



**G A D S H I L L  
C E N T E R**

COMMUNITY | SOLIDARITY | HOPE

**2020**  
ANNUAL REPORT



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# OUR PROMISE

Dear Friends,

What a year it's been. The Covid-19 pandemic brought about an unprecedented and ongoing global crisis. In Gads Hill Center's 122 years of existence, this has to have been one of its most challenging periods. But crisis can also bring out the best in us. During this time we've recognized our vulnerabilities and acknowledged our humanity in order to become a stronger community, discerned our interdependence to stand in solidarity with each other, and reaffirmed hope as the energy to build courage and strength in the midst of uncertainty.

The pedagogical models and best practices that Gads Hill Center adheres to and has built for decades to ensure children and youth fall in love with learning were based on classroom interaction. Teamwork, conflict resolution, curiosity, and language development are taught through social interaction. We migrated all our programs online two days after the lockdown on March 17, 2020 to continue advancing the children's educational goals. But the challenges continue coming out of every corner. More than half the families in our programs did not have the technical capacity and knowledge to connect online. Having a computer and internet service are prohibitive for many working families due to cost. It took tremendous effort and resources to bridge the digital divide among our children.

Two weeks into the lockdown the emergency needs of the families changed from food, diapers, and baby formula to assistance to pay rent or mortgage. One third of the families we serve lost their jobs right away and their needs became insurmountable. It is impossible to save for a rainy day if you make minimum wage. We listened to them and pivoted our emergency funds to assist with housing costs to prevent homelessness. Through partnerships, we secured food from other sources. The weekly distribution of emergency boxes in our centers was not enough as the number of COVID-19 cases grew exponentially in the Black and Brown communities that we serve. Out of an unwavering sense of solidarity, our staff organized daily home deliveries for the families afflicted by COVID-19 cases, connected them with health services, and monitored their wellbeing via phone.

All this felt surreal and, at times, overwhelming. There was no social compass to point the right direction. We instinctively knew that we could count on each other during this crisis and collectively we would emerge stronger. The pandemic is by no means over, but Gads Hill Center stands strong as the beacon of hope that it has been for the community since 1898. We are here because of the commitment to our mission from staff, board of directors, donors, and community partners. Thank you for your support and all you do to create opportunities for children and to make the world better.

With gratitude,

Maricela Garcia  
Chief Executive Officer



Mark Hersh  
Board President



# SINCE 1898

## 122 YEARS OF SERVING CHICAGO'S FAMILIES



# MISSION & VISION

Gads Hill Center, a social service organization established in 1898, creates opportunities for children and their families to build better lives through education, access to resources, and community engagement. We work to accomplish our vision that all individuals regardless of where they start, will achieve their full potential

# THEORY OF CHANGE

GIVING LOW-INCOME LATINO & AFRICAN-AMERICAN CHILDREN AND YOUTH ON CHICAGO'S SOUTH AND SOUTHWEST SIDES THE SKILLS AND RESILIENCE THEY NEED TO SUCCEED IN SCHOOL AND REACH THEIR FULL POTENTIAL!

BY ATTENDING PROGRAMS WITH THESE ELEMENTS

## RESEARCH-BASED EDUCATION

with linguistic and cultural competency and racial equity lens

## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

to build social consciousness and share tools for families to overcome economic barriers

## MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

that address obstacles to learning and increase resilience

## PARENT ENGAGEMENT

to increase paternal capacity to support their children and family needs

## SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES

## LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

	ACADEMIC	SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL	CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
EARLY CHILDHOOD (0-5)	CHILDREN MEETING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION BENCHMARKS	DEVELOP A FOUNDATION FOR RESILIENCE AND MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS	DEMONSTRATE SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS
YOUTH (5-18)	STUDENTS AT OR ABOVE GRADE LEVEL	BUILD/STRENGTHEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND DEVELOP MENTAL WELLNESS CAPACITY	INCREASED SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND ENGAGEMENT IN COMMUNITY
PARENT ENGAGEMENT	INCREASED CONFIDENCE IN ABILITY TO SUPPORT CHILD'S ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT	INCREASED CAPACITY TO SUPPORT THE MENTAL HEALTH OF THEIR FAMILIES	DEMONSTRATE CAPACITY TO ADVOCATE FOR THEIR CHILDREN AND COMMUNITIES

CHILDREN GRADUATE HIGH SCHOOL AND ARE ABLE TO THINK CRITICALLY TO SOLVE PROBLEMS AND MAKE ETHICAL DECISIONS, DRAW ON ROBUST COPING MECHANISMS TO ENSURE MENTAL WELL-BEING, AND ENGAGE CIVICALLY IN COMMUNITY AND COLLABORATE WITH OTHERS.

# CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Eighty-five percent of a child's brain develops before age five making early education critical for healthy cognitive development. However, systemic barriers often make early education programs inaccessible for children of low-income families. Our children's programs bridge the gap by offering research-based early childhood education with a bilingual and culturally competent curriculum grounded in the framework of Head Start and Early Head Start. Through our civic engagement curriculum, we build social consciousness starting at age three. We recognize parents as their children's first teachers and actively engage them to promote language-rich parenting behaviors. Our staff, including dedicated teachers, clinicians, and family support workers, promote mental wellness for the whole family by monitoring developmental milestones and providing access to therapeutic services.




HOME VISITING PROGRAM



506  
TOTAL CLIENTS SERVED

6,300  
SERVICES PROVIDED




CENTER-BASED EARLY CHILDHOOD



312  
TOTAL CLIENTS SERVED

6,500  
SERVICES PROVIDED



THE PARTNER NETWORK



280  
TOTAL CLIENTS SERVED

2,200  
SERVICES PROVIDED



Chicago's Brighton Park neighborhood is a community with over 3,000 vibrant children ages 0-5 who are in significant need of early childhood education services. Research from the Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago reported that only 736 children in Brighton Park had access to early education services before the opening of our center, leaving 3,195 children without these vital resources. In October of 2019, Gads Hill Center opened the first early learning center in Brighton Park, providing full-day services to over 100 infants & toddlers with quality early childhood education.

At our ribbon cutting ceremony, community member Yennia Segura shared that she was filled with hope as her two-year old daughter, Yaretzy, finally had a chance to build a strong future saying "this is a beautiful place, a real gift for the children. Now, I will be able to go to work reassured that my daughter is safe and learning."

It has been proven that children who receive early education perform better academically and are equipped with social-emotional competencies including emotional regulation, communication, and empathy. Research has also shown that 90% of brain development occurs before age five and early learning experiences contribute to building a strong foundation and cultivates a resilience for lifelong learning.

When working families have access to affordable and quality childcare they are able to provide for their families and accomplish goals. Our trauma-informed programs help stabilize families during life's difficult challenges, and provide comprehensive services to build healthy child development. When we invest in children and families, the whole community benefits well into the future.

# MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Research-based mental health interventions positively influence students' academic and social-emotional development and can help them overcome psychosocial stressors in their environment such as community violence, poverty, and systemic racial barriers. Gads Hill Center addresses these issues through multi-tiered mental health services for children and youth including: individualized, family, and group therapy, crisis intervention, school staff professional development, and psycho-educational workshops. Our services engage students, parents, and school staff to build positive school culture and help them achieve academic success, apply healthy parenting behaviors, and self-advocate in their schools and communities.



EARLY CHILDHOOD  
MENTAL HEALTH



**418**  
TOTAL CLIENTS SERVED

**500**  
SERVICES PROVIDED




HEALTHY MINDS  
HEALTHY SCHOOLS

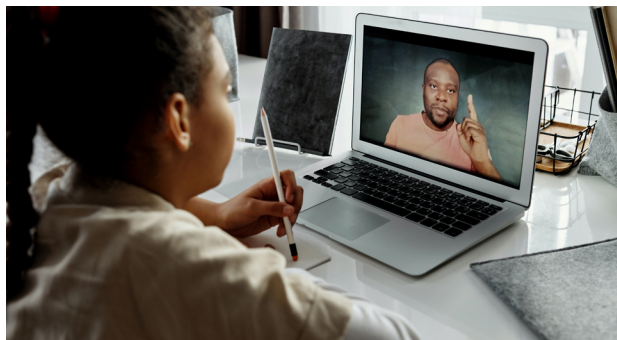


**1,061**  
TOTAL CLIENTS SERVED

**3,800**  
SERVICES PROVIDED



BRIDGING  
THE GAP



**3,700**  
INTERACTIONS

**60**  
WORKSHOPS &  
TRAININGS



David is a hard-working, intelligent 17-year-old with a huge heart and an infectious laugh. He grew up with his family in the Back of the Yards Community on the southwest side of Chicago where he loves to play football and spends his free time helping to manage his school's team.

Life took a difficult turn when David's father passed away unexpectedly when he was 10 years old. To help make ends meet, David's mother needed to work long hours to provide for the family and David then stepped into the role of caregiver for his ailing grandmother who had resided with the family for years. While David was very committed to helping his family, the stress of balancing his school work at Curie High School with caring for his grandmother stressed his mental wellbeing.

At the beginning of 2020, David's teachers began to notice a change in David's behavior toward peers and school staff and he was ultimately referred to Gads Hill Center's Healthy Minds, Healthy Schools (HMHS) Program to begin to explore his experiences as a young man dealing with grief and trauma. HMHS takes a holistic, trauma-informed, whole-child approach to mental health and addresses needs for students, families, schools, and communities. Our clinician assessed David's needs and implemented an open-door policy to build a supportive and trusting environment, working in solidarity with David to create an outlet to reflect on his social-emotional wellbeing while openly expressing his feelings with clinicians, teachers, and school support staff. David used the resources provided by Gads Hill Center's HMHS Program to become an agent of his own growth, achieving more self-awareness and coming to understand the importance of prioritizing his own wellbeing. As the year unfolded and the pandemic arrived, David continued to make progress in leaps and bounds, demonstrating renewed commitment to his academics and ultimately securing a scholarship to study engineering at a university in 2022.

# YOUTH SERVICES

Our youth programs provide a rigorous academic support curriculum during out-of-school time that ensures students of all ages perform at grade level or above and provides them with the tools they need to achieve academic success through high school graduation, college acceptance, and beyond. Programs are tailored to fit each age group and anchored by research-based educational curricula that emphasize science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). Other core pillars of the program include mental wellness support to build emotional intelligence and prepare students with effective coping mechanisms and civic engagement opportunities that build social consciousness and ensure all students are equipped to share their voice. Parents are engaged through a curriculum that recognizes them as key to their child's educational success and complements their child's learning in social-emotional skills and academics.




JUNIOR BUILDING LEADERS



196  
TOTAL CLIENTS SERVED

2,300  
SERVICES PROVIDED



BUILDING LEADERS

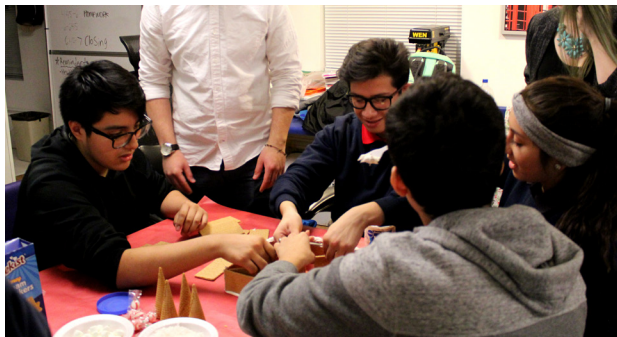


86  
TOTAL CLIENTS SERVED

650  
SERVICES PROVIDED



COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS



203  
TOTAL CLIENTS SERVED

673  
SERVICES PROVIDED



Olivia is a 7th grade student who has been part of Gads Hill Center since she was 8 years old. In 2016, Olivia and her parents, Karolina and Benjamin, moved from Phoenix to Chicago to be closer to her mother's family. Curious and energetic, Olivia has always shown great enthusiasm for environmental science; even after four years in Chicago, she is mesmerized by the snow but also misses the desert flora and hiking trails of the southwest.

Like many children who move to a new place, Olivia had some difficulties adjusting, she often felt anxious and shy when participating in group activities; nonetheless she had hope for a better future with her family. To help her adapt, her parents enrolled Olivia in Gads Hill Center's Junior Building Leaders (JBL) program to make friends and support her academic development. She loved the classes, especially the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) focused curriculum. By participating in JBL's STEM curriculum, Olivia's confidence began to grow and her love for science was reinforced. Olivia began to feel more comfortable sharing her ideas and was able to make new friends that shared her passion for science. Now, she has participated in nearly every extracurricular activity that GHC offers, from Math Circles to Kitchen Possible; you name it and Olivia has been leading by example.

When Chicago Public Schools transitioned to remote learning during the 2019-2020 school year, Olivia became even more determined to succeed in school. With the help of her parents, she enrolled in GHC's technology education programs to build the whole family's computer literacy. Gads Hill Center is so proud of Olivia, who has found her footing in her new home while showing increased enthusiasm for her education.

# COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

Research reveals that strong networks and access to resources result in a measurable improvement in community health outcomes. This access strengthens family health and their capacity to support children to succeed academically and beyond. We promote holistic family health by partnering with parents, schools, and organizations to provide physical and mental wellness services, foster civic engagement to advance social change, and strengthen families to support their children’s educational success.




HEALTHY MOVES



**891**  
TOTAL CLIENTS SERVED

**160**  
EVENTS CONDUCTED



PLAYSTREETS



**15,264**  
TOTAL CLIENTS SERVED

**90**  
EVENTS CONDUCTED



COMMUNITY SERVICES



**1,652**  
TOTAL CLIENTS SERVED

**160**  
EVENTS CONDUCTED

Roberta and her family moved to Chicago’s North Lawndale neighborhood in the summer of 2019. With her twins, Edgar and Esperanza, preparing to begin second grade in the fall, she was eager to explore new opportunities for the three of them to connect with the community. The family attended a Gads Hill Center PlayStreets event that summer, which supports the development of healthier communities by creating safe and accessible residential play areas for kids to be active and for communities to come together. Edgar and Esperanza had a wonderful day playing soccer and jumping in the bounce house with other kids their age. Meanwhile, as Roberta learned more about Gads Hill Center’s programs, she decided to enroll the twins in GHC’s Youth Programs.

Connecting with other parents during PlayStreets inspired Roberta to sign up for our Healthy Moves cohort, a network of trained Health and Community Engagement Promoters. Gads Hill Center’s unique Healthy Moves curriculum trains health promoters to improve health outcomes and promote civic engagement for low-income families through developing skills in health, nutrition, mental wellness, and advocacy. The curriculum equipped Roberta with the knowledge and tools to navigate resources in her new community and leveraged her bilingual abilities to inform and advocate for others. Throughout 2020, Roberta joined local elected officials to perform census outreach and voter registration, successfully supporting the registration of over 2,000 first-time voters. Even after the COVID-19 pandemic began, Roberta followed health protocols and continued engaging with her community.

Roberta is currently attending early childhood education classes at a local college but continues to support her community through virtual workshops to help new families like hers stay connected and stand together.





## DONORS

JULY 1, 2019 - JUNE 30, 2020

ALL OF US AT GADS HILL CENTER EXPRESS OUR DEEPEST GRATITUDE TO THE GENEROUS INDIVIDUALS, FOUNDATIONS, AND CORPORATE DONORS WHO MAKE OUR WORK POSSIBLE. TOGETHER, WE ARE BUILDING A STRONGER CHICAGO



### \$50,000+

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- » HEALTHY COMMUNITIES FOUNDATION
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- » MICHAEL REESE HEALTH TRUST
- » PAUL M. ANGELL FAMILY FOUNDATION
- » POLK BROS. FOUNDATION
- » THE JOHN R. FLANAGAN CHARITABLE FOUNDATION
- » UNIDOSUS

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- » UNITED WAY OF METRO CHICAGO IMPACT FUND, A FUND OF THE MCCORMICK FOUNDATION
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- » SANDRA SEIM
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- » STEVE AND WENDY FROST
- » STEVEN PFLAUM
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- » SUSAN KUEN GREGORY
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- » VIRGINIA MARTINEZ J.D.
- » WEC ENERGY GROUP
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## IN-KIND

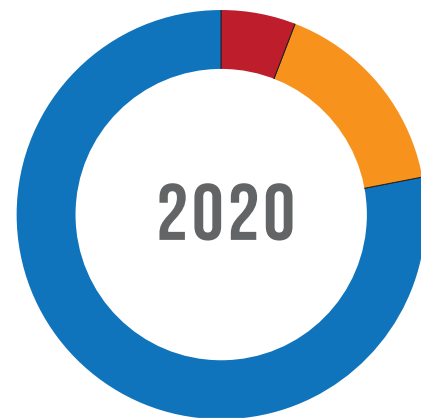
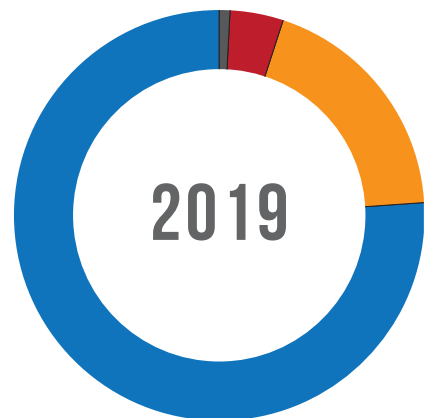
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- » ZANIES COMEDY CLUB

# FINANCIALS

## REVENUES

	2020	2019
Contributions .....	1,193,108	1,277,819
In-Kind Contributions .....	39,112	59,523
United Way of Metropolitan Chicago .....	45,500	25,000
Fees & Grants from Governmental Agencies .....	8,276,627	7,880,193
Program Service Fees .....	78,875	117,069
Interest and Dividends .....	81,674	88,768
Gain (loss) on Investments .....	23,397	58,700
Miscellaneous Income .....	49,009	45,382
<b>Total Revenues and Other Support</b>	<b>9,787,302</b>	<b>9,552,454</b>



- Management & General
- Youth & Community Services
- Children's Services
- Fundraising

## EXPENSES

### Program Services:

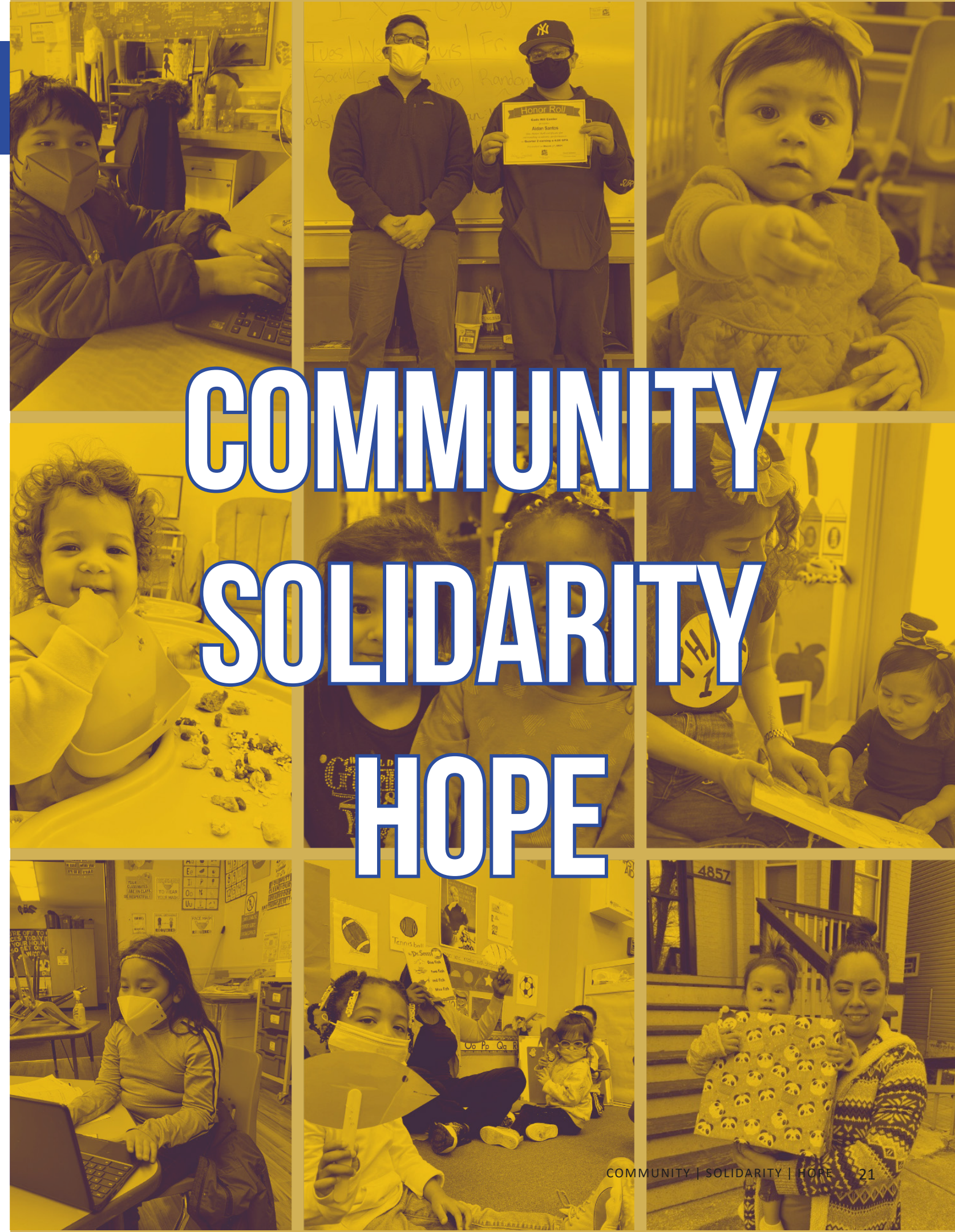
Children's Services .....	7,511,559	5,941,710
Youth & Community Services .....	1,568,757	1,496,587

### Supporting Services:

Management & General .....	575,408	323,822
Fundraising .....	40,726	102,547

<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>9,696,450</b>	<b>7,864,666</b>
-----------------------	------------------	------------------

Change in Net Assets .....	90,852	1,687,788
Net Assets at Beginning of Year .....	8,150,593	6,462,805
Net Assets at End of Year .....	8,241,445	8,150,593



COMMUNITY  
SOLIDARITY  
HOPE

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

# EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP



**MARK S. HERSH**  
PRESIDENT



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