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THE

**SOUTHWEST
COLLECTIVE®**



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A Letter From Us

In a season where divisiveness is the default, it's easy to lose sight of the reason that The Southwest Collective exists: to unite our neighbors in the work of increasing our quality of life on the southwest side of Chicago.

It's important to re-center the fact that we don't do transactional charity. Our work models for others simple acts of peace, kindness and empathy, which is desperately needed right now.

We hope you're inspired to lend a hand where you can, in support of these popular programs, so we can continue to offer them to our communities with care and a high level of quality.

In the coming year, there will be many new opportunities to connect with us and learn more about our work - and we will welcome you warmly!

Mayra, Adriana, Diane, Renee & Inime
The Southwest Collective Board of Directors





HOW IT WORKS

Freebies for Families provides a safe space to pick up free necessities, like a sleeve of diapers or a few gently used onesies, connect to wraparound services and meet other parents. Each month, we set up at a federally qualified healthcare center (FQHC) or local school, so parents can get what they need and "build their village."



78%

of attendees report an annual household income of < \$35,000*.

54%

of event attendees report utilizing Snap, WIC and/or Medicaid*. **It still isn't enough.**

* Source: Southwest Collective Survey Responses



POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

We aim to improve birth to five health outcomes for southwest side kids, by connecting parents to resources, necessities and each other. Expansion of this program would allow us to increase enrollment in early childhood programs, lactation consultations and postpartum mental health support.



HOW IT WORKS

In the shadow of Midway Airport, it's hard to compete as a small business. National chains, big box stores and franchises come with big budgets and the expertise to scale. We're here to level the playing field. Grant funding, from state and county sources, allows us to compensate subject matter experts who prefer to work on a consultatory basis. SMEs provide direct assistance, intervening before a business is forced to close its doors.



SUCCESS STORY: LA CHAPARRITA #2

We stopped into La Chaparrita #2, and owner Maria shared that the building and kitchen really needed some upgrades and repair. Maria had taken out two small loans to repair the plumbing leak and electrical box, which needed to be repaired to keep the kitchen in compliance with IDPH regulations. We assisted Maria with her application for the B2B grant and she received an award to offset her costs!



POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

We wish to designate our organization as a business development center or similar, in order to continue providing bilingual assistance to start up businesses in our community.



HOW IT WORKS

Young adults have the potential to change history. We just have to light the way. We visit CPS high school classrooms to guide students through identifying an issue, launching a letter writing campaign, and engaging directly with elected officials.



20%

Average amount of residents in Archer Heights, Brighton Park & Gage Park who are undocumented & unable to vote*

15%

of registered voters in wards 12, 13, 14, 15, 22 & 23 voted in the 2024 Democratic Primary*

*Source: Chicago Health Atlas & Chicago Board of Elections



POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Online surveys, meme-ified talking points, community walks, public forums, and visits to public school classrooms...! These elements all work together to expose multiple points of view - and facilitate respectful, invigorating debates that do not devolve into chaos or end in an echo chamber.



HOW IT WORKS

Offsetting air, noise, and other pollution in a heavily industrial community is no easy feat. In partnership with CDPH and Morton Arboretum, we spent the past two years working to improve our tree canopy.

19%

Average tree canopy coverage city wide*

8-15%

Average tree canopy coverage on the southwest side*

733

trees requested & planted on the southwest side**

* Source: Morton Arboretum

** Source: CHI 311



POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Trees are a pain point with homeowners, due to the city's past shortcomings with tree pruning. Now that regular prunings are scheduled and requests can be made through 311, we aim to educate & encourage tree requests. More trees can help offset carbon emissions and cool our overheated streets and sidewalks. We want to place planters in busy streets to calm traffic as well.



WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Car culture rules the southwest side - and it's dangerous for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers. We responded to the tragic deaths of our neighbors Jiekun Xu and Charlie Mills with a campaign to improve traffic safety on Pulaski. Neighbors, elected officials, media, and transit advocates have all taken notice.



500+

people responded to our online survey, joined our series of in-person walks between 40th and 71st St, and came to our community meeting about traffic safety on Pulaski.

* Source: Southwest Collective Survey Responses

36

monthly community bike rides since 2020

9

monthly bike rides in Garfield Ridge & Clearing

ADVOCATING FOR CONCRETE CHANGES

Working with the Chicago Department of Transportation and local elected officials, we advocated for pedestrian-friendly infrastructure like pedestrian islands and bumpouts on Pulaski—and protected bike lanes on Archer.

Pedestrian-friendly infrastructure would make it easier for our neighbors to embrace biking, especially for short trips.



WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Our communities face deep-rooted systemic inequity when it comes to food access. As a multi-year partner in the Healthy Chicago Equity Zone initiative, we are dedicated to increasing access to fresh, nutritious food...and building the infrastructure needed to get there.



31%

SW side residents who face low food access (10% higher than citywide mean)*

56%

Households below the poverty line who do not receive SNAP benefits

* Source: Chicago Health Atlas

384

Food rescue & redistribution missions since Jan 2024

IMPROVING INFRASTRUCTURE, INTERVENING AT CRITICAL POINTS

We have collaborated with several FQHCs, nonprofit organizations and environmental coalitions to provide more 24/7 access points such as fridges and dry food boxes. We also piloted emergency food parcel delivery, to address acute and immediate needs produced by long wait times at social service offices, or difficulty in accessing distributions in a timely manner.



HOW IT WORKS

Our weekly summer art classes focus on channeling "big feelings" into self expressive media. Chicago DCASE funded these art sessions, which were held at a cafe in Archer Heights and at our weekly group therapy session for asylum seekers in Pilsen.



336

families joined our weekly group therapy and art making sessions in spring 2024*

**Source: CPS Parent U sign in data*



POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Working with new neighbors, we led art activities with youth while adults entered Spanish language group therapy sessions. We plan to move these sessions into CPS Parent University locations, as well as other public spaces, to continue important (and sometimes tense or sensitive) conversations as new neighbors settle in our communities.

Expenditures



Administrative Costs: 6.6%

We typically reserve a standard 10% De Minimis rate when budgeting for grant awards.

Office Expenses: 6.6%

The cost of doing business. This year, we vacated our physical space to further cut costs. Everyone works remotely.

Supplies & Misc: 2%

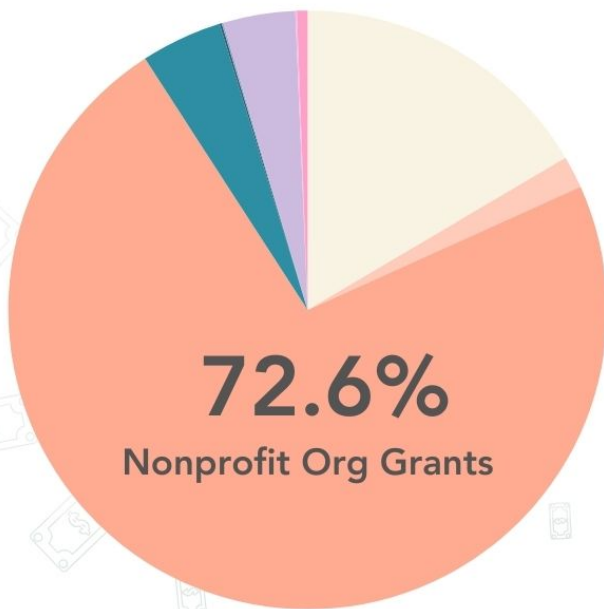
Stuff like printer ink, our Zoom subscription, etc.

Contract Services: 84.7%

Seems high, right? **Keep in mind: that number represents everyone at SWC: board members, staff, part-timers and regular volunteers who take on more than a volunteer's share - all of whom have 1099 status.**

We all work on a 1099 basis, rather than full time, to keep overhead low and allow residents with lived experience to be compensated for their work and perspective. *Funds go right back out to community members - whether for services or supplemental pay that levels the playing field!*

Income



 **Nonprofit Org Grants: 72.6%**

We have become an outreach machine for more established organizations in our communities to depend upon - ensuring that services reach community members in a timely manner.

 **Direct Public Grants: 16.5%**

 **Direct Public Support: 4.4%**

 **Government Grants: 3.9%**

 **Corporate/Business Grants: 1.7%**

 **Program Service Fees: 0.6%**

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