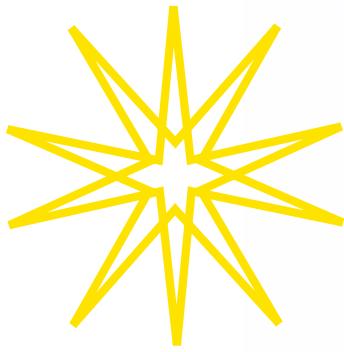


annual report 2012



CHICAGO LIGHTS

A Community Outreach Organization
at Fourth Presbyterian Church

academics • career development • collaboration
• change • community building • drama • dance
• economic stability • educational engagement •
empowerment • farming • field trips • fine arts •
healthy living • hope • internships • job training •
literacy • meals • microenterprise development •
nutritional education • opportunity • relationships
• scholarships • self-expression • self-sufficiency •
stability • support • transformation • tutoring •
urban agriculture • writing • youth

changing lives
one at a time

In 2012

- 4,464** children, youth, and adults served
- 20,932** hours of one-to-one tutoring
- 18,342** meals served to individuals in a community setting
- 10,851** hours of arts instruction
 - 1,192** committed donors
 - 1,849** dedicated volunteers
 - 1,316** clothing appointments for guests of the Elam Davies Social Service Center
 - 100** percent graduation rate for high school students in the Tutoring program
 - 30** youth completed internships via the Tutoring and Urban Farm programs
 - 19** full-time staff, 20 part-time staff
 - 6** dynamic community outreach programs:
 - Chicago Lights Academic Success in Schools (CLASS)
 - Chicago Lights Elam Davies Social Service Center
 - Chicago Lights Free Write Jail Arts and Literacy
 - Chicago Lights Summer Day
 - Chicago Lights Tutoring
 - Chicago Lights Urban Farm

One mission: to provide hope and opportunity to our city's children, youth, and adults facing 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.

One vision: to break the bonds of poverty, lifting up our neighbors in need to claim fuller lives and brighter futures.

From the Leaders of Chicago Lights

Dear friends,

Most annual reports are about the numbers. Quantifying the number of people served, funds raised, volunteers involved, and money spent demonstrates, on some level, the importance and impact within the community. You will see those numbers in this report, but how do you really measure a life path altered, a child learning to read, a welcome in from the fringes of society, the hope of a job interview, the first stirrings of belief in yourself? For Chicago Lights the number that matters most is the number 1. One life changed at a time.

Chicago Lights is driven by respecting the dignity of the individual. And each program we bring into the community begins with understanding and meeting the needs of children, youth, and adults who are all too often defined by the poverty around them. In this annual report you can look beyond the numbers and share in some of those stories.

This past year was a year of challenging and exciting new possibilities. At the end of March 2012, we closed operations of the Center for Whole Health and identified other program areas for those services to continue.

The Chicago Lights Urban Farm expanded infrastructure and fledgling micro business efforts, relationships and new programming for kids, and job training and culinary internships for young adults, all while growing two tons of organic produce and immeasurable community. Our Tutoring kids continue to thrive, especially in the incredible new space offered by the Gratz Center of Fourth Presbyterian Church. It is a learning environment filled with brightness and new resources. Chicago Lights Summer Day combats summer learning loss while Chicago Lights Academic Success in Schools brings the arts alive during the school day.

And young people who are incarcerated find self expression through our arts and literacy program at the Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center. The Elam Davies Social Service Center touches the lives of more than 1,600 guests to help each one meet basic and immediate needs.

It is our mission to provide hope and opportunity to Chicago's children, youth and adults facing 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.

Chicago Lights is successful in that mission because of each volunteer who tutors a child, makes a sandwich for someone experiencing homelessness, or serves a hot meal on Sunday night. Chicago Lights can only continue to change lives one at a time with your help, support, and generosity.

Please spend time at www.chicagolights.org to discover more stories and, perhaps, to find a way that you might touch a life—one unique, worthy, deserving, and waiting life—at a time. Thank you.



Kenneth Ohr
President, Board of Directors



Stacy Jackson
Executive Director

2012 Highlights • How your gifts changed lives last year



The Chicago Lights Academic Success in Schools (CLASS) program, which provides arts instruction to students attending Chicago's underperforming schools, **increased its number of students from 650 to 900** by collaborating with Chicago Youth Centers and introducing a fee for service component.



The Chicago Lights Elam Davies Social Service Center, which provides meals, supportive services, and ongoing support to 1,600 persons who are hungry, experiencing homelessness, or in transition, **continued improving and expanding its Community Collaboration Project**, which provides intensive case management, by incorporating special presentations on interview skills, conflict resolution, and goal setting.



The Chicago Lights Free Write Jail Arts and Literacy program, which provides one-to-one tutoring and group arts workshops for more than 150 students at the Nancy B. Jefferson Alternative School in the Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center, **released *Escape Route*, its fifth anthology of student writing and art.** *Escape Route* is made available to the students, their families and teachers, court officials, and the community at large.



The Chicago Lights Tutoring program, which encourages 400 students from under-resourced communities to graduate from high school and pursue college and meaningful careers, saw **increased retention rates in students (77%), tutors (66%), and tutoring pairs (43%)**—some of the highest numbers the program has had in years.

The program's youth initiatives grew through a new College Awareness Week for all students, a series of college workshops, and financial planning workshops for Tutoring students participating in the Career Development program.



The Chicago Lights Summer Day program, which combats summer learning loss for 100 first through eighth-graders from economically struggling neighborhoods through six weeks of academic and arts programming, **introduced a new Community Action and Leadership class to engage seventh and eighth-graders** in the program and their community.

The final production from Summer Day 2012 involved more student creative input than ever. Students improvised the majority of the theatrical scenes, wrote lyrics and songs, and created original set pieces.



The Chicago Lights Urban Farm, located in the Near North neighborhood, empowers Cabrini Green residents through **increased access to healthy and affordable food, economic opportunities, and programming for children and youth.** The Impact 100 Greenhouse Learning Lab increased the growing season and the length of on-site child and youth development programming.

In collaboration with Blue Plate Catering, a culinary internship project for youth ages 18 to 25 was piloted that provides hands-on skill-building experience in taking food from farm to table.

Invest in a Brighter Future

for those facing the challenges of poverty

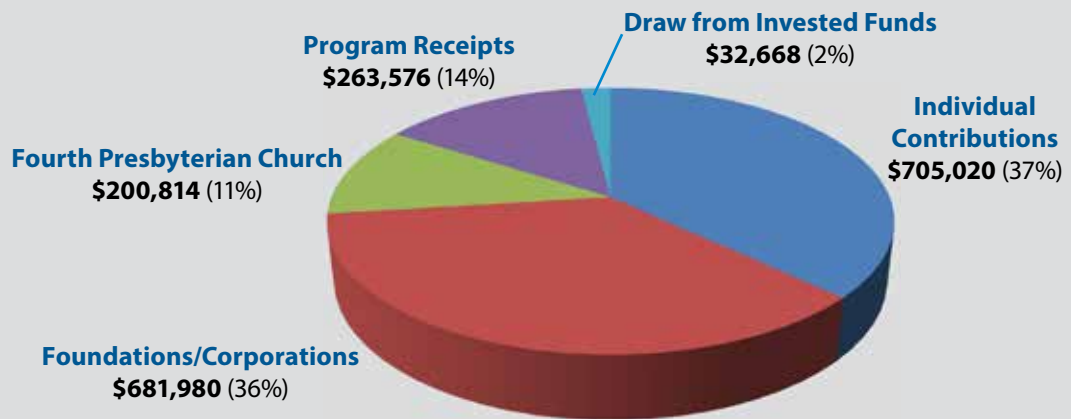
- Give to the Chicago Lights Annual Fund
- Designate Chicago Lights for a corporate matching gift
- Honor someone special through a tribute or memorial gift
- Donate to a specific program
- Secure a sponsorship or in-kind gift from your company
- Designate Chicago Lights through your company's United Way campaign
- Party with a purpose at Carnaval, our annual gala
- Support our Associates Board's gala, GLOW
- 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).

2012 Financial Summary

Contributions

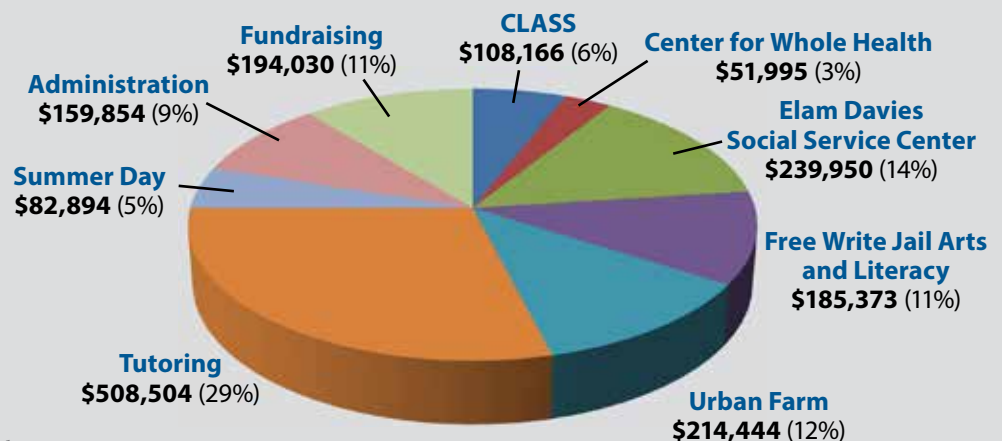
Total: \$1,884,058



Disbursements

Total: \$1,745,210

(Net surplus: \$138,848)



Source: the Chicago Lights 2012 unaudited financial statement.
An audited statement will be available after June 30, 2013.

Partnerships



*Chicago Lights gives thanks for our partnerships with
127 organizations that help extend outreach to those we serve.*

Ada S. McKinley Community Services, Inc.
Alderman Walter Burnett, Jr.
American Academy of Implant Dentistry
Anthony Overton Elementary School
Belmont-Cragin Elementary School
Blue Plate Catering
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Brandikurtyka.com
Breaking Bread, a ministry of LaSalle Street Church
Breakthrough Urban Ministries
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Chicago Cares
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Chicago Hope Academy
Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
Chicago Police Department (18th District)
Chicago Public Schools
Chicago Semester
Chicago Sinai Congregation
Chicago Waldorf School
Chicago Youth Centers
Chico & Nunes, PC
Christ the King Jesuit College Preparatory School
CICS ChicagoQuest School
Coe College
Congressman Danny Davis' Office
Cook County Juvenile Detention Center
De La Salle Institute
DePaul Family and Community Services
Dori Wilson Public Relations
Educational Endeavors
EOI Service Company
Equinox Fitness Club
ETA Theatre
Faith in Place
Farmhouse Chicago
Feeding America
First Baptist Church, Huntsville, Alabama
First Presbyterian Church, Janesville, Wisconsin

Francis W. Parker School
Franciscan Outreach Association
Gensler
Gordon Tech High School
Greater Chicago Food Depository
Greenheart
Groupon
Growing Power
HighSight
Holy Trinity High School
Impact 100 Chicago
Inspiration Corporation / The Employment Project
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Jenner Academy of the Arts
Jesuit Volunteer Corps Midwest
Josephinum Academy
Kendall College
Lakeview Pantry
Law Offices of Elina Golod & Associates, Ltd.
Lawson House YMCA
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Lincoln Park Community Shelter
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Marist High School
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Northwestern Memorial Hospital
Northwestern University Civic Education Project

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Northwestern University Law School
One Good Deed Chicago
Princeton University Law Alumni
Project NIA
Project SYNCERE
Ravinia Festival
Regina Dominican High School
Richard J. Daley Elementary Academy
River North Dance Company
Rock for Kids
Rock Prairie United Presbyterian Church
Roosevelt University
Ruben Salazar Bilingual Academy Center
Salvation Army
Sarah's Circle
School of the Art Institute
SGA
Smith & Associates Ltd.
St. Malachy School
St. Matthew United Methodist Church
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St. Patrick High School
St. Scholastica Academy
Swish Dreams Sports & Educational Foundation
The Chicago School of Professional Psychology
The Women's Treatment Center
ThoughtWorks
Trinity High School
Tutoring Chicago
University of Michigan
University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration
Urban CPE Consortium, Inc.
Urban Village Church
VietNow
Wheaton College
William H. Brown Elementary School of Technology
Yale University Law Alumni
Yogaview
Young Chicago Authors

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CLASS



Sixth-grader Alondra Sewell had taken just a few dance classes before CLASS came to her school two years ago and introduced her to ballet. “Now this girl dances all day long,” says her mother, Felicia Sewell, with a laugh. “She’s warming up something in the microwave and jumping around the kitchen. Dancing raises her spirits, and she seems to really love ballet.”

This love of ballet has also motivated Alondra to focus on her school work. Her mom reports that Alondra’s reading, which was once a problem area, has improved, and Alondra works hard on her homework so she can keep her grades up and keep on dancing. Alondra’s CLASS instructors have helped her get a scholarship to the Joffrey Ballet’s weekend dance program, and her mom sees a bright future ahead. “I hope to see her in a big Broadway production,” she says, “in the spotlight as a role model for other young kids. I know she’ll stick with dancing.”

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EDSSC

Vicki Couch, fifty-one, came across the Elam Davies Social Service Center by accident, just after she'd moved with her son from Detroit to Chicago. "But I've been here ever since," she says. "They make you feel like you really count and your life matters to them."



EDSSC staff soon identified Vicki as a hard worker and a good candidate for the Community Collaboration Project, which provides individual and group counseling to help participants meet their goals. Vicki "jumped at the chance" to be part of the program and says she's thankful for the housing and legal assistance the Social Service Center has provided. "They do whatever they can to empower you."

Vicki has been HIV positive for more than twenty years, and today she's an AIDS advocate and is writing a book. "I want to give back," she says. "I see change in myself, being a person who has been depressed. Now I get up with something to look forward to. Fighting addiction is tough, but I have something positive to talk about."

"It feels like a blessing, a privilege to be here. The EDSSC motivates me to do the very best I can," she says. "When people believe in you, you can perform better."

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Free Write



In 2009 and 2010, falsely accused of murder, sixteen-year-old Semajay Thomas spent fifteen months behind bars. He struggled a lot during that time, but he remembers Free Write as something that helped him make it through. “I thought of the classroom as a meditation room,” he recalls. “It let me escape in my mind while I was dealing with the situation I was in.” He remembers working with Program Director Ryan Keesling as Semajay began writing a book about his life.

And that’s a story he’s still writing. “I still have the book I used to write in,” he says. “I keep it in my closet.” Since his acquittal in November 2010 (gang members tried to pin their crime on him, given his reputation as a boxer, but their story fell apart), Semajay has finished high school, been to the Olympic trials, and made his debut as a professional boxer. He plans to publish his book after he wins the boxing world championship, and he’d like to open a gym to give kids a place to work toward their goals. “I’d like to be a positive role model, letting youth know that dreams do come true. You have to work hard and stay grounded and pray.”

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Summer Day



Reba James had sent her son, Jordan Burks, to summer camp before. “They’d just go play in the water. He came back sunburned and not knowing anything,” she says with a laugh. But then Jordan tried Summer Day. “I was amazed at the end-of-the-year performance to see all they’d learned,” Reba says. “I left work early to come to those performances.”

Jordan, now thirteen (*shown above in the Mayor’s office*), cites singing and acting as his favorite parts of Summer Day, and last year he starred in the final performance. He’d never done anything like that before, and since then he’s talked a lot about a career as an actor. Jordan is dyslexic and has struggled with reading, but he’s a great memorizer, his mom explains.

No wonder he’s a natural on the stage! Reba also credits Chicago Lights with helping Jordan improve his reading. “At first he didn’t like to read at all, but he had a tutor who encouraged him a lot, and now he’s not scared anymore,” she says.

With no fear and a flair for the theatrical, Jordan may be unstoppable. “If he wants to become an actor, I’d like him to do that,” says Reba. “Don’t just say it. Go do it!”

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Tutoring

Samantha Franklin is poised, polite, and professional. Her voice on the phone projects competence and ease. It's hard to believe she just finished high school last spring—and that she used to be shy about public speaking.



“I never liked talking in front of people,” she says. “But Tanya Uyigue forced us to do it as part of Tutoring’s Career Development program. She wanted us to get comfortable, and if she hadn’t done that, I wouldn’t be able to talk on the phone, which is what I do for work.”

Samantha began coming to Tutoring in the third grade and continued until she graduated. She spent most of those years with a single tutor, Rachel Maze, who she still calls on for help from time to time. Her current job—as a “care concierge” connecting home care agencies, caregivers, and potential clients—is a continuation of the Career Development internship she had last summer.

Samantha is also going to college, with plans to be a dentist, and she can’t say enough about how Tutoring and Career Development have prepared her. “Learning about an ‘elevator speech’ helped me with thinking on my toes, and both programs help you stay organized,” she says. “It’s been a really great opportunity.”

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Urban Farm



Brittany Braxton, twenty-one, was interested in cooking as a middle school and high school student, but she never saw it as more than an after-school activity. Then she saw a flier in her neighborhood about a culinary internship. When she showed up at the Urban Farm to ask about it, they interviewed her on the spot. Although she was happy to be chosen for the opportunity, she kept her expectations low—and was pleasantly surprised. “I never expected it to go that well,” she says of her ten-week experience last fall. “But they really encouraged us, and I felt really happy while I was doing it.”

At the Urban Farm, Brittany says she learned teamwork as she and the other interns did lots of planting and helped build the greenhouse. And at Blue Plate Catering, “we were in the kitchen,” she says. She helped prepare lots and lots of cookies and pastries. She’s now very interested in a culinary career and has applied to work at Blue Plate, as well as applying to culinary school and working to get her GED. “I’m a quick learner,” she says. “If I enjoy something, I’ll do it!”

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