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SOS ILLINOIS' ROOSEVELT SQUARE COMMUNITY CENTER IS THE FIRST-OF-ITS KIND IN CHICAGO

The 11,000 square foot center was built utilizing sustainable materials and energy to serve more than 5,000 residents in the surrounding communities

March 23, 2021 (Chicago, IL) – SOS Children's Villages Illinois, a non-profit, child-welfare agency that serves at-risk youth and children in foster care, has built an environmentally-friendly facility, the Roosevelt Square Community Center, to provide the children and families with a hub of family reunification, therapeutic, academic, social, civic, enrichment, and recreational activities. This first-of-its-kind community center utilizing sustainable architecture is located at 13th Street and Blue Island Avenue. Information and updates on the new building and its many environmental benefits can be found at <https://www.sosillinois.org/roosevelt-square-community-center/>

The building reflects SOS Illinois' mission to connect children to a community of love. The building's architectural lines gesture upward as a symbol of hope. The community center has been designed to serve as a communal space for community residents - a safe place where residents can meet and connect to public resources, and serve as a learning center, providing financial and educational training.

"Our vision for this community center is as the epicenter for academic, therapeutic, social, and recreational activities for youth in our care," said Tim McCormick, Chief Executive Officer, SOS Children's Villages Illinois. "With the use of these sustainable materials and resources, the Roosevelt Square Community Center will stand as a resource for SOS Illinois families and the surrounding neighborhoods, as well as a beacon of responsible development in the City of Chicago for many years to come."

The center will be the first public building in the city permitted to be fully constructed from Cross Laminated Timbers (CLT). The eco-friendly features of the new center complement the nonprofit's Village Model of Care, a sustainable model of foster care that stabilizes families, strengthens communities, and builds lasting change for future generations.

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The architectural planning, inspired by generous donations, include the use of eco-friendly materials, like **CLT** and **Glulam columns and beams**, as well as sustainable and renewable energy sources, such as **solar panels**, and **energy efficient appliances and light fixtures**. The **site location** and inclusion of an **urban garden**, both further promote the organization's commitment to responsible development.

Since the Center opened in October 2020, the solar panels have tracked the amount of energy produced. After half a year, reports show that 7.32 MWh's of electricity were produced every 3-months. During this time span, the megawatt hour output has been estimated in CO2 reductions and trees planted. We calculate approximately 11,122 lbs. of CO2 are offset with the equivalency of 86 trees planted on a quarterly basis.

Additionally, the building is situated on the site to welcome the community, by providing a generous entry plaza and learning center immediately adjacent to Blue Island Ave.

The construction of the 11,000+ square foot facility, designed by internationally recognized architect Juan Moreno, President and Founder of JGMA, is projected to serve over 5,000 individuals annually from University Village, Lower West Side/Pilsen, Little Village, North Lawndale, and other surrounding neighborhoods. The Center serves as an urban prototype for the delivery of human services that will specifically provide:

- Academic, therapeutic, social, and recreational outlets for youth and families served at SOS Illinois' Villages
- A communal center for neighborhood residents – a safe place where they can meet in the community and connect to public resources and engage in training, activities, seminars, and special events
- Family meeting rooms and learning center providing financial and educational training

The centerpiece Goya Learning Kitchen has been designed to educate the community about health and nutrition, the culinary arts, and hospitality. A key component of the culinary program includes relevant job skills training. The centerpiece of a 3,000 square foot multi-purpose space, the Goya Learning Kitchen was designed to promote culinary demonstrations and hands-on learning.

[About SOS Children's Villages Illinois:](#)

SOS Children's Villages Illinois, founded 30 years ago, is a 501(c)3 child welfare agency that provides an individual licensed home in a supportive, community environment that marshals all the resources needed to help children heal and achieve their permanency goals. The Village Model of Care prioritizes the following: 1) Children live together with their siblings; 2) Children receive care and support from a full-time, professionally trained and licensed Foster Parent; 3) Children thrive in a private, single-family home; 4) Children are supported by the Village, designed as an intentional community of care; and 5) The entire family is supported through our Family Strengthening Services to keep families in-tact whenever possible.

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SOS Children's Villages Illinois unites brothers and sisters in foster care and provides a safe space to heal for at-risk youth. Currently, the organization operates four sites: three Villages providing sibling group foster care at an 18-home Village (opened in 1993) in Lockport, Illinois; a 19-home Village (opened in 2004) in the Auburn Gresham, Englewood neighborhood of Chicago; a 14-home Village (opened in 2014) in the Roosevelt Square Community of Chicago, as well as Casa Tepeyac (acquired in 2011), a facility that offers preventative and in-home services in the Back of the Yards neighborhood of Chicago.

SOS Children's Villages Illinois celebrates a 100% high school graduation rate, compared to a national average of 50% for children in foster care. In 2020, SOS Illinois was awarded Charity Navigator's highest rating of Four-Stars and recognized by GuideStar with a Platinum Seal of Transparency. For more information on SOS Children's Villages Illinois visit: [sosillinois.org](https://www.sosillinois.org).

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