



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES
ILLINOIS

SOS ILLINOIS NEWSLETTER FALL 2019

STATE OF THE HEART

ADOPTION AWARENESS:
THE CALL TO GIVE LOVE

PG 4

STATE-OF-THE-HEART
PARTNERSHIPS

PG 5-6



**SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES**
ILLINOIS

IN THIS ISSUE



HAVE YOU BEEN FOLLOWING
OUR TWELVE WEEKS OF GIVING?
CHECK US OUT ON SOCIAL MEDIA
TO SEE A DOZEN WAYS TO MAKE
AN IMPACT THIS SEASON.

DO WE HAVE YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS?

Don't miss out on event announcements and Village news.
Send your e-mail address to:

TCISARIK@SOSILLINOIS.ORG

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

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

**216 W. Jackson Blvd., Ste. 925
Chicago, IL 60606**

P (312) 372-8200
F (312) 372-8202

LOCKPORT VILLAGE

**17545 Village Ln.
Lockport, IL 60441**

P (815) 740-7280
F (815) 740-7282

CHICAGO VILLAGE

**7600 S. Parnell Ave.
Chicago, IL 60620**

P (773) 783-0500
F (773) 783-0600

CASA TEPEYAC

**4538 S. Hermitage Ave.
Chicago, IL 60609**

P (773) 247-7725
F (773) 247-7794

ROOSEVELT SQUARE VILLAGE

**1200 W. Roosevelt Rd.
Chicago, IL 60608**

P (312) 243-1901
F (312) 243-3086

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jim Wolfe, President
John Trotta, Vice President
Jeff Riemer, Secretary
Christina Abbott, Treasurer
Don Biernacki
Mary Patricia Burns
Tarrah Cooper Wright
Rama Dandamudi
Rich Gamble
David Hoffman
Laurie Holmes
Sister Mary Ellen Lacy
Jonah Siegellak

CEO MESSAGE

Page 2

VILLAGE VOICES: APPRECIATING OUR CARE TEAM: CASE MANAGERS AND CLINICIANS

Page 2

ROOSEVELT SQUARE COMMUNITY CENTER CONSTRUCTION UPDATES

Page 3

FAMILY MATTERS: ADOPTION AWARENESS: THE CALL TO GIVE LOVE

Page 4

EXTENDED FAMILY: STATE-OF-THE-HEART PARTNERSHIPS

Pages 5-6

MAKE A GIFT THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Page 7



facebook.com/soscvi

twitter.com/sosillinois

tinyurl.com/soscvi

instagram.com/sosillinois

linkedin.com/company/sos-children's-villages-illinois

pinterest.com/sosillinois



CEO Message

VILLAGE VOICES: APPRECIATING OUR CARE TEAM: CASE MANAGERS AND CLINICIANS

When we consider the phrase “state-of-the-art,” we think of businesses and organizations that are at the forefront of their fields to make better and lasting change. At SOS Illinois, as we build the future of foster care, we do so to ensure that every child receives the love needed to succeed.

Through our Village model of care, we take an innovative approach to foster care by providing comprehensive wrap-around services. We meet children where they are, and surround them with the care of full-time Foster Parents, caseworkers, clinicians, and Village staff. This outpouring of resources allows children to heal, grow, and rebuild their lives . . . and with that, we do the incredible work of transforming the state of each child’s heart.

“ we do the incredible work of transforming the state of each child’s heart... ”

As you read this newsletter, I ask that you share with others SOS Illinois’ progress on the community center construction project, our initiatives to bring awareness as to the importance of adoption for children in foster care, and how our partners help us trail blaze the child welfare industry.

Your support keeps us innovating. Your belief in our mission challenges us to remain forward-looking as to what it means to provide the highest quality programs and services to children in care. I thank you, as your support makes us state-of-the-heart.



SOS Illinois Case Management and Clinical staff gathered in October for a special recognition luncheon

At SOS Children’s Villages Illinois, the success of our community is the result of many hands and much hard work. Our Case Management and Clinical team provide compassionate support and advocacy for the children in our care as they transition into our Villages, navigate the Illinois court system, and make strides towards permanency.

The work of our team heals, strengthens, and transforms lives of children; therefore SOS Illinois desires to take every chance available to celebrate their dedication. This October, we celebrated our Case Management and Clinical team for their tireless work towards building the future of foster care.

Insights From a Member of Our Care Team

Lisa B., a Child Welfare Specialist, offered some insight to us about her journey towards helping to create stability and healing for children in care.

“I always knew I wanted to pursue a career in mental health,” Lisa shared. “A friend recommended me to SOS Illinois to start this journey. It was very nice to see a model that focused on keeping a family together after the children are in care.”



Staff bonded and played games to promote teamwork

As a member of our Case Management team, Lisa works closely with both our professional Foster Parents and biological families to ensure that the youth in our care have the support, resources, and careful insight needed for a return home, independence, or movement into a forever family through adoption.

“It was great getting my first successful return home then case closure. I was so proud of the family and myself for all the work that went into it to help the youth reach permanency.”

Dedicated staff members like Lisa make it possible to offer transformational support and care. We’re proud of each staff member and look forward to the incredible ways they will impact our community in the future.



**SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES
ILLINOIS**

FUTURE HOME OF THE ROOSEVELT SQUARE COMMUNITY CENTER

A large sign will soon be displayed on the land of the future Roosevelt Square Community Center to share our excitement with the community

ROOSEVELT SQUARE COMMUNITY CENTER UPDATES

About the Roosevelt Square Community Center Project

Groundbreaking plans got underway in fall 2019 as SOS Children’s Villages Illinois began clearing the land for the future site of the Roosevelt Square Community Center at 13th Street and Blue Island Avenue. The community center, an 11,000-square-foot space, will serve the children and families at our Roosevelt Square Village and surrounding communities. Programs will include academic, therapeutic, social, and recreational support; multi-use spaces for community members to connect to public resources and engage in training, activities, and events; as well as a signature culinary kitchen providing food and nutrition

education, and jobs-skills training for the hospitality industry. In addition to the over one hundred children and families cared for by SOS Illinois, more than 5,000 people from the surrounding neighborhoods will be served through the creation of the center.

Recent Community Center News and Updates

This fall, SOS Illinois brought excavators on-site. As progress was made on the 12-month long project, SOS Illinois took time to meet up with the community center project architecture team from JGMA. Dan Spore, JMGA Senior Project Manager, sat with us to answer a few questions regarding the process of creating the community

center design and elaborate on new, never-before-used materials in Chicago, which will be incorporated in this project. Once built, the center will be a place of transformation for the community and city at large.

“One of the most important issues for this project is to make sure the space is really multi-functional. ally make this building the heart of the community,” Spore shared. “This project is going to be the first Chicago project that’s been permitted where we build using cross-laminated timber... it’s exciting for us that we get to bring new technology in.”

Staying Updated on the Community Center Project

Throughout the course of the construction project, visit the SOS Illinois blog to see videos, pictures, and updates on the progress of the building, the innovative materials used in its construction, as well as ways to invest in the Community Center. We look forward to sharing each milestone reached in the development of this important community resource.

Support the Roosevelt Square Community Center

To contribute to the project, please visit us online at sosillinois.org or contact our Development Department at 312-372-8200.



Ongoing construction of the Roosevelt Square Community Center during fall 2019

FAMILY MATTERS: ADOPTION AWARENESS MONTH: THE CALL TO GIVE LOVE

Each November is recognized as National Adoption Awareness Month in the United States. The particular focus of this month is on celebrating and raising awareness of permanency achieved through adoption of children in foster care.

At SOS Illinois, we work diligently to ensure that the siblings in our care find stability in “forever homes” through reunification, independence, or adoption. We’re taking a moment this month to celebrate the adoptions achieved at SOS Illinois and beyond.

This November, we sat down with J’ai Brown—a friend and supporter of SOS Illinois who was adopted out of foster care—to talk about her experience within the foster care system and her ongoing journey of self-discovery, cacy, and hope.

Adoption through Foster Care

Similar to many children in foster care, including at SOS Illinois, J’ai’s placement in foster care—and later adoption— difficult for both her and her birth family. J’ai’s biological mother, who eventually determined that foster-to-adoption was the right path for her and her child, took time to decide what was best.

“It was a really hard decision for her. She actually kept me up until around six months or so...She was leaving me with family and friends; she was basically trying to keep me in the friend and family network. The state stepped in at some point and said ‘you need to put her into the system because you aren’t able to care for her.’”

After formally entering into foster care at six-months-old, J’ai shared the process of having lived in two foster homes before eventually being placed with her adoptive family.

“The first visit I had with my adoptive father, I actually called him ‘Daddy,’” J’ai smiled as she shared. “I connected to my father relatively early. We actually have a very strong relationship - I am a super, uber ‘Dad  Girl.’”

Adoption and Identity

While J’ai’s relationship with her dad felt almost instinctive, discovering her identity as an adopted daughter has been a process; one that she worked through within her own family, her network of friends and mentors, and her academic and professional careers.



J'ai is boldly empowering others to bring awareness to adoption

From first discovering the details of her early life through unsealing her adoption records, to exploring adoption therapy and uncovering the roots of her emotions, to embracing all her roles in life as a wife, mother, mentor, and friend, being adopted has shaped J’ai presence and purpose in the world.

“[My adoption] has absolutely influenced the way I move through friendships, through my relationship with my husband, and absolutely through my relationship with my daughter.”

The Call to Love: Advocacy During Adoption Awareness Month

We are joining J’ai this month in raising awareness of the importance of adoption, and the ways that we can all be advocates for those who have been adopted or are awaiting an adoptive family.

“It is really, really important that we encourage, we support, we talk about the positive aspects of adoption,” J’ai shared at the end of our interview. “That we talk about the positive aspects of the work that organizations like SOS [Illinois] do to keep families together; to build that confidence, to inspire that concept of family.”

*To learn more about how SOS Illinois is participating in Adoption Awareness Month, read stories about the adoption of SOS Illinois families, and view our powerful interview with J’ai, **check out our blog at sosillinois.org/connect.***

EXTENDED FAMILY: STATE-OF-THE-HEART PARTNERSHIPS



Evening of Hope Committee Members, SOS Illinois CEO Tim McCormick, and SOS Illinois Board President Jim Wolfe gather with VIP Honorees

Evening of Hope 2019

Evening of Hope is SOS Children's Villages Illinois' annual fall event that raises awareness and funds to support the programs at SOS Illinois. This year's event invited guests to join us in raising hope for siblings in foster care with an evening of fun, friendship, fundraising. We would like to thank our supporters for joining us for another successful celebration that put emphasis on innovation, community, and hope. This year we honored our builders and visionaries, who empower us to build the future of foster care.

Over 600 guests attended Evening of Hope on Thursday, October 10 at the Museum of Contemporary Art and raised \$300,000 from sponsorships, ticket sales, and in-kind support. The event featured DJ R3DLINE, delicious food, cocktails, and plenty of conversation.

Top sponsors gathered for a VIP reception hosted for attendees to learn more about the mission at SOS Illinois, and to enjoy time with our VIP Honorees, José Alvarez, Illinois Tollway Executive Director; Jamie Rhee, Chicago Department of Aviation Commissioner; Rocky Donahue, PACE Executive Director; Omer [redacted], Illinois Department of Transportation Acting Secretary; [redacted] M. Marcheschi, METRA Chief Operating Officer and Deputy Executive Director; and Retired Judge Gloria Chevere, Chicago



Event Chair and SOS Illinois Board of Directors Vice President, John Trotta, grabs a quick photo with Evening of Hope guests

Transit Authority Board Member.

Special thanks to Event Chair, John Trotta, and the fundraising committee (Thomas F. Carey, III, Dave Crosson, Rashod Johnson, Tim Martin, Amar Rajpurkar, Chuck Stenzel, and Noreen Zuniga) for helping to bring the event to life. Additionally, Evening of Hope 2019 would not have been possible without the generous support of this year's sponsors, including Diamond Sponsor, WSP; Platinum Sponsor, HNTB; and Gold Sponsors, F.H. Paschen, Omega, TranSystems, and Powering Chicago. The event's full list of sponsors is available at sosillinois.org.



**POWERING
CHICAGO**
IBEW 134/NECA

2019 Evening of Hope Diamond,
Platinum, and Gold Sponsors

Did you know that you can download photos from Evening of Hope and read more about all of our fall events on our blog? Visit us online at sosillinois.org/connect.



SOS Children's Villages Illinois CEO, Tim McCormick; Related Midwest Senior Vice President, Don Biernacki; and Lendlease Senior Vice President, Bert Brandt

Related Midwest/LendLease Charity Golf Classic

Our extended family at Related Midwest and Lendlease sponsored their 16th Annual Charity Golf Classic at Harborside International Golf Course on September 12, 2019. The event was once again sold out with over 300 golfers and the backing of 70+ sponsors, including Snaidero, AT&T Business, Amberleaf Cabinetry, and more. Proceeds benefited SOS Children's Villages Illinois and two other charities impacting children and families in the Chicagoland area. SOS Illinois received over \$200,000, and we offer our sincere gratitude to all who supported the event. With your ongoing partnership, we are able to provide at-risk children safe spaces to grow, heal, and achieve their goals.



2019 Related Midwest/Lendlease
Charity Golf Classic
Presenting Sponsors

Vines to Villages

SOS Illinois joined friends and corporate partners for Vines to Villages on September 19. Hosted by Snaidero at 210 Design House, the event invited guests to learn more about SOS Illinois while enjoying an exclusive reception and the rare opportunity of being among the first to try three wines from the Benziger Family 2017 reserve collection.

Additionally, three dishes were provided by Chef Tony Priolo of Piccolo Sogno rounding out the delightful experience for guests to enjoy alongside their wines.

Vines to Villages focused on "setting the table" for the spring event Dining & Conversation. These conversations included appearances from key supporters of SOS Illinois, Board members, longtime partners, and the 2019 Dining & Conversation sponsor, Sodexo.



Vines to Villages Hosts and Partners



Swissôtel Chicago's Ted Selogie and Dan McGee stop for a photo with special guest and presenter, Chris Benziger, at 210 Design House

Chicago Regatta Presented by Wintrust

More than 1,000 participants and 100 boats lined up at Monroe Harbor on September 14 at the Chicago Regatta presented by Wintrust. The Chicago Yacht Club hosted the third annual charity event, raising funds for three Chicagoland charities, including SOS Children's Villages Illinois. The regatta hosted a number of on-water events for boaters, including a buoy race, a distance race, and a casual race. Additionally, the Chicago Yacht Club welcomed boating participants and guests to attend the "Sweet Home Chicago" post-race dock party and silent auction.

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 is evident through the Chicago Yacht Club's continued support of SOS Illinois families and youth.



FOUNDED 1875

The Chicago Regatta host and presenting sponsor

SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES ILLINOIS

216 W. Jackson Boulevard, Suite 925
Chicago, IL 60606

NON-PROFIT ORG

U. S. POSTAGE

P A I D

CHICAGO, IL

PERMIT NO. 1513



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES
ILLINOIS



MAKING SEASONS BRIGHT.

This holiday season, give a gift that builds the future.
support children today at [sosillinois.org](https://www.sosillinois.org).