



GADS HILL CENTER

2013 Annual Report

*Treasuring the Past,
Honoring the Future*

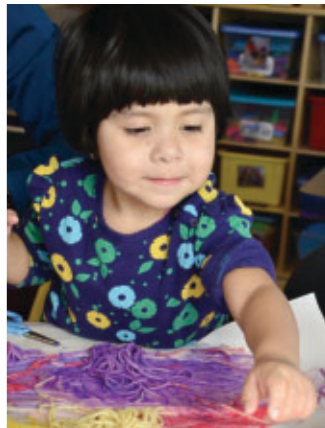
115 Years





Mission

Gads Hill Center, a social service organization established in 1898, creates opportunities for children and their families to build a better life through education, access to resources, and community engagement.



Vision

All individuals, regardless of where they start, will achieve their full potential.

Gads Hill Center (GHC) provides services to low-income families on the west and southwest sides of Chicago so that they may overcome obstacles that affect their quality of life and their children's futures. Anchored in the community, GHC delivers culturally and linguistically competent programs and provides a platform for success for children up to age eighteen and their families. GHC builds on the assets of individuals, families, and communities to create positive systemic and individual change through the following programs:

- > Early childhood education
- > School-age academic support and enrichment
- > Teen tutoring, mentoring, and academic enrichment
- > Parent education and family support
- > Community health and nutrition programming



Dear Friends,

For 115 years, families have taken wide-ranging paths to Gads Hill Center's door. From the Czech, Bohemian, Irish, and German families who settled in Pilsen around the turn of the century to the Latino families who arrived decades later, they have all shared one dream—to achieve brighter futures for their children.

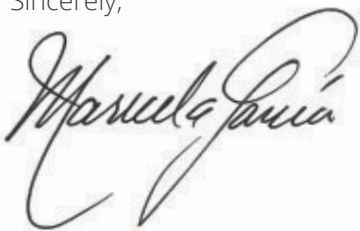
Our region's rich history has seen people from every walk of life cross paths. Many of the families we serve today are immigrants, and they are also racially diverse. A century from our founding, the opening of GHC's Child Development Center in 2001 first brought us into North Lawndale and to our goal of serving families in predominantly African-American communities. In this and other endeavors, our innovative spirit has allowed us to constantly evolve and provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services for those who need them the most.

Children continue to be the focal point of our work. They herald a nation more racially, ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse than at any other time in our recent history. Because we understand that the family system is of utmost importance in supporting their world, our plan for working with each child is firmly embedded in that system. We provide a comprehensive array of services that radiate outward, helping families flourish and impacting all the other systems that support the child, including schools, health care, employment, and services for parents.

We value our parents' voices, and we continue to ensure that their unique experiences are woven tightly into the fabric of our communities. Today's families see themselves as agents of change; they recognize their responsibility to advocate for that change. Parents direct policy on our board, meet with legislators to advocate for restoration of critical services, and become leaders in community health promotion. In the pages that follow, you will read some of their families' stories. Different paths have led them all to GHC and closer to their dreams and ours—that our children will develop the skills and knowledge they need to be leaders and address the challenges of the future.

With this report, we are proud to recognize another year of accomplishments for our children and families. On behalf of our board and staff, I sincerely thank our funders, individual donors, and community partners for their support. Gads Hill Center has made many true friends on its path, and you continue to be vital to our work.

Sincerely,



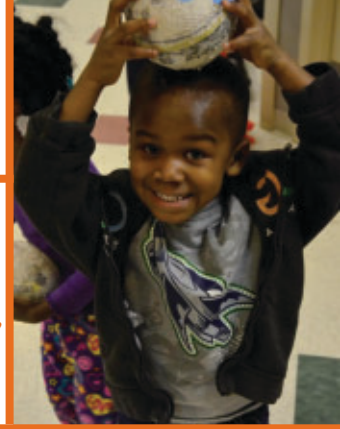
Maricela García
Chief Executive Officer



Maricela García
Chief Executive Officer

OUR PROGRAMS

Our aim is to increase family involvement in learning and to ensure that children are prepared for school success. We put our mission into action through an array of high quality, flexible, responsive, and culturally sensitive programs.



Children's Services

Early Head Start Home Visiting serves 96 pregnant mothers and children, newborn to age three, by promoting healthy prenatal outcomes and enhancing the development of young children while promoting healthy family functioning.

Prevention Initiative Home Visiting is a home-based program serving 50 pregnant mothers and families with children up to age three. Home visitors model positive parenting behaviors and empower parents as the first teachers of their children.

Home-Based Head Start serves 84 children ages three to five and their families by promoting healthy development, preparing them for success in school, and empowering parents as their children's first teachers.

Center-Based Early Childhood Education provides high-quality early learning and family support for 146 at-risk children ages two and a half to five and their families in North and South Lawndale and the surrounding communities. Services are provided in half-day and full-day classrooms.

The Head Start Partner Network provides high-quality Head Start services to 172 children and families enrolled in five private early education centers in the communities of Chicago Lawn, Ashburn, and Gage Park. Children are supported by Gads Hill Center staff with professional development opportunities for providers, educational guidance, and family support.

Family Support Services provides comprehensive case management services to nearly 400 children and families enrolled in early childhood program options. GHC's workers connect families to resources they need to meet their educational, job-related, and health-related goals on a continual basis.



The Gutierrez Family: Learning Begins at Home

Yuri and Miguel Gutierrez came to Gads Hill Center seeking help to guide their children through their critical first years. The couple wanted to ensure that their two young daughters, Lily, age two, and Emma, age one, would be fully prepared for school. Knowing that education begins at home, they wanted to build the skills to become their children's first teachers.

GHC's linguistically and culturally competent Early Head Start Program attracted the couple. Services were delivered in their own home, and they offered Yuri and Miguel the opportunity to educate their children in English and Spanish. Staff members worked closely with the family to equip them with the skills, knowledge, and resources they needed to guide their children's learning. Yuri and Miguel also brought the girls to socialization sessions at Gads Hill Center twice a month to connect with other families and build a sense of community that is critical to healthy child development.

After just a few months, Yuri reported seeing major improvements in her children. They socialized easily with their peers, and their language skills had improved. Yuri and Miguel were more confident about being their girls' first teachers: "Gads Hill Center staff is guiding us through the parenting process. We are learning strategies to help our daughters enhance their vocabularies, handle behavior issues, and deal with potty training," explained Miguel.

GHC has provided opportunities for Yuri and Miguel to grow as leaders, helping advance the interests of their family and the community. As Yuri says, "I joined the Head Start Parent Policy Committee so I could have a voice in my children's education. I get to help make decisions about what happens inside and outside the classroom." Today, the mother of two is proud to represent other parents in the program: "Now my dream is to provide the best opportunities for all kids in my community."



Alicia and Jada: Working Toward a Brighter Future

When Jada and her mother, Alicia, enrolled in Gads Hill Center's Head Start Program in December 2012, the family was facing many challenges. Jada was experiencing language difficulties and had trouble socializing with other children. Years before, she had sustained a head injury that potentially could have impacted her development. Concerned about the possibility of developmental delays, Alicia felt her daughter could benefit from the specialized services offered by GHC's Family Support Team.

Still, Alicia was facing struggles in other areas of her life. She needed to find employment, a safe place to live, and a support system. Lacking a high school education, Alicia found it difficult to locate stable jobs that would allow her to support her daughter.

Gads Hill Center worked with Alicia and Jada to develop a plan that would address their immediate needs while also setting longer-term goals. The team referred Jada to Chicago Public Schools for a developmental assessment that would result in an individualized educational assessment plan (IEP) to support her learning. Alicia also received emergency services to secure housing and job placement. Once stabilized, Alicia was able to focus on a long-term goal—completing her GED.

Today, Alicia reflects on her experiences with the team: "Gads Hill Center cares. They offer a different level of support that has really helped Jada and me work toward a better future." At GHC's Child Development Center, Jada is thriving; she is now making rapid progress toward reaching her educational goals. Jada's teachers are confident that she is on-track to enter school ready to learn. Alicia has grown as well; she is gainfully employed and working to complete her GED and pursue higher education.

OUR PROGRAMS

Youth Services

Club Learn is a comprehensive, strength-based out-of-school time program providing academic and developmental support for up to 99 children to support their academic success and to expose them to new concepts and experiences beyond what they learn in school. The program serves low-income, at-risk kindergarten through sixth graders at our North Lawndale and Pilsen sites.

New Horizons is a youth mentoring program that matches at-risk sixth through eighth graders from Orozco Academy with individual volunteer mentors who provide them with consistent social-emotional and academic support to ensure they make positive decisions and have the support necessary to successfully transition to high school.

Community Service

Gads Hill Center offers several programs that support and enrich the community at large. In partnership with the El Rincon Clinic, Gads Hill Center offers a **child passenger safety program** funded by the Illinois Department of Transportation that trains over 300 parents annually on the proper use of child safety seats and booster seats. This program also offers families access to subsidized, low-cost seats.

In addition, Gads Hill Center trains adults as health promoters across our service area through our new initiative called Healthy Moves. These health promoters educate community members in schools, churches,

Students stay in the program until they graduate from middle school.

Teen Connection is a STEM-focused academic enrichment and college preparatory program serving high school students in Pilsen. The program prepares students for college and other postsecondary education options and provides hand-on scientific experiential learning components in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). Students have an opportunity to learn robotics through competition in the FIRST Tech Challenge.

clinics, and other community locations about healthy eating, shopping, and physical activity.

During FY13, in partnership with the Chicago Department of Public Health, Gads Hill Center implemented 22 PlayStreets events in the communities of North Lawndale, Brighton Park, and Pilsen, reaching 2,500 people. These events temporarily transformed public streets into safe places for children and adults to engage in active play and supported our nascent strategy of engaging the communities that we serve in health and physical activity.





Oscar and Katie: Finding a Voice

Oscar joined Gads Hill Center's New Horizons mentoring program when he was in seventh grade. Oscar was very quiet compared to other students his age, and he struggled academically. According to his mentor, Katie, Oscar hardly spoke or interacted with other students. He characteristically responded to her questions with silence and a downward gaze. Lacking self-confidence, Oscar struggled to make friends and participate in classroom discussions, and he was an easy target for bullies.

Together, the pair developed a plan to help Oscar improve his social-emotional skills. They established an initial series of goals that included mastering academic skills, such as studying math every day. Their plan also included life skills such as navigating the CTA. Eventually, Oscar's goals expanded to include taking turns when speaking, establishing eye contact, and engaging confidently in conversations.

Sharing many interests, Oscar and Katie spent a lot of time in mentoring sessions, casually chatting over indoor activities such as playing board games, creating art projects, and listening to music. Over time, Oscar's self-esteem began to grow; he began to talk openly with Katie during outdoor walks and field trips.

Since the beginning of the year, Oscar's growth has been substantial. His speech is clearer and more articulate. He maintains steady eye contact throughout meetings and conversations with Katie, and he has improved the quality of his interactions with others at Gads Hill Center and at school.

In a self-assessment of his progress, Oscar shared that kids at school are nicer and he no longer faces challenges with bullying because he can stand up for himself. He is proud to report, "My mentor has helped me make friends. School is becoming easier and way more fun!"

Suriziday: Charting a Path to a STEM Career

Suriziday was a good student before she joined Gads Hill Center in seventh grade, but she lacked access to the kind of resources that would support her dream of going to college. Her mother worried that she did not have a safe place to send her daughter after school and that Suriziday might fall behind her peers from more-affluent communities. After months of searching, Suriziday learned about Teen Connection from a friend at school. She began attending every day for homework help and discovered a new support network with the resources she needed to achieve her goals.

Four years later, Suriziday has taken advantage of all of the activities that the program has to offer: academic support, leadership development, and career exploration through a unique focus on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math). Teen Connection has provided the tools she needed to develop into a strong student and confident leader, ready to pursue a career in the biological sciences.

Currently a high school sophomore at Air Force Academy charter school, Suriziday uses Teen Connection's academic supports to maintain a B average even amidst the many challenges of her school's rigorous academic program. Drawing on the leadership skills she developed at Gads Hill Center, Suriziday has launched a Green Club at her school.

Teen Connection has helped Suriziday expand her horizons as she prepares for her future. Exploring her growing interest in science, Suriziday completed an internship at the Adler Planetarium, leading participants through exhibits and helping coordinate a "Civic Hack Day," during which she helped visitors solve problems through simple solutions.

To promote her burgeoning leadership abilities, Gads Hill Center sent Suriziday to meet with First Lady Michelle Obama in July 2013 to discuss issues that affect Latino youth. Suriziday was chosen to represent GHC's youth programs at the annual National Council of La Raza conference in New Orleans.

Of her experiences, Suriziday says, "Teen Connection has helped me discover new interests, new possibilities, and new strengths. I am excited about applying to college and helping my community."



HIGHLIGHTS

Agency Highlights

- > Under the leadership of CEO Maricela García, the agency completed a three-year strategic plan to guide its growth into an organization that serves the residents of broader west and southwest Chicago through site-based and community-based programs for children, youth, and families.
- > During FY13, Gads Hill Center substantially increased community-based programming, serving thousands of additional children and families across west and southwest Chicago and solidifying the agency's focus on health, nutrition, and physical activity.

Program Highlights

- > **Home visiting programs doubled in size**, enabling Gads Hill Center to meet the needs of young, isolated families and young children who live in Brighton Park and surrounding communities, some of Chicago's most underserved communities for early childhood programs. In addition, the agency's Head Start partner network grew to serve additional families in Chicago Lawn, Gage Park and Ashburn through early education partners.
- > **The Teen Connection program began implementation of a STEM** (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) curriculum in its programmatic offerings, making these promising career paths available to local youth.
- > **The agency launched Healthy Moves**, an initiative to bring health and nutrition education to parents and other adults through trained community health promoters. This initiative increased community capacity and educated over 2,000 individuals on healthy shopping, cooking and eating.
- > **In partnership with the Chicago Department of Public Health, Gads Hill Center launched PlayStreets**, an initiative to temporarily transform public streets into places for play and physical activity. The initiative successfully engaged thousands of children and adults in moderate and vigorous physical activity through three-hour street closure events.



FINANCIALS

Statement of Activities for the Year Ended June 30, 2013 (with comparative totals for 2012)

We invite you to view this statement of financial activities for the 2013 fiscal year. We are proud to be responsible and effective stewards of your philanthropic efforts. Developing sustainable communities requires collaboration.

Your support of Gads Hill Center helps provide accessible services to children, youth, adults, and families in our community.

REVENUES	2013	2012
Contributions	564,777	755,121
In-Kind Contributions	59,431	33,450
United Way of Metropolitan Chicago	85,000	90,000
Fees & Grants from Governmental Agencies	3,549,764	3,948,621
Program Service Fees	106,035	95,730
Interest and Dividends	24,757	22,196
Gain (loss) on Investments	63,861	11,583
Miscellaneous Income	19,207	14,469

Total Revenues and Other Support	4,472,832	4,971,170
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EXPENSES	2013	2012
Program Services:		
Children's Services	3,109,799	3,277,563
Youth & Community Services	869,212	1,200,554
Supporting Services:		
Management & General	260,431	369,075
Fundraising	63,161	48,930

Total Expenses	4,302,603	4,896,122
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Change in Net Assets	170,229	75,048
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	2,683,521	2,608,473
Net Assets at End of Year	2,853,750	2,683,521

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In memory of Alvina Breckel





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 Council on Equity
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 CLOCC Early Childhood Interest Group
 Coalition of Site Administered Child Care Centers
 Commissioner Jesus Garcia's Health Task Force
 Community Renewal Society
 12th District Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy
 Donors Forum
 Home Visiting Applied Research Collaborative
 Home Visiting Taskforce
 Early Childhood Innovation Zone Core Teams –
 North Lawndale and Pilsen/Little Village

Illinois Latino Agenda
 Illinois Partners for Human Services
 Illinois Early Childhood Senior Leaders Program
 Illinois Early Learning Council
 Latino Policy Forum
 National Association of Professional Women
 National Council of La Raza
 National Head Start Association
 Pilsen Education Task Force
 Pilsen Neighbors Community Council
 Responsible Budget Coalition
 Steering Committee, Illinois States Attorney's Office
 United Way of Metropolitan Chicago



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 Chicago, IL 60608
 Tel: 312.226.0963
 Fax: 312.226.2248

North Lawndale

2653 W. Ogden Ave.
 Chicago, IL 60608
 Tel: 773.521.1196
 Fax: 773.521.4793

Brighton Park

4234-6 S. Archer Ave.
 Chicago, IL 60632
 Tel: 773.269.6595
 Fax: 773.269.6556



*For more information, please visit our website at www.gadshillcenter.org,
 or email us at info@gadshillcenter.org*

