



## Community Investment Strategy 2017

Chicago Cares mobilizes volunteers to build a stronger, more unified Chicago. Throughout our twenty-five year history, our hands-on volunteer programs have met immediate needs, while simultaneously connecting people, breaking down barriers, and building trust and empathy among groups of diverse Chicagoans, leading to long-term transformation. Our volunteers are empowered to solve the city's most pressing challenges.

Right now, our city is facing unprecedented levels of violence and division, and fear and misunderstanding often reign. Chicago Cares is in a unique position to be an integral part of the way forward. As the leading mobilizer of volunteers in Chicago, we must continue to use the volunteer experience as a catalyst for change. We can't move forward until we get to know each other and develop respect and understanding.

**In 2017, Chicago Cares is launching a new Community Investment Strategy to expand our high-impact volunteer programs and deep community collaboration to create sustainable change in Chicago.**

The Community Investment Strategy will allow Chicago Cares to invest in the workforce, institutions, and programs of very high-need communities, and will give our team the flexibility to test, adapt, and evaluate new programs to maximize our impact. By pairing volunteer projects that create direct community impact with resources to build the local capacity of nonprofits and community leaders, we can build on the strengths of Chicago communities and our successful history to collaboratively advance more sustainable solutions for Chicago.

Activities will include:

- Hiring a Director of Program Innovation with extensive community organizing and volunteer mobilization experience to develop new program models and oversee the Community Investment Strategy.
- Hiring local leaders in three high-need communities to serve as part-time Chicago Cares Community Liaisons, identify local needs and opportunities, and build relationships and projects from the ground up.

# CHICAGO CARES

- Catalyzing community change by partnering with leading city organizations, such as LISC Chicago and the Mikva Challenge, on their new and existing community development strategies.
- Designing and implementing innovative and community-driven volunteer projects that will leverage Chicago Cares' available resources, including thousands of annual volunteers and supplies.
- Creating more facilitated volunteer connection and education about the issues that face our city at our projects.
- Ensuring participation of community members in our projects through enhanced volunteer and community outreach efforts.
- Mobilizing the next generation of community leaders by providing stipends to high school students to participate in volunteer project design and implementation.
- Engaging the Chicago Police Department in mutual education and hands-on volunteer opportunities in order to rebuild trust at the community level.
- Investing resources directly into the targeted communities by renting local office and meeting space, procuring project supplies and food from local vendors, and providing incentives for community members to participate.
- Investing in a program evaluation plan and instruments that will allow Chicago Cares to demonstrate the long-term impact of our community work.

Chicago Cares invites all those committed to a stronger, more unified Chicago to support the new Community Investment Strategy. Investors of \$1,000 or more will be recognized in Chicago Cares' 2017 Annual Report and in other publications as appropriate. Please contact Jenné Myers, CEO, at (312) 780-0800, ext. 130 or [jmyers@chicagocares.org](mailto:jmyers@chicagocares.org) for more information.