



**CHICAGO
LIGHTS**

A Community Outreach Organization
at Fourth Presbyterian Church

HOPE

2015 | ANNUAL REPORT

OUR MISSION

Chicago Lights provides

HOPE

and opportunity to our city's children, youth, and adults who face the challenges of poverty. Through supportive relationships and diverse programs, we empower people to thrive academically, secure economic stability, lead healthy lives, and build community.



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



What an incredible year 2015 was for Chicago Lights! Through the spring, we continued to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Tutoring program, recognizing five decades of one-to-one student-tutor relationships. We were humbled by the outpouring of support at the annual Gala of Hope, raising an unprecedented \$772,000 for the outreach programs of Chicago Lights. The Urban Farm doubled its revenue from produce sales, and the Dance Academy's Summer Dance Intensive was our most successful yet, enrolling forty students in two weeks of focused dance curriculum.

None of this would have been possible without the generosity of our supporters, donors, and volunteers. For you, we are truly grateful. Thank you for providing hope and for changing lives, one person at a time.

John Borovicka
President, Chicago Lights Board of Directors
May 2015–May 2016

Stacy Jackson,
Executive Director, Chicago Lights

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“Once I got a home, the pressure of the streets was off of me, and I didn’t feel like a victim. Having a home makes you feel like part of society again.” – Umar, Social Service Center Guest

Umar had experienced homelessness for twenty years before he heard about the Chicago Lights Elam Davies Social Service Center. “[Being homeless], you’re a victim of your circumstances, but it’s up to you if you’re going to stay down in it. You can beat it,” Umar says.

For Umar, “the momentum kicked in” as he participated in case management with Social Service Center staff, who worked with Heartland Alliance to place Umar in the city’s supportive housing database. A year later, he turned the key on his first home in more than twenty years.

“Once I got a home, the pressure of the streets was off of me, and I didn’t feel like a victim,” he says. “Having a home

is the best. I used to stay at airports, bus stations, churches—it’s painful. Having a home makes you feel like part of society again.”

For more than two decades, Umar—a soft-spoken writer and poet—experienced one challenge after another as he struggled to survive being unemployed and living on the streets. With a criminal record, his options for employment were limited.

“I have five felony theft convictions. Am I proud of it? No. So why did I indulge in such self-defeating activities throughout my early years? For survival, that’s why,” Umar says. “And you realize that it doesn’t take but one felony conviction for employers to discriminate against you. You really

have to be determined because you watch people slam doors.”

With an innate sense of self-worth, Umar persevered and connected with the Social Service Center. His new home served as a major turning point. “The doors of opportunity were open again, and I put my will together and started looking for jobs,” he says. Now working with the Chicago Park District, Umar says the Social Service Center “has been very helpful” and continues to be a part of his journey toward greater stability.

“Life is hard, but it has a way of explaining itself, and we’re not here to discover who we are. We’re simply here to create who we are,” Umar says.



2015 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

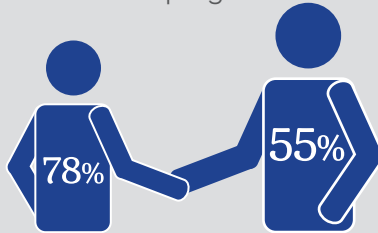
TUTORING



100%

100% of senior scholarship students graduated on time and were accepted into college

Continued high retention rates for students (78%) and tutors (55%) show commitment to and value of the program



Retention Rates



513
volunteers

SUMMER DAY



100% of students in grades 1-6 successfully avoided summer learning loss in language arts and math skills



100%

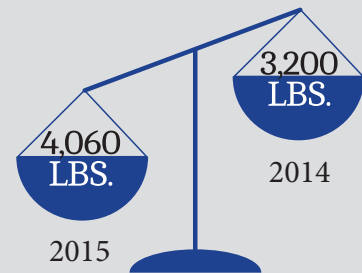
100% of students participated in or contributed to the final performance



- Students received 54 hours of academic instruction and 36 hours of arts instruction
- Students received 180 minutes per week of exercise for six weeks
- Each student received 6 hours of social-emotional learning with counselors from DePaul Family and Community Health

URBAN FARM

4,060 pounds of produce were grown, representing a 27% increase from last year



426 volunteers assisted with Summer Farm Camp, Identity Arts, Melting Pot Cooking Club, and Youth Workforce Development, with a total of nearly 1,700 volunteer hours



426
volunteers



1,700
hours

FREE WRITE JAIL ARTS and LITERACY



Volunteer tutors logged more than 140 hours of individual tutoring time with students, greatly enhancing students' access to print literacy and their ability to create art as an expression of their knowledge and experience

140 hrs



The annual gallery show of Free Write student work celebrated the **fifteenth** anniversary of the program and opened in July 2015 at Chicago Art Department in Pilsen



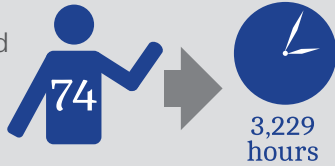
 → Summer Farm Camp
55 students

 → Youth Workforce Development Program
30 youth

2015 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

ELAM DAVIES SOCIAL SERVICE CENTER

74 people volunteered
a total of 3,229 hours



75 walkers joined the Social Service Center team for the Greater Chicago Food Depository's (GCFD) 30th Annual Hunger Walk and earned \$2,700 in GCFD food credits for the Consumer Choice Food Pantry



100 water-resistant and self-heating coats from the Empowerment Plan were distributed to people through Good Neighbors Street Outreach programming

Share Shop



Average of 113 Share Shop appointments each month

1,353 total appointments through 2015

Consumer Choice Food Pantry



Assisted a total of 1,750 (duplicated) individuals through the Pantry

Assisted an average of 92 households each month, a 5% increase from last year



up 5% since 2014

Case Management



164 cases opened



71 short-term goals achieved and 49 long-term goals achieved

DANCE ACADEMY



300 dance classes (Spanish, ballroom, flamenco, contemporary, creative, liturgical, creative, dance ensemble) taught to students in kindergarten through eighth grade in 5 schools (Belmont-Cragin, Salazar, Manierre, Brown, and Augustus Tolson)



Summer
= Dance
Intensive

Summer Dance Intensive hosted 40 students in grades 3-12 and 6 professional dance instructors for 2 levels of focused dance instruction in styles of ballroom, modern, Spanish, Broadway, and ballet

CLASS

PROGRAM
NAME
CHANGE

Chicago Lights
Dance Academy

Nifemi and Tess

Chicago Lights Tutoring

Many students and volunteer tutors in the Chicago Lights Tutoring program are born and raised Chicagoans. Nifemi and Tess are exceptions: They're both from different parts of the world and have come together through the Tutoring program in hopes of making a difference, both in their own lives and in the lives of others.

Nifemi, a bright high school senior (she's currently first in her class at Holy Trinity High School), began attending the Tutoring program in middle school when she learned about the opportunity for mentorship and scholarships. Born in Nigeria, Nifemi viewed the program as a chance to get acquainted with her new environment and peers.

"When I came [to Tutoring], it was the first building block for me being comfortable in a new setting," Nifemi says. "Here I had to develop friendships with the tutors and the other kids."

For the last three years, Nifemi has been paired with volunteer tutor Tess Poland, who knows what it's like to feel like an outsider. Three and a half years ago, she moved from Sidney, Australia, to work in healthcare in Chicago.

"Coming from a foreign country and getting implanted somewhere, the [Tutoring program] has been a stabilizing factor," Tess says. "The weather changes and that can be harsh or my job might change—it's very dynamic. [Tutoring] is the one consistency that I really look forward to."

Both Nifemi and Tess admit that they "warmed up to each other quickly" and now share a familial bond.

"[Tutoring] is not just about doing homework once a week. It's about building a friendship and someone you can rely on," Nifemi says. "Tess is not someone I just see on Mondays—

we text throughout the week. She's been a big influence on my life. She's like a second mom."

Nifemi admits that both her mother and Tess have served as role models when it comes to thinking about her future career. Both women work in healthcare, and Nifemi plans to follow the same path. This fall, she'll begin studying nursing at Connecticut College, where she's received a full-ride Posse Scholarship.

"[The Tutoring program] may seem like a small solution, but it really keeps people our age off the street," Nifemi says. "I heard a quote a long time ago, 'I was cared for; therefore I will care for you.' I think that's one of the missions of Chicago Lights. There's a lot more to this than just tutoring. There's networking, there's building friendships, there's meeting people that can help you in life."

Chicago Lights Tutoring student Nifemi (left) and her tutor, Tess Poland (right)



JUNE BARNARD AND THE DRISKILL FOUNDATION



June Barnard and her late husband, Ron, at the 2014 Chicago Lights gala

“Curiosity is contagious,” says June Barnard, Executive Director of The Walter S. and Lucienne Driskill Foundation. “Once something piques your interest, it all falls into place.”

The Driskill Foundation seeks to fund innovation and progress “in the field of medicine and medical research.” Because the programs of Chicago Lights support curiosity and a love of learning among Chicago’s youth, The Driskill Foundation made a tremendously generous gift in 2015 to support the outreach of Chicago Lights. “We’ve come to realize that if we don’t get the next generation motivated and curious about life and learning, we won’t have future medical researchers,” June says.

June and her late husband, Ron, have long been supporters of Chicago

Lights and the annual Gala of Hope (formerly Carnival), so she knows well that “the work Chicago Lights is doing raises curiosity about learning.” In March 2015, The Driskill Foundation became the Gala of Hope’s first-ever Jubilee Sponsor at \$50,000, plus an additional \$50,000 in matching funds to encourage donations from other Chicago Lights supporters—who not only met the match but exceeded it.

The Driskill Foundation’s generous gift and expression of faith in the work of Chicago Lights led the way to making Gala of Hope 2015 a record-breaking success. And the \$772,000 raised to fund the outreach of Chicago Lights has enabled our programs to further carry out our mission: bringing hope and opportunity to individuals in our community.

THE GREER FOUNDATION

Founded by Drs. Carl and Pat Greer in 2007, the Greer Foundation is dedicated to supporting programs that address the root causes of violence, poverty, and social injustice, as well as protecting the earth and promoting effective health care. It is a means through which Carl and Pat are able to give back.

The Greers were introduced to Chicago Lights through the Urban Farm. As they learned more about the Farm’s Youth Workforce Development program and the Chicago Lights Dance Academy, they came to believe these efforts were a good match for their foundation’s mission to support disadvantaged youth.

In 2015, the Greer Foundation created a plan to fund half the cost of expanding the Urban Farm’s Youth Workforce

Development program to include assistant grower and youth educator internships, plus half the cost of adding to the Dance Academy’s offerings, both during the school year and at the Summer Dance Intensive. By matching the gifts of other givers up to \$53,000, the Greers hoped to motivate increased support, thereby giving Chicago Lights the funds needed and inspiring a wealth of new donors.

In addition to developing job skills and providing a creative outlet for youth who might not otherwise have these opportunities, the Urban Farm and the Dance Academy offer students a means of cultivating self-esteem and self-expression, as well as the especially powerful experience of learning by doing. The Greers hope the Youth Workforce Development program will help young adults gain useful employment history and skills to



transition to a full-time job. They hope their support of the Dance Academy will enable more children to flourish amid the struggles of poverty and violence.

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 Zero Percent

FINANCIALS

CONTRIBUTIONS

Individual Contributions	\$727,762	34%
Foundations/Corporations	\$583,135	27%
Fourth Presbyterian Church Support	\$87,491	4%
Program Receipts	\$729,190	34%
(Reduced by Mission Benefit cost/transfers of \$213,901)		
Draw from Invested Funds	\$44,506	2%
Accumulated Surplus	-	0%
Total:	\$2,172,084	



DISBURSEMENTS

Dance Academy	\$130,442	6%
Elam Davies Social Service Center	\$268,322	12%
Free Write Jail Arts and Literacy	\$290,999	13%
Summer Day	\$116,963	5%
Tutoring	\$542,970	25%
Urban Farm	\$261,442	12%
Management and General	\$346,623	16%
Fundraising	\$207,217	10%
(Reduced by Mission Benefit cost/transfers of \$213,901)		
Total:	\$2,164,978	
Net Surplus / (Deficit)	\$7,106	



Source: the Chicago Lights 2014 unaudited financial statement.
An audited statement is available after June 30, 2015.

SUPPORTERS

Thank you!

Chicago Lights is grateful for each and every supporter who made a donation in 2015. With your generosity, our programs continue to provide hope and opportunity to children and adults facing the challenges of poverty.

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“Without the Urban Farm, I don’t know what I’d be doing, if I’d have a job or not. The Farm has definitely helped me better myself.”

—Malcolm,
Urban Farm Youth
Program Alumnus

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—Robert,
Social Service Center
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 —Makayla,
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Goose Island Beer Co.
Sprinkles Cupcakes
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Thank you to the corporate sponsors who supported Chicago Lights events in 2015.

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GET INVOLVED

GIVE

- Give to the Chicago Lights Annual Fund
- Designate Chicago Lights for a corporate matching gift
- Honor someone special through a tribute or memorial gift
- Donate to a specific program
- Secure a sponsorship or in-kind gift from your company
- Designate Chicago Lights through your workplace giving campaign
- Plan a gift for the future

For more information about giving to fund Chicago Lights' life-changing outreach, please contact Katy Frey Bever at 312.981.3380 (kbever@chicagolights.org).

VOLUNTEER

- Serve as a mentor through Chicago Lights Tutoring, help students harvest produce at the Urban Farm, teach choreography at the Dance Academy, lead a Summer Day academic or enrichment class, or aid guests in the Social Service Center's clothing shop or food pantry.

For more information about volunteering, please contact Kate Solis Silva at 312.981.3564 (ksolis@chicagolights.org).

ATTEND

- Party with a purpose at Gala of Hope, our annual benefit in the spring, or support our Associates Board's annual gala, GLOW, in the fall.

For more information about attending our gala events, contact Andrea Miller at 312.640.2576 (amiller@chicagolights.org).



"I'm happy to come to Summer Day each year because it's different each day and has nice teachers and easy-going classrooms. Plus, I don't like staying home all day!"

—Leah, Summer Day Student