



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES
ILLINOIS

SOS NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2016

FORWARD BOUND: ONE SUCCESS AT A TIME

CELEBRATING THE CLASS OF 2016

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OUR EXTENDED FAMILY:
MOVES US FORWARD

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**SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES**
ILLINOIS

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DO WE HAVE YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS?

Don't miss out on event announcements and Village news.
Send your e-mail address to:

YWAGENER@SOSILLINOIS.ORG

We'll make sure you're on the list!

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Back-to-School Supply Drive:

July 15 - August 31, 2016

Golf Outing: September 15, 2016

Evening of Hope: October 20, 2016

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CEO Message

LOOKING FORWARD TO A SUMMER OF SUCCESSES

**“WITH YOUR BACKING AND BELIEF,
WE ARE ABLE TO HELP CHANGE THE
NARRATIVE TO ONE OF PROMISE.”**

SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES ILLINOIS CEO - TIM MCCORMICK



Summer is a time to enjoy warm weather, longer days, and family fun. It is also a time to prepare for next chapters and beginnings, which is what summer means to us at SOS Children's Villages Illinois. Even though school is out, we do not stop preparing and planning in our Villages. We know that everything we do this summer makes a difference.

Our recent graduates from kindergarten, eighth grade, and high school remind us of the importance of remaining invested and active throughout the summer months. At our first Village-wide graduation party at the end of June, we recognized their achievements. It was a special day and a reminder that while one chapter ends, we are writing the next. For our youth, that means spending time at summer camp and experiencing new opportunities for growth and enrichment, preparing for post-secondary education, and keeping their minds active and ready for the next academic year.

Their success is no accident. It is a result of the hard work by our Foster Parents and everyone in our Villages—

and your support. Celebrating our graduates reminds us that we must also applaud you, our community of donors, partners, sponsors, and friends, for your irreplaceable role in helping us maintain a 100% high school graduation rate for yet another year. It is with your support of our educational programming, particularly our College Bound and Beyond program—a three-tiered program aiding youth, ages 12-22, in preparing for college and the workforce—that allows us to proudly report that in 2015: 98% of youth attended 90% or more school days, and 96% of youth in an educational program earned credits, advanced one grade level, or earned a diploma or certificate.

To remind you of just what that means, it is important to put this into perspective against the national average: approximately only 50% of youth in traditional foster care graduate from high school, and less than 3% earn a college degree. With your backing and belief, we are able to help change the narrative to one of promise.

It is this idea of storytelling and potential that has informed our growth throughout the years. You have been active players in sharing our story of hope, and continue to be our strongest advocates. You understand that our Villages are a catalyst for success: they are built with intention, meant to improve the lives of each child and all families who spend time within and beyond their walls. We know our Foster Parents do not work in isolation; they are surrounded by a care team of professionals and resources. In that same way, neither our Villages nor mission exist without our greater communities.

We thank you for being an integral part of our community. We hope you will join us in continuing to be invested, informed, and involved in our mission. As you continue reading, you'll see evidence of your commitment and our continuous journey to improve the care and services we provide. You inspire us to continue to be better, and together we will seek new possibilities for success and transformation.

CELEBRATING THE CLASS OF 2016



"My advice to our graduates would be to act lovingly and kindly to others even when you do not feel like it. Resist the temptation to put yourself first all the time. Stick up for the kid/person who other people tease. Pursue justice for those who have been left out. Rest in the comfort that God always loves you more than you can ever know. And never let life or other people steal your joy."

-Sr. Mary Ellen Lacy, Daughters of Charity,
SOS Children's Villages Illinois Board of Directors

Read more insights from Sr. Mary Ellen Lacy on our blog: www.sosillinois.org/connect

2016 GRADUATION PARTY

On June 24, 2016, we celebrated all of our 2016 graduates at a special Village-wide graduation party at our Lockport Village.

Special thanks to Mosaic for sponsoring the event and running all of the amazing field games for the day.

Read more about the festivities on our blog at: www.sosillinois.org/connect.

Top right: SOS Children's Villages Illinois graduate wearing the official event t-shirt

Bottom right: Mosaic Cares volunteers



PAVING THE WAY FOR SUCCESS

2ND ANNUAL BACK-TO-SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE

Last year we embarked on our first-ever back-to-school supply drive, and thanks to your overwhelming support it was a great success. As we look ahead to the 2016-2017 school year, and because of your amazing response, we ask for your help again.

Please join us for our 2nd Annual Back-to-School Supply Drive, starting **July 15, 2016** through **August 31, 2016**.

Visit sosillinois.org for links to our wish-list, key dates, and more. Together, let's lighten the load on our Foster Parents and send the children back to school for another great year of learning.



BECOME A DREAM MAKER: JOIN OUR MONTHLY GIVING CLUB



CHAMPION YOUNG DREAMERS BECOME A DREAM MAKER

SIERRA DREAMS OF BEING A
REGISTERED NURSE.

WE KNOW SHE CAN DO IT.

www.sosillinois.org/giving/become-a-dream-maker

Dream Makers are a special group of SOS Illinois' most passionate and thoughtful supporters.

Your automatic monthly gift provides the sustained resources needed to help the foster children in our care – Illinois' most vulnerable children.

Monthly giving is the easiest and most efficient way to support SOS Children's Villages Illinois. Gifts of all sizes are greatly appreciated. You can easily start today at support.sosillinois.org and change your giving at any time.

Support our young dreamers and help us continue to celebrate a 100% high school graduation rate.

Become a Dream Maker today!

OUR EXTENDED FAMILY:

CHAMPIONING OUR YOUNG DREAMERS THROUGH COLLEGE AND BEYOND

Ensuring educational successes and development for the young men and women in our care is a top priority at SOS Illinois. Our 100% high school graduation rate is a direct reflection of that. Pivotal to that success is our College Bound and Beyond Program, which involves a care team of Foster Parents, educators, and community members, ensuring each child successfully matriculates to the next grade level.

Each year we seek to improve the program. We couldn't do that without the generosity of the following corporate partners whose support only helps us better it. Thank you for your partnership and continued belief in our young dreamers.

- Chicago Blackhawks Community Fund, a McCormick Foundation Fund
- HSBC
- Mission & Ministry, Inc.
- Caterpillar
- US Bank
- Insurance Industry Charitable Foundation

Read more about the program on our blog at sosillinois.org/connect.



THE ILLINOIS CLEAN ENERGY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION HELPS US INVEST IN OUR COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT



We will be getting a little greener at SOS Children's Villages Illinois, thanks to The Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation's award for energy-efficient lighting-system upgrades in our facilities. These enhancements will help improve lighting quality while saving energy, reducing costs, and improving the environment.

The Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation is an independent foundation with a \$225 million endowment provided by Commonwealth Edison. Their mission is to "improve energy efficiency, advance the development and use of renewable energy resources, and protect natural areas and wildlife habitat in communities all across Illinois."

Thank you to the Foundation for including us in their important work and sharing the importance of investing in energy efficiency—just as we invest in our community.

MOVES US FORWARD

A CAREER DAY AT SWISSÔTEL CHICAGO

We encourage the children in our care at SOS Children's Villages Illinois to ask themselves "What do I want be when I grow up?" Some of our youth were able to explore that question in a real-life way at Swissôtel Chicago's Career Day event on April 20, 2016. Seven of our 8th-12th graders from our Chicago and Roosevelt Square Villages participated in the day's events, full of insight into the ins and outs of the hotel business.

Our youth toured the hotel and met employees from nearly every department. IT, engineering, kitchen, and housekeeping teams gave a behind-the-scenes glimpse into what

they do to keep things running smoothly at all times. The main floor, human resources, and executive staff gave our youth a view into professionalism and how to conduct themselves with customers, colleagues, or during interviews.

We are so grateful to all Swissôtel staff who took time out of their day to meet with our youth. Their time and effort made for a very important introduction to career considerations for our young men and women.



MOSAIC DONATES LAPTOPS FOR GRADUATES AND CASE MANAGERS



We are continuously seeking ways to provide the tools and resources our youth need in order to progress toward their goals. This May, Mosaic, in partnership with their Dell team, heard this need and answered it with a generous donation of 34 laptops.

Many of these laptops will find a fitting home with our recent graduates, to support them through their next steps—higher education or career endeavors. The laptops will also be put to great use by our hardworking case managers, who will now have an easy and portable way to keep notes and monitor cases while on the road and out of the office.

Our sincere gratitude to Mosaic and Dell for thinking of our graduating seniors and our caseworkers and allowing us to better support our SOS Children's Villages Illinois family.

SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES ILLINOIS

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SOS CHILDREN'S
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SAVE THE DATE

2016 EVENING OF HOPE: AROUND THE WORLD IN ONE NIGHT

When: Thursday, October 20, 2016

Where: Morgan Manufacturing
401 N. Morgan Street

Evening of Hope raises awareness and funds to support the programs at SOS Children's Villages Illinois. Please join us and make a difference for children in need at this year's event – *Around the World in One Night*. Event highlights include: a pre-event "VIP" reception for high-level sponsors; cocktail-style main event featuring food and drink from acclaimed chefs and vendors; and live music.

For sponsorship opportunities, tickets, and to learn more, visit support.sosillinois.org/eoh.

