



SOS CHILDREN'S  
VILLAGES  
ILLINOIS

SOS ILLINOIS NEWSLETTER FALL/WINTER 2020

# BUILDING A TOMMORROW BETTER

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION  
PROMISE BRIGHTER DAYS AHEAD

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ROOSEVELT SQUARE  
COMMUNITY CENTER OPENS:  
THE PROMISE IS NOW A REALITY

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We'll make sure you're on the list!

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AND FAMILIES IN OUR CARE.

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CEO Message

## VILLAGE VOICES: DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PROMISE BRIGHTER DAYS AHEAD

*The COVID-19 virus has presented us with challenges that many of us never dreamed of occurring in our lifetime.*

*However, amid this pandemic, there is also a place beyond the fear and anxiety. A place where the strength of the human spirit can call us beyond the moment of adversity so that together we can dream and create a better future.*

*I wish to share with you four insights I have gained since the onset of COVID-19 that keeps me looking forward and gives me hope:*

***First, how interconnected we all are as people. Second, we have learned how resilient we can be as one people. Third, we can reawaken a spirit of sacrifice and compassion for others. Fourth, we can create and maintain safe havens.***

*This forward-looking spirit became a driving force that guided every aspect of the construction of the Roosevelt Square Community Center, the development of a new education department, the creation of a racial justice committee, and celebration of the commitment of our extended family who found ways to support our organization even amidst the unprecedented time of hosting events.*

*These things are very tangible symbols to reinforce the notion if we can dream it, we can create it. We are an interrelated, resilient, compassionate, and united community; and SOS Illinois will not be deterred in our working each day to build a better tomorrow for the children and families in our care.*



As our Villages and services continue to care for children and families of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, SOS Illinois made the commitment this summer to do more to provide diversity and inclusion education for our Foster Parents and staff by creating a specialized Racial Justice Committee.

The goal of the Committee is to “advance the core mission of SOS Illinois by critically assessing and creating strategies with a focus on innovative methods in areas of promoting equality, addressing racism and bias, and advocating for social justice reforms both within the organization and surrounding communities.”

This Committee, made up of staff and Foster Parents, is being led by consultant Jacklyn Jackson, an experienced Human Resource Management professional in the Chicagoland area, with 10+ years experience in Human Resources and Organizational Development, and a former SOS Illinois employee. She shared some thoughts with us about the impact of

racism on the child welfare and foster care systems, and how SOS Illinois can make a difference:

**“I think realizing that many children end up in the foster care system due to systemic bias and proven practices of racism is important for those who work inside the foster care system. SOS Illinois has been a leader in the child welfare industry for many years now. SOS Illinois can lead the industry with these understandings and challenge the status quo one case at a time.”**

The Committee’s first initiative will be to develop a parent handbook that will be provided to biological parents, Foster Parents, and parents in communities served through our programs and services. The handbook will address topics such as: educating parents about their legal rights; training on navigating the court system & DCFS; and advising on utilizing community resources. As this project develops along with others, we look forward to sharing updates and fostering opportunities for culture-sharing and respectful conversation.

## OUR EXTENDED FAMILY: CORPORATE PARTNERS



Television Star David Eigenberg in the new Goya Learning Kitchen with Swissôtel Executive Chef Dan McGee and an SOS Illinois Alumnus for a baking session.

### Evening of Hope 2020

Evening of Hope to support SOS Children's Villages Illinois looked a bit different this year. Honorees, Sponsors, Corporate Partners, and friends gathered virtually to raise funds for programming that serves the brothers and sisters in foster care. Traditionally, the engineering and transportation infrastructure industries have come together to make Evening of Hope the event of the season; and this year was the same in spirit.

We would like to thank our supporters for joining us for another successful celebration that put emphasis on finding our connection. Over 140 guests attended Evening of Hope on Tuesday, November 17 online and raised \$116,500 from sponsorships and ticket sales.

The event celebrated SOS Illinois' 30th Anniversary, as well as the Goya Learning Kitchen at the newly opened SOS Illinois Roosevelt Square Community Center. Special video footage included a baking session with Chicago Fire Actor, David Eigenberg, Swissôtel Executive Chef Dan McGee, and an SOS Illinois Alumnus. The event also honored José Alvarez, Illinois Tollway Executive Director; Jamie Rhee, Chicago Department of Aviation Commissioner and Omer Osman, Illinois Department of Transportation Acting Secretary who shared remarks. The evening was rounded out with music, cookies, and fun.

*Special thanks to Event Chair, John Trotta, and the fundraising committee: Thomas F. Carey, III, Dave Crosson, Wes Hampsch, Rashod Johnson, Kim Morreale, Mary Person, Amar Rajpurkar, Chuck Stenzel, and Noreen Zuniga for helping to bring the event to life. Additionally, Evening of Hope 2020 would not have been*

*possible without the generous support of this year's 60+ sponsors, who showed tremendous dedication to the children served at SOS Illinois.*



2020 Evening of Hope Gold Sponsors.

# ADAPT IN A YEAR OF MANY CHANGES



*Volunteers check in staff at the Related Lendlease Annual Charity Golf Classic.*

## Related Lendlease Charity Golf Classic

Our extended family at Related Midwest and Lendlease sponsored their 17th Annual Charity Golf Classic at Harborside International Golf Course on September 17, 2020. Even though COVID-19 made this event look much different and smaller than usual, the enthusiasm and energy were still there in volumes. This year's Annual Charity Golf Classic showed that even in unprecedented times of uncertainty, there can still be a lot of good happening, which really embodied the spirit of this event.

This year, the Golf Classic raised over \$300,000 to financially impact three charities in the Chicagoland area - SOS Children's Villages Illinois among them. We are grateful for the backing of the generous and loyal sponsors at the Golf Classic, which included Snaidero, Norman Mechanical, Amberleaf Cabinetry, and more.

We offer sincere gratitude to Related Midwest, Lendlease, and all participating business supporters. With your help, we are able to provide at-risk children safe spaces to grow, heal, and achieve their permanency goals.

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*2020 Related Midwest/Lendlease  
Charity Golf Classic  
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*The 2020 Chicago Regatta Presented by Wintrust.*

## Chicago Regatta Presented by Wintrust

The events of the 2020 Chicago Regatta were altered to fit this year's pandemic. Yet, the core purpose of raising funds for three Chicago area charities remained front and center. The Chicago Regatta proved the event serves as a showcase for the waterfront community's shared generosity and love of the water, and compassion for children.

The Chicago Regatta Presented by Wintrust hosted a number of on-water events for boaters including buoy racing, a distance race, and a casual race. Additionally, the Chicago Yacht Club held an online silent auction and virtual event where guests could join and listen to the music featuring the Sons of Chicago band and Mount Gay Rum Specialty Cocktails.

SOS Illinois feels immensely grateful for the generous support of the Chicago Yacht Club leadership and members, and for Wintrust's investment in youth and families. This year's event raised \$47,000 for SOS Illinois, which surpassed last year's donation and will go directly towards benefitting the programs and services at SOS Illinois.



*The Chicago Regatta Host  
and Presenting Sponsor.*

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## ROOSEVELT SQUARE COMMUNITY CENTER OPENS:

SOS Illinois is proud to share the launch of the Roosevelt Square Community Center, a first-of-its-kind facility in Chicago, took place this past October. In celebration of the opening of the Center under incredibly difficult circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic, instead of hosting a traditional ribbon cutting ceremony where donors, friends, and staff gathered at the Center, SOS Illinois brought the Center to them through a virtual tour of the building.



*The Center from the corner of 13th St. and Blue Island Ave.*

### Roosevelt Square Community Center: The Overview & Design

The Center, an 11,000+ square foot facility designed by internationally recognized architect Juan Moreno, will serve over 5,000 individuals annually from University Village, Lower West Side/Pilsen, Little Village, North Lawndale, and other surrounding neighborhoods. The Center is now a hub of family reunification, therapeutic, academic, social, civic, enrichment, and recreational activities for the over 100 children and families at our Roosevelt Square Village homes and the surrounding community.



*The Peg Donovan Entryway.*

### A First for Chicago's Architecture: The Eco-Friendly Features at the Center

The Center is the first public building in the city permitted to be fully constructed from Cross Laminated Timbers (CLT), as well as Glulam columns and beams. The entire structure is made from environmentally friendly materials and puts the Center at the forefront of sustainable architectural design in the City of Chicago. 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.



*Through a generous donation, the Center has solar panels secured to roof that will generate 58% of its power needs.*

The architectural planning, inspired by generous donations, included 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, 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.



*The David Hoffman and Ruth Callaghan Community Center Room showcases the building's CLT and glulam columns and beams.*

### Goya Learning Kitchen: A Learning Pro

The Goya Learning Kitchen is designed to educate the children and families at SOS Illinois and the surrounding community with a training program for the culinary arts and hospitality industry. The program offers nutrition and culinary education, as well as relevant job skills training.

The Goya Learning Kitchen resides in the Center's 3,000-square-foot multi-purpose room called The David Hoffman and Ruth Callaghan Community Center Room. The

design was intentionally created for culinary demonstrations, hands-on learning experiences, and special event entertaining space.

Additionally, there are stations for cooking instruction with student prep areas to promote culinary and nutritional education programming. The Goya Learning Kitchen features professional-grade appliances provided by the generous donations of Sub-Zero, Wolf, and Cove, as well as kitchen design and cabinetry by Snaidero.

**To learn more about the Center, take our self-guided virtual tour, a 12-stop series of videos, at [sosillinois.org](https://www.sosillinois.org)**

# THE PROMISE IS NOW A REALITY



*The Knight Engineers & Architects Learning Annex.*

## **Knight Engineers & Architects Learning Annex: Educating Our Children & Community**

The Knight Engineers & Architects Learning Annex allows SOS Illinois to share an important resource with our children and families, as well as our surrounding communities. In the Learning Annex is the Specialist Staffing Group Computer Lab, as well as a training center that will provide ongoing workshops and seminars to promote lifelong learning.

Programming in the Learning Annex is supported through the Jill L. Meinzer Scholarship Fund, which will help youth and young adults reach their potential, become self-sufficient, and have the foundation in place for a life of achievement and professional satisfaction. Job skills training and education programming at the Center will include tutoring, college preparedness, career days, career counseling, mentorships, job shadowing, internships, and resume writing and interview preparations.

## **Program to Create Lasting Change**



*The Goya Learning Kitchen designed for culinary demonstrations.*

## **Staff Offices and Meeting Rooms: Strengthening Families & Transforming Lives**

The SOS Illinois Administrative Office for the Roosevelt Square Village is in the west section of the Center. Our case management staff, clinical therapists, our Village Director, business manager, and education team provide comprehensive wrap-around services to the children and families in our care, and soon to the surrounding community.



The design of the administrative area included both individual staff offices and open office space and generous amounts of light on either side of the Center. Rooms identified as spaces for therapy sessions and biological family visits promote a welcoming and nurturing environment. The Staff Lounge and Common Area include both individual booths and countertop dining space, which double as small group meeting areas. SOS Illinois staff members already have moved into the site. They are energized by the Center and see their new space as the place where a collective mindset has the power to transform vulnerable lives.

SOS Illinois is immensely grateful for the support of our generous **benefactors** and **in-kind donors** who helped make the Center a reality. Through your kind support, we have built a site that will continue SOS Illinois' mission of caring for children in need, strengthening families, and transforming lives.

Our benefactors (\$100,000 and above) include: The Bohne Foundation, Chicago Housing Authority, Goya Foods, Inc., Gurtz Foundation, Kathleen & John Buck, Knight Engineers & Architects, Inc., Lendlease, Carol & Lawrence Levy, Maestro Cares Foundation, McKay Family Foundation, Jill L. Meinzer Scholarship Fund, Mission & Ministry Impact, Related Midwest, Skender Foundation, Sky Ranch Foundation, SOS Children's Villages USA, Specialist Staffing Group, Thunder Cares, and Wintrust Financial Corporation.

Our in-kind donors include: All American Exterior Solutions, All Sealants, All-Tech Decorating Co., Amberleaf Cabinetry, Architectural Window Treatments (AVDG), Artlow Systems Inc., Contract Flooring, Denk & Roche, The Dulanski Group, GEI Testing Inc., Granite Innovations, Gurtz Electric Co., Imperial Crane, Interior Concepts, Lendlease, Long Island Fire, Mobile Air, Multivista, Norman Mechanical, Northern Glass Inc., Ozinga, Prime Scaffold, Pryor Signage, Quality Excavating, Related Midwest, RG Construction, S Mechanical, Sherwin Williams, Snaidero, Specialty Construction, Trice Construction, Twin Oaks, Unity Fencing, US Alliance Fire Protection, and Verde Solutions.

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