



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES
ILLINOIS

SOS NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2019

BREAKING NEW GROUND

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SQUARE COMMUNITY CENTER **PG 3**

DINING, CONVERSING, RAISING
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**SOS CHILDREN'S
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ILLINOIS

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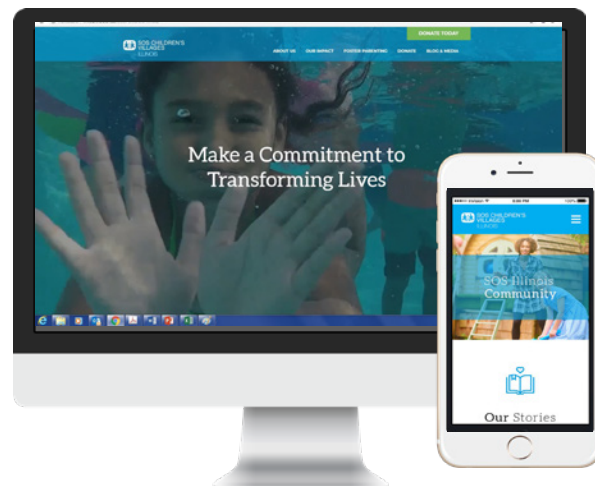
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CEO Message

VILLAGE VOICES: CELEBRITIES HEAR FROM SOS ILLINOIS FOSTER PARENTS

When we think about what “groundbreaking” means, we understand it as both a verb and adjective, whether it be an action with shovels or a description of new ideas. At SOS Illinois, we are proud to be doing both. With the Groundbreaking Ceremony at the site of the new Community Center and through our programs and services, we are digging into the first parcels of land to construct a place where children and families in our communities can together learn more skills, find support, and dream. Each of you, our supporters, are key to our ability to move and create groundbreaking opportunities.

“...our supporters, are key to our ability to move and create groundbreaking opportunities.”

As you read this newsletter, I ask that you share our progress on everything from the latest updates on our community center to the leadership and celebrities lending their voices to the charge to our amazing donor support. I also invite you to learn more about our innovative programs on our brand new website, complete with regular blogs that keep you apprised of the latest events at SOS Illinois and those affecting the foster care system both in Illinois and nationwide. Thank you for helping us break new ground that transforms our children, their families, our communities, and society.



SOS Illinois Foster Parents and staff gather with Christian Bale and David Eigenberg on May 1

As a precursor to Dining & Conversation, Actors Christian Bale and David Eigenberg, and Alex Pissios (President and CEO of Cinespace Chicago Film Studios), joined SOS Illinois Foster Parents, Carmen and Tony Moyet and Jenny and John Wray, to learn more about the rewards and challenges of being a Foster Parent at SOS Illinois.

Each couple shared with our special guests what drew them into our unique mission, and why they chose to commit to serving the children and families in our care.

Though Jenny Wray had grown up in a home that her mother opened to children in foster care, the SOS Illinois mission, quite different from her traditional experience, is what drew her in.

“This model of community-based care—where you actually move into the SOS Illinois homes, where community support is right there on your street, on your block, or across the street—was totally new to me,” Jenny shared. “I can’t imagine doing this in a different way...I can call Ms. Carmen if I need help. I can say, ‘Hey, I know you’ve got a new baby. But what care do you give to a teenager?’ We can just talk about this stuff, and it’s great. You have a whole, built-in network.”

Each Foster Parent offered their hopes for the future at SOS Illinois, made possible

by the dedicated leadership, staff, and supporters of our mission.

“The children at SOS Illinois need love and protection 24/7, just like all children need,” Tony Moyet shared. “And that’s basically what our goal is: to make sure that they



Foster Parent Jenny Wray shares on her experience

always get that. They get protection. They get fed. They get clothed. SOS Illinois provides all of that.”

The greatest testimony of our services comes from our Foster Parents and the children they serve. Hearing firsthand helped our special guests understand the commitment our Foster Parents make to healing and strengthening each life. We are of particular gratitude to our new friends.



Roosevelt Square Community Center funders, area civic leaders, SOS Illinois staff, and Board Members ceremoniously break ground

GROUND BREAKS AT ROOSEVELT SQUARE COMMUNITY CENTER

On June 11, SOS Illinois gathered Roosevelt Square Community Center funders, civic leaders, SOS Illinois Board Members, community advocates, staff, children, and families at 13th Street and Blue Island Avenue for a groundbreaking ceremony to mark the beginning of construction for the project.

SOS Illinois CEO, Tim McCormick, started the event by sharing, “We *all* can make a difference by bringing ourselves *together* to make a difference.” With that, he introduced “Chicago Fire” Actor, David Eigenberg. “It is the essence of being human,” David shared. “Reaching out, and

sharing with each other, bringing each one of us along to the next step, and learning and teaching.”

SOS Illinois assembled community voices who shared the impact the center would have on their lives. Community voices included: Elizabeth Hope, SOS Illinois Foster Parent; Karen Felix, SOS Illinois Program Director for the Roosevelt Square Village; Mary Baggett, ABLA President; Raymond Wilson, SOS Illinois Child Welfare Specialist; Michelle Morris, SOS Illinois Alumna; and Ted Selogie, Swissôtel Chicago General Manager.

Remarks were also shared by JGMA Founder and President, Juan Moreno; SOS Illinois Board President, Jim Wolfe; CHA CEO Eugene Jones, Jr.; 25th Ward Alderman Byron Sigcho-Lopez; 28th Ward Alderman Jason Ervin, Wintrust Senior Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer, Matt Doubleday; Executive Director of Maestro Cares Foundation, Zaidy Cardenas; and Goya Foods General Manager, Rafael Rodriguez.

Following the ceremony, SOS Illinois gathered supporters to break ground at the site. Tim shared that the shovels for the event were specially made for each of our partners by the children at our Roosevelt Square Village. On every shovel, there was a different drawing depicting a service or program that will make the community center important to our families and the surrounding community. SOS Illinois was delighted to offer these shovels as a keepsake to each participant.

As guests enjoyed refreshments, as well as a culinary demonstration offered by Chef Dan McGee from our corporate partner, Swissôtel Chicago, the group was reminded of remarks shared by Juan Moreno, the project’s architect, “SOS [Illinois], they have a legacy, not just for their buildings, but buildings that make a difference in people’s lives, buildings that instigate change . . . so this center is going to break ground in many different ways.”



Shovels decorated by SOS Illinois youth, later gifted to special guests

FAMILY MATTERS: SOS ILLINOIS RESPONDS TO THE IMPACTS OF THE OPIOID CRISIS ON FOSTER CARE

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) reports the Nation is in the midst of an unprecedented opioid epidemic. More than 130 people a day die from opioid-related drug overdoses.

The work SOS Children's Villages Illinois does in our community to keep children healthy and drug-free pairs closely together with how we maintain relationships with the biological parents that may be getting the support and assistance they need to combat addiction.

The opioid epidemic is growing at a rapid rate, bringing more children into foster care in increasingly large numbers. It's more important than ever for children entering foster care under these circumstances to be placed where they will be loved, nurtured, and allowed to harbor a sense of security and peace while their biological parent(s) receive the help they need. At SOS Illinois, we are committed to providing youth with resources and support associated with parental addiction and combat the cycle of opioid use.

Promoting Healing Through our Community

SOS Illinois has a community in place that promotes the healing and wellbeing of the children in our care. We have licensed, clinical therapists on-site at each of our Villages who are dedicated to helping children in foster care recover from their adverse experiences. Clinical services help our youth find healthy solutions for navigating traumas and other difficulties in which they may otherwise use drugs or alcohol to numb or self-medicate.

Our clinical support at SOS Children's Villages Illinois creates an environment of healing that is necessary in order to mend families and prepare children to re-enter into homes when recovery has occurred. Children in foster care at SOS Illinois live with their biological siblings, offering a feeling of comfort and security as they rebuild trust with biological parents.

Additionally, keeping our youth engaged in academic and extracurricular activities reduces the likelihood that they will use or abuse drugs and alcohol. In addition, placing emphasis on education and wellness helps to break the cycle of poverty among youth in care, which runs parallel to the cycle of drug use. As a result, SOS Children's Villages Illinois celebrates a 100% high school graduation rate with our youth. Additionally, the College Bound and Beyond program at SOS Illinois helps prepare those in foster care



for college as well as the workforce. This disrupts harmful patterns that propel at-risk adults into danger, leaving behind legacies of success.

Offering Support for Families Struggling with Substance Abuse

As the children in our care and their lifelong wellbeing are our priority, we find it extremely important to work towards healthy relationships with biological parents recovering from addiction. Through providing unbiased and compassionate support, we encourage the youth in our care to recognize that healing is a full family effort, and that SOS Illinois works to preserve the dignity of each family we serve.

Our programs on education and mental health and wellness work hand-in-hand with the vision of the Family First Prevention Services Act. Our mission is to provide loving, stable environments where children in foster care are able to receive the encouragement, support, and focus they need to move forward in a positive way.

To support these programs, or learn more about the ways that we are focusing on providing holistic mental healthcare to the children and families we serve, visit us online at sosillinois.org.

EXTENDED FAMILY: DINING, CONVERSING, RAISING AWARENESS



Dining & Conversation Luminaries gather with Chicago Mayor Lightfoot, SOS Illinois Board President, Jim Wolfe, and CEO, Tim McCormick

On May 1, 2019, the stars came out once again in support of SOS Children's Villages Illinois. Serving as the launch of Foster Care Awareness Month (honored each May), as well as the #Voices4FosterCare campaign, Dining & Conversation offered the opportunity for guests to dine alongside key supporters and friends in civics, business, entertainment, and more.

Leadership Reception at 210 Design House

The day kicked off with a Leadership Reception hosted by 210 Design House (Snaidero Chicago), where guests were greeted by staff and mingled amidst a collection of some of the world's most premier kitchen and home furnishing brands under one roof. Reception Host, Rama Dandamudi, Snaidero Chicago President and SOS Illinois Board Member, welcomed guests and thanked everyone for taking this time together in support of SOS Illinois. Over the course of the reception, guests enjoyed remarks, dishes prepared by TWO Restaurant and Bar, and time together with a selection of this year's Dining & Conversation Luminaries.



Rama Dandamudi and Sarita Rao pose with Christian Bale

#Voices4FosterCare at Cinespace

Following the Leadership Reception, Christian Bale kicked off our #Voices4FosterCare campaign on DePaul University's Stage 15 of Cinespace Chicago Film Studios during our Conversation with the Media. Other presenters included Alex Pissios, the President and



Mike Landers tours Cinespace with Jonah Siegellak, Board Member

CEO of Cinespace Chicago Film Studios, and a 2018 Luminary for SOS Illinois' Dining & Conversation event; Tim McCormick, CEO of SOS Children's Village Illinois; Michael Landers, Vice President of Operations of Sodexo USA, sponsor of Dining & Conversation; and New Orleans-based actor and SOS Illinois Alumnus, Tevin Marbeth. A precursor to the evening's gala, our Conversation with the Media offered an opportunity for Dining & Conversation Luminaries, supporters, and the press to learn more about why so many notable individuals are interested in joining the conversation on foster care.

VIP Reception with Chicago Mayor Lightfoot

Prior to the start of the evening program, VIP guests – including 2019 Dining & Conversation Sponsor, Sodexo – gathered with Luminaries, Celebrity Chefs, and Chicago Mayor, Lori Lightfoot for a VIP cocktail reception. Lightfoot, who gave the opening remarks for the evening's gala, graciously stopped for photos with Luminaries, Chefs, sponsors, and guests, and offered affirmations for the work at SOS Illinois.



Jim Wolfe and Tim McCormick with Mayor Lightfoot

Additional opening speakers included SOS Illinois Board President, Jim Wolfe; SOS Illinois Alumnus, Tevin Marbeth; 2019 Dining & Conversation Sponsor Representative, Michael Landers (Vice President of Sodexo USA), and 2019 Dining & Conversation Emcee, Micah Materre (WGN TV news anchor).

Guests Dine with Luminaries

After Luminaries were introduced, the well-crafted meal began, led by Chef Tony Priolo of Piccolo Sogno. The meal consisted of

LUMINARIES:

Christian Bale; Lou Canellis; David Eigenberg; Josh Earnest; Gillian Flynn; "Candid" Candace Jordan; Zach Filkins; Leslie Hindman; Adam McKay; Elayne Granger; Jamie Rhee; Scott Turow; Dr. Stuart Strahl; Anna Valencia, Jenny Wray.

CELEBRITY CHEFS:

Lead Chef Tony Priolo; Chef Louie Alexakis; Chef John Coletta; Chef Federico Comacchio; Graham Crowe (Mixologist); Chef Kevin Cuddihee; Chef Chris Gawronski; George Jewell; Chef Tom Van Lente; Chef Dan McGee; Chef Ryan Pitts; Chef Liz Plascencia; Nicole Raftery and Raki Mehra

A special note of acknowledgment to the evening's emcee and longtime SOS Illinois supporter, **Micah Materre**, and for the support and leadership of the 2019 Dining & Conversation Committee Members, **Rama Dandamudi**, **Jonah Siegellak**, and **Jim Wolfe**.

courses prepared by Celebrity Chefs from Chicago's most well-respected restaurants. Luminaries shared a course at each table, rotating throughout the evening, so as to dine and converse with all guests in attendance. As the event progressed, each guest had the opportunity to talk with all the Luminaries.

Gratitude for 2019 Dining & Conversation Sponsor, Sodexo USA

The success of Dining & Conversation 2019 was only made possible due to the generous support and friendship of Sodexo. Sodexo, a worldwide leading provider of integrated food, facilities management, and other services that enhance organizational performance and improve quality of life, centers its mission on corporate responsibility and sustainability. We are honored to welcome Sodexo into the SOS Illinois family and offer our warmest gratitude to Michael and the full Sodexo team. Their kindness and generosity is making a profound impact on the children and families we serve!



Mike Landers gathers with wife, Jill, Sodexo USA team members, and Christian Bale during Dining & Conversation

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GIVING IS SIMPLE. HERE ARE FOUR EASY WAYS:



Through Commemorating Love

Memorial tribute gifts are a wonderful way to make an impact on SOS Illinois and honor the lasting legacy of a loved one who inspired you to care for others.



Through Empowering a Dream

Our Monthly Giving Program, **Dream Makers**, focuses on supporting educational development, health and wellness, and cultural enrichment. Each gift helps to keep our youth at their very best, empowering each child to achieve their dreams.



Through Remembering Our Cause

Include us in your estate plans to continue supporting youth at SOS Children's Villages Illinois for many years to come.



Through Breaking New Ground

We have officially broken ground on the Roosevelt Square Community Center. Support this innovative project and the over 5,000 families it will serve in our community and beyond.



Give online at sosillinois.org/giving, or arrange your gift with our Department of Advancement by calling 312-372-8200.