



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES
ILLINOIS

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES ILLINOIS AND WINTRUST FINANCIAL PARTNER TO RAISE AWARENESS FOR ILLINOIS' MOST VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Over one million drivers and passersby are expected to see The Mural Building along the Kennedy Expressway from now until April. The playful design is dedicated to giving a voice to at-risk youth and children in foster care - #OurHopeTheirDreams.

February 23, 2016 (Chicago, IL) – SOS Children's Villages Illinois, a 501(c)3 child-welfare agency, and Wintrust Financial are partnering to raise awareness for at-risk youth and children in foster care. The mural design spread across The Mural Building, located at 1735 N. Ashland Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60622, and viewable from the Kennedy Expressway, was developed by Wintrust Financial in honor of SOS Children's Villages Illinois' commitment not only to the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of the children in care, but also the organization's capacity to rekindle hope, allowing each child to dream of a brighter future.

The mural puts children in foster care, an often times marginalized group of society, in front of the nearly 327,000 vehicles traveling on the Kennedy, one of the busiest roads in Illinois, each day. It is anticipated that the mural will be viewed by an estimated 1 million drivers during its month-long campaign. The mural sheds light on the mission of SOS Children's Villages Illinois to ensure every child belongs to a family and grows with love, respect, and security, as well as highlights for viewers of the mural that these good works all take place within Chicagoland's very own backyard.

"We are proud to partner with Wintrust Financial to raise awareness for the children and families in our care," stated Tim McCormick, CEO of SOS Children's Villages Illinois. "Through our collective imagination, we have the power to envision and create new opportunities for each child we serve, renewing in them a capacity to dream and maximize their fullest potential."

Wintrust Financial has been a longtime supporter and advocate for SOS Children's Villages Illinois. Through a dedicated team focused on corporate social responsibility, Wintrust Financial has proven to be a valuable partner through both funding and leadership that has allowed the organization to continue providing services that strengthen families and transform lives.

"The SOS Children's Villages model is like a light under a bushel basket that more people need to know about and support," said Wintrust President & CEO Edward J. Wehmer. "That's why we're glad to help expose this organization wherever we can. We hope this mural helps lift the basket to encourage more people to take notice of the important work SOS does."

PRESS RELEASE

For more information on SOS Children's Villages Illinois' public awareness campaign to highlight the programs and services they provide to Illinois' most vulnerable children and families, visit sosillinois.org, or search #OurHopeTheirDreams.

About SOS Children's Villages Illinois:

SOS Children's Villages Illinois is a non-profit, child welfare agency that unites brothers and sisters in foster care and provides a safe space to heal for at-risk youth. Currently, the organization operates four sites: three Villages providing sibling group foster care at an 18-home Village (opened in 1993) in Lockport, Illinois; a 19-home Village (opened in 2004) in the Auburn Gresham, Englewood neighborhood of Chicago; and a 14-home Village (opened 2014) in the Roosevelt Square Community of Chicago, as well as, Casa Tepeyac (acquired in 2011), located in the Back of the Yards neighborhood of Chicago, which is a short-term residential facility designed to assist at-risk male youth, ages 12-17.

SOS Children's Villages Illinois celebrates a 100% high school graduation rate, compared to a national average of 50% for children in foster care. Since 2006, SOS Children's Villages Illinois has received 7 consecutive 4-star evaluations from Charity Navigator. Only 2% of charities rated achieve this, indicating that SOS Children's Villages Illinois outperforms most other charities in America. Additionally, in November 2015, *Chicago Magazine* named SOS Children's Villages Illinois one of "Twenty Top Charities in Chicago."

About Wintrust Financial Corporation

Wintrust is a financial holding company with nearly \$23 billion in assets and a common stock traded on the NASDAQ Global Select Market. Wintrust provides traditional commercial and community banking services; asset-based lending; wealth management services; commercial insurance premium financing; mortgage origination; short-term accounts receivable financing; and certain administrative services, such as data processing of payrolls, billing and treasury management services. Wintrust was created as the alternative to the big banks, offering the solutions and services of larger competitors with the customer-focus and service that can only be found at a true community bank or local financial services company. The Wintrust Community Bank family has more than 150 community bank locations across the Chicagoland area, southern Wisconsin and northwest Indiana.

Wintrust Community Banks are Members FDIC and Equal Housing Lenders.

For more information about SOS Children's Villages Illinois, please contact:

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