

# Annual Report

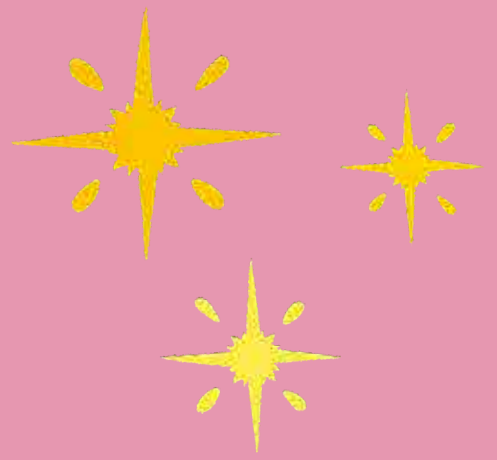
2024



Cornerstone  
Community  
Outreach

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# Cornerstone's Mission



## Mission

Addressing Homelessness, Providing Shelter, Accepting People, Finding Home, through the operation of charitable community development programs that improves the quality of life for low-income, disadvantaged, displaced, unhoused and underprivileged individuals, families and communities.

“People can have a respite from the fear and uncertainty of sleeping in their car, on the train, or outside. They can have a shower, meals, and a bed. More than that, they can have a renewed spirit and a renewed sense of hope.”

– Eve Haycock, Naomi Women’s Shelter Supervisor

“Ultimately, our goal is to ensure everyone has access to safe housing, nutritious food, and, most importantly, dignity, no matter their plight.”

–Andrew Winter, CEO



# Letter From Executive Director Andrew Winter

The year at Cornerstone Community Outreach has been one of deep commitment, daily resilience, and meaningful transformation. Reflecting on 2024, we can all be proud of coming together to offer each person the opportunity to find care, community, and a new start.

This past year, Cornerstone provided housing and support to 592 people, including 108 families, 204 children, and 388 adults, across our three shelter programs. With your support, we served over 85,000 meals, hosted 130 days of on-site medical care, provided multiple weekly behavioral health sessions, and met countless basic needs, from school supplies to shoes for every child. Most of those who came to us arrived with no income, yet with care and stability, many found employment, moved into housing, and began rebuilding their lives. At Cornerstone, dignity is restored one step at a time.

But our work is more than numbers. It's Sheila's journey from displacement in Haiti to graduation as a certified nursing assistant in Chicago. It's the joyful sounds of a summer block party, and the quiet resolve of volunteers sorting donations. These moments remind us that real change grows from community, from the shared belief that everyone deserves housing, support, and a path forward.

As we step into a new year, we invite you to walk with us. The needs are urgent, and our vision is bold: expanding medically integrated shelter, deepening trauma-informed care, and continuing to welcome each person with dignity. Your time, your voice, and your generosity make this work possible. Whether you've journeyed with us for years or are just now learning our story, we welcome you into the heart of this mission. Together, we can turn opportunity into healing, and ensure that everyone has a place to call home.

Andrew Winter, CEO



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# Who is Cornerstone?



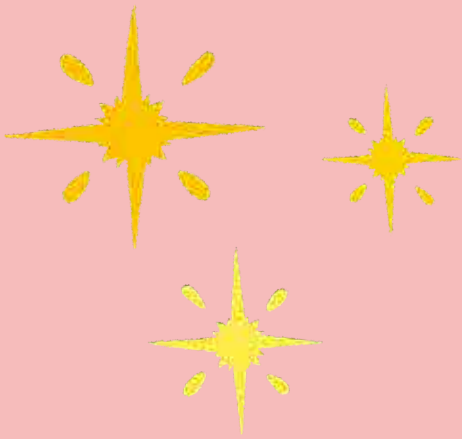
## Cornerstone's Services

- trauma informed case management
- 24/7 temporary housing
- on-site medical care
- therapy referrals
- move-out resources
- three meals daily
- clothes, shoes, hygiene and baby care items
- rooftop garden and playground access
- after-school tutoring

Cornerstone Community Outreach (CCO) is a Chicago-based nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to addressing homelessness in Chicago since 1989. CCO operates three shelters with a transitional-housing model. Hannah House serves 55 moms and kids each night, Naomi serves 72 single adults, and Sylvia serves 30 families. In 2024, Cornerstone served 592 individuals through our integrative case management and housing services.

All residents in our programs receive personalized case management, referrals, and advocacy from CCO staff and partner agencies, ensuring that each person's unique needs are met. All services are designed to help residents feel cared for and empowered as they work toward self-sufficiency and permanent housing.

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# 2024 Statistics At-a-Glance



**70**

**households  
housed**

74 adults and 44 children



**592**

**individuals  
received case  
management**



**130**

**days of on-site  
medical care**



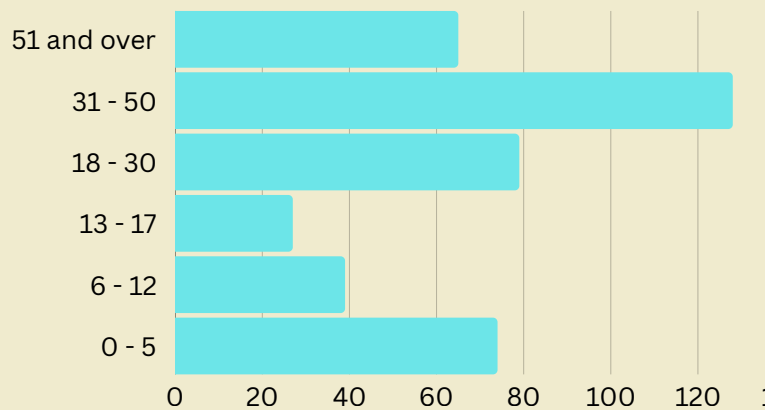
**82,125**

**meals  
served**

# 2024 Statistics Continued

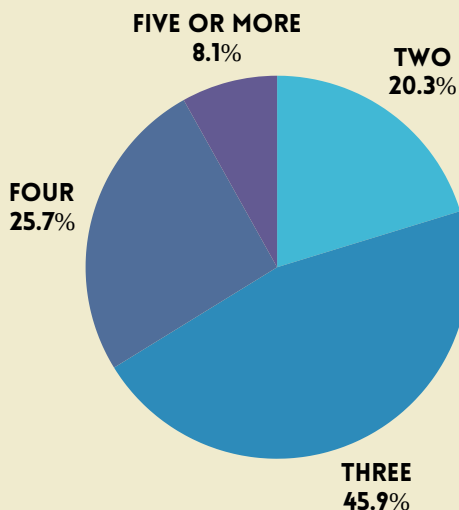
In 2024, we saw a rise of over 8% in the number of clients entering CCO with no income whatsoever - this percentage is now 93%.

Across CCO's three programs, Cornerstone serves individuals of all ages.

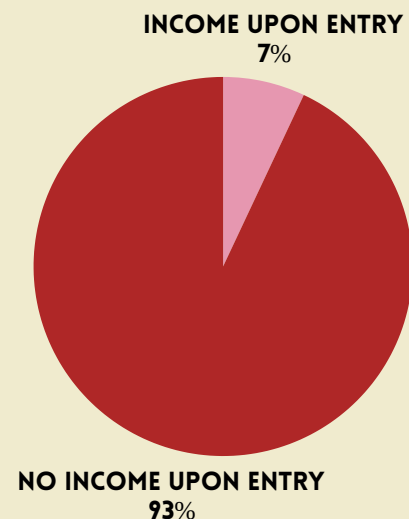


“Systemic issues contribute to the rise in older adults experiencing homelessness [such as] weak safety nets, incarceration, an increasing lack of affordable housing, and the end of COVID assistance.”

-Beth Nicholls



Households in our family programs have an average of three members, with some of our largest families with 7 members.



The vast majority of clients coming into Cornerstone have no income whatsoever.



# 2024 Happenings



## Cornerstone's Annual Block Party!

Cornerstone hosted a summer kick-off for the neighborhood with bubbles, dancing, possums, and more!



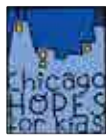
## Chicago's Best Baker Contest

In July, Cornerstone partnered with Chicago's Best Baker to raise funds for CCO while bringing together Chicago's baking community



# Back to School at Cornerstone

Every year, each kid gets new clothes and school supplies - and we throw a big party to make the return to classes special!



## AFTER-SCHOOL SUPPORT

Our partner, Chicago Hopes for Kids, comes on-site weekly during the school year to tutor kids



## CORNERSTONE SUPPLIES FOR KIDDOS



1 high-quality backpack



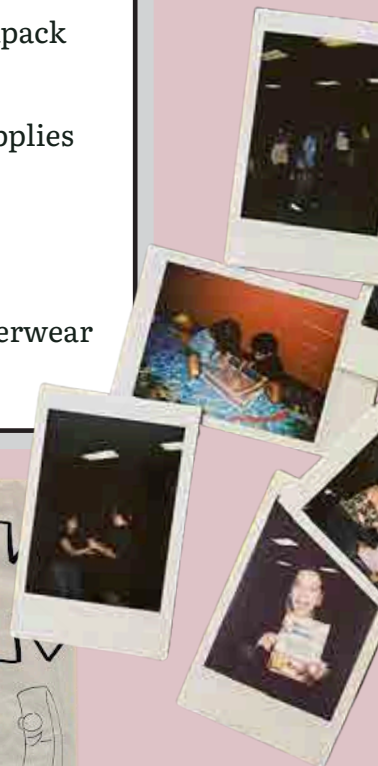
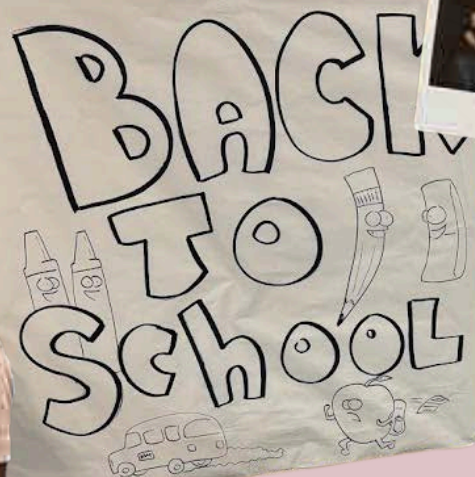
all CPS required supplies



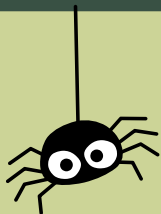
1 new pair of shoes



5 pairs socks + underwear







thank u sharon sims,  
costume donor!



## Haunt the Halls at Cornerstone

Each kid picks out a  
Halloween costume!  
This year's favorites -  
Spidermen and  
Princesses!



Partners from across Chicago come together to  
make sure each child and each adult gets a heap  
of fabulous gifts!



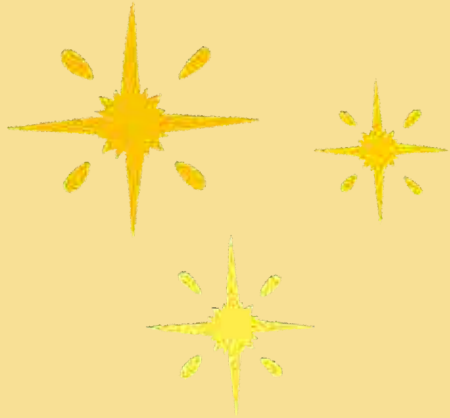
"We had never had a  
Christmas like this.  
We were so happy with  
the gifts."

-mother of 5



## Cornerstone Christmas

Cornerstone pulls out all the stops for  
Christmas - every single resident gets  
showered with gifts, and every program  
celebrates with a Christmas party!



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# A Message to Our Volunteers

from Donna Hall

I want to take the time to thank our volunteers, the men, women, and children who have offered a helping hand in so many ways. It's a challenge to keep track of the wonderful ways you've worked alongside us. It is my personal belief that CCO has the absolute best volunteers in all of Chicago. They faithfully show up, work hard, and bring both joy and hope to us.

Some people have a romantic notion of what volunteering looks like. But our volunteers are realists. Volunteering is not romantic. Volunteering is rather a tough creature. It stands with muddy boots planted firmly in the quagmire of humanity as it offers a welcoming hand to others who need to find their footing.



**vive.**



I'm one of those people who needs that welcoming hand. Our Events Team needs that welcoming hand. The whole of CCO needs those hands as we work together to create a place of love, warmth, and hope to the children, the women, and the men who are experiencing homelessness.

Emily Dickinson has a poem about hope. She likens hope to a "thing with feathers that perches in the soul". Its a delicate little bird, this hope that she writes about. It's a

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little bird that could be “abashed by the storm”. But our volunteers are built of sterner stuff. They give us a different kind of hope. But it’s not a romantic thing with wings. It’s a “boots on the ground” kind of hope. It’s the kind of hope that rolls up its sleeves to get the work done.

In her poem “Hope is not a Bird, Emily, It’s a Sewer Rat”, Caitlin Seida tells us that hope “thrives in the discards and survives in the ugliest parts of our world, able to find a way on when nothing else can even find a way in.” She calls hope a “gritty, nasty little carrier of such diseases as Optimism, Persistence, Perseverance, and Joy.” It’s the kind of hope that “still shows up to work on time the next day looking no worse for the wear.” Caitlin Seida is a realist.

Our volunteers are a variety pack of people who join our incredible family of like minded people whose desire is to serve others in the best ways that they can.



**LAKEFRONT**  
ROOFING & SIDING SUPPLY

They are willing to do the task before them - whether that’s wrapping Christmas presents or organizing storage areas. They sort, shop, haul all sorts of heavy stuff up five flights of stairs. They decorate, translate, feed, connect, and share. They organize drives, diapers, socks, back to school supplies . . . the list goes on and on.

One of our youngest volunteers is a tiny little Girl Scout. She’s a great sales person. As she’s filling out someone’s Girl Scout cookie order, she’ll ask, “wanna add an extra box to your order for a shelter?” I’m walking across the street one day, and I see this breezy little thing carrying a box bigger than she is. “Can I help you, honey?” I ask. “No. I got it” That box was full of cookies. So was the next box. And the next box. Wouldn’t even let her mom or me help her unload them. She had to see the task to completion. She’s serving others in the best way she can. This is the quality of our volunteers - from the elementary student to the octogenarian.

These acts of kindness produce hope. And it doesn’t go unnoticed. It’s no small thing to serve others. We see it and we are better for it.

Thank you.

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# Sheila's Story



**Written by Ellen Raedeke. Sheila's quotes are translated from Haitian French.**

“I want to say that the situation in my country is very hard.”

Sheila, a client from our Naomi program, tells us about what brought her to Cornerstone. She came from Haiti to Chicago last year, and 11 months later she has a job and a home of her own.

Growing up, Sheila studied rigorously. She was a high achiever and strongly believed in her own responsibility to her people. But she was kidnapped on her way to work as a young woman, an event which highlighted her need to escape Haiti, the country she loved so much. “There is no food, no hospital, no education. I didn't see my life there. I came to America. Sometimes I'm still crying for my family, sometimes I'm still crying for my country.” With the help of her niece, Sheila made her way to Chicago and landed at Cornerstone.

She says, “Last year, when I came here I did not speak English very well. Trust me. You helped me go to Truman college,” she says, addressing her case manager, Eve. “It's a very professional school - when you're not speaking English well, the teachers have patience for you.” When asked what she most longed for upon her arrival, Sheila says that she wanted to go to school, go to church, and take care of her family and her community - and that's exactly what she's been doing ever since. She wanted to pay for her education on her own, so she got a job and started taking classes at Truman College. She found comfort in prayer, in walking the 20 minutes to Lake Michigan, in reading, and in listening to music.

“The shelter helped me with getting a doctor, with food, with clothes, and shoes,” she says, and “I see the team working - you have been given a job to do, and you do it well.”



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## Sheila's Story Continued

Sheila says she is leaving with contentment. She has not stopped thinking about her family, her community, back in Haiti. She has an admirable love and compassion for the country that was so unsafe that she had to leave - she says, "I tell you, I love my country, I love my people", she says, and laughs, "and sometimes, the people are crazy." Really, her stay at Cornerstone is just a tiny piece of Sheila's life.

I happened to meet Sheila for the first time just a few weeks before she moved out of Cornerstone. She was wearing a sophisticated white pants-and-top set, and she told me she was about to leave for her graduation ceremony. That day, she got her nursing assistant certificate, and walked in cap and gown.

Just a few weeks later, Sheila, the case managers, and the program aides on the womens' floor sang Kool and the Gang's "Celebration", and danced, as the proverbial ink dried on Sheila's new lease. It was a day of great accomplishment for Sheila - a milestone of her journey to the United States. She's now working as a certified nursing assistant, a job which she loves. And she has her own kitchen now (she loved to cook back in Haiti, and she was good at it).

We wish the absolute best for Sheila, for her family, and for the communities she loves.

"It's time to come together -  
It's up to you, what's your pleasure?  
Everyone around the world, come on!  
It's a celebration!"



# Financial Overview

In the previous pages, you've seen the impact of Cornerstone's work this past year; families housed, nutritious meals served, education expanded, and hope renewed.

## Total Revenue \$4,149,878

### Sources of Revenue

Government Grants - \$3,154,324 - **76%**

Individual Donations - \$263,990 - **6%**

Foundation & Corporate Support - \$253,763 - **6%**

In-kind Support - \$456,116 - **11%**

Other Income (Sale, events)- \$21,686 - **1%**

## Total Expense \$4,871,918

### How Funds Were Used

Shelter & Housing Programs - \$4,039,509 - **83%**

Food & Nutrition - \$464,000 - **10%**

Medical & Behavioral Health Support - \$72,949 - **1%**

Administrative Costs - \$241,702 - **5%**

Fundraising- \$53,758 - **1%**

**94%** of all expenses went directly to programs and services.

CCO practices responsible stewardship of all gifts and grants, is working to maintain a balanced budget, and is grateful for your meaningful support. Above is a summary of the financial support and costs that made this work possible.

Annual financial statements and single audit will be available at [ccolife.org](http://ccolife.org)

# Funded in Part By...



## Thank you to our Event Sponsors!



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