee
Christopher DeGroot
Episcopal Bishop of Chicago
The Fortnightly of Chicago
Stephanie Giggetts
Leslie and Bill Gitlin
Goldman Sachs & Co. Matching Gift Program
Rachel Goldstein
William Gorman
Charlie Graham
Gregory Guarrine
John Guarrine
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Kathleen Hess
Harold and Mary Hines
Mary Houpt
Dottie Johnson
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Mitchell Katten
Thomas Keim
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Carlo Tamayo
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Andrew and Alyshia Verb
Willard White
Anne Wilson
Ashlyne Wilson
Cheryl Wisniewski
$99 and below
Tim Abraham
Briana Advani
Alison Aguilar
Colin Altevogt
Amazon Smile Foundation
Anonymous
Aaron Apter
Malika Austin
Jennifer Bajer
Kells Barnett
Holly and Kevin Baumgart
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Robert Bernstein
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Sam Bettinardi
Thomas Brennan and Diane Monnich
Travis Burns
Megan Cage
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Ann Collins
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Cheryl A Danner
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David Derbes and Clairan Ferrono
Anna Diekemper
Nick DiGioia
Peter and Julie Donalek
Jack Donovan
Michael Donovan
Jim Draths
Donald Ensing
Tashia Ephraim
Exelon Foundation
Julie Fekete
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Ronald Friend
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Lindsay Stevens
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Linda Thomas
Jason Toon
Jose Valdes
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Carol Votava
Ed Walsh
Emma Walsh
Kathleen Walsh
Edward Wavak
Courtney Wax
Eric Woods
**Tribute gifts:**

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Joan Adler *in honor of Marjorie Biederman*
Joan Adler *in honor of Lili Greenebaum*
Joan Adler *in honor of Susan Kahn*
Joan Adler *in memory of Ann Wolff*
Mary Lou and Bill Anton *in honor of Mary Settanni*
Daniel and Sarah Chavez *in honor of Priscilla Bahena*
Alfred and Terri D’Anconia *in honor of Edgar Ramirez*
Leslie and Bill Gitlin *in memory of John Benjamin*
John Guarrine *in honor of Michael Guarrine*
Kathleen Hess *in honor of Frank Seever*
Betsy Iversen *in honor of Michael Guarrine*
Johanna Luks-Jurutka *in memory of Alfred J Mazzetti, Sr.*
Daniel Miles *in honor of Amit Mehta*
Jamie Sauer *in honor of Joan Adler*
Mary Timmons *in honor of Priscilla Bahena*
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John Yeager
Managing Director, Whitehorse Capital
**Bud Blossom Golf Outing**
Monday, June 28, 2021

**Shoreacres**
1601 Shore Acres Rd., Lake Bluff, Illinois, 60044

**Registration and Lunch**
11:00 AM to 12:30 PM

**Welcome**
12:30 PM

**Shotgun Start**
1:00 PM

**Cocktail Reception and Dinner**
(Pending COVID-19 restrictions)
6:00 PM

For more information please contact Emma Walsh at walshe@chicagocommons.org or 847-714-6752.

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**Pour Out Your Heart for Commons:**
A Virtual Beer & Wine Tasting Fundraiser
Friday, April 30, 2021
5:30 to 7:30 PM

Featuring Joe Miñoso of NBC’s Chicago Fire as Emcee and VIP reception guest.

Presented by Goose Island Beer Company

All proceeds benefit Chicago Commons’ COVID-19 Relief Fund.

[www.chicagocommons.org/poyh2021](http://www.chicagocommons.org/poyh2021)

For more information, contact Cheryl Wisniewski at cheryl@chicagocommons.org or 773-826-4256.

*Sponsorship opportunities available.*