



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES
ILLINOIS

PRESS RELEASE

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SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES ILLINOIS TO OPEN ITS BRAND-NEW ROOSEVELT SQUARE COMMUNITY CENTER THIS OCTOBER

The Community Center will serve the SOS Illinois Roosevelt Square Village and surrounding neighborhoods thanks to the Generous Support of Community Partners Wintrust, Maestro Cares Foundation, CHA, Local Officials, and others.

October 23, 2020 (Chicago, IL) – SOS Children's Villages Illinois, a non-profit, child-welfare agency serving at-risk youth and children in foster care, will complete construction on its new Roosevelt Square Community Center this October. Community partners Wintrust, Maestro Cares Foundation, Chicago Housing Authority, Local Officials, SOS Illinois Board of Directors, and others have helped bring this critical resource to the community. The Center will serve the [SOS Illinois](#) Roosevelt Square Village and the surrounding neighborhoods *near 13th Street and Blue Island Avenue*.

This 11,000+ square foot facility, designed by internationally recognized architect [Juan Moreno](#), is projected to serve over 5,000 individuals annually from University Village, Lower West Side/Pilsen, Little Village, North Lawndale, and other surrounding neighborhoods. The Center will serve as an urban prototype for the delivery of human services that will specifically provide:

- Academic, therapeutic, social, and recreational outlets for youth and families served at the Roosevelt Square Village homes
- A communal center for neighborhood residents – a safe place where they can meet in the community and connect to public resources and engage in training, activities, seminars, and special events
- Family meeting rooms and learning center providing financial and educational training

"We are excited to be at this incredible milestone, where we can present the completed building to our families, neighbors, and those who have shared our vision from the very beginning," said Tim McCormick, SOS Illinois CEO. "This Center will impact the lives of more than one hundred children and families in our care, as well as thousands of residents in the surrounding area. The next important step in this process is to open our

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doors to the public so we can fully realize the opportunity to transform lives by offering programs and services that will positively influence the community."

A culinary kitchen designed to educate the community about food and nutrition, including relevant job skills training, will be a key component of the Center. The centerpiece of a 3,000 square foot multi-purpose space, the kitchen will be designed to promote culinary demonstrations and hands-on learning.

"SOS Illinois is proud to be offering a unique culinary kitchen to support culinary and nutrition education programming, a much-needed resource in the community," said SOS Illinois Board President Jim Wolfe. "The Center's purpose is to provide critical wrap-around services to the children in our care, as well as to assist the community in a way that will have lasting effects. This skill-building component of the culinary kitchen will create a legacy of opportunity for so many to come."

Through numerous collaborations, partnerships, and commitments, SOS Illinois opened the [Roosevelt Square Village](#) on Chicago's near west side in November 2014. The Village of fourteen individual homes can collectively serve up to 84 children, 24 hours-a-day, 365 days-a-year.

"We are fortunate to be partnering on a project in our own community and hometown, Chicago! From Latin America to the U.S., serving disadvantaged children and their families is not only our mission but also our honor and purpose," said Henry Cárdenas, Co-Founder of Maestro Cares Foundation. "Having previously partnered with SOS Children's Villages on projects in Colombia, Guatemala, and Bolivia, we have come full circle to bring it back home. As our mission and the mission of SOS Children's Villages Illinois are in alignment, we look forward to continuing to change lives and build dreams."

The architectural planning, inspired by generous donations, will include the use of eco-friendly materials, like Cross Laminated Timber (CLT) and Glulam columns and beams, as well as sustainable and renewable energy sources, such as solar panels, and energy-efficient appliances and light fixtures. The site location and inclusion of an urban garden further promote the organization's commitment to responsible development.

The Roosevelt Square Community Center is located within the ABLA/Brooks Homes, a complex of 330 Section 8 rowhouses on the Lower West Side of Chicago. According to the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, as of June of 2020, the community surrounding our Roosevelt Square Village is 74% Hispanic/Latinx. 64.5% of households report speaking Spanish only, while 53.9% earn less than \$50,000 per year. 26.2% earn less than \$25,000 per year. 30.4% do not have a high school diploma.

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About SOS Children's Villages Illinois:

SOS Children's Villages Illinois, founded over 25 years ago, is a 501(c)3 child welfare agency that provides a stable home in a supportive, community environment designed to help children in need grow into caring, productive, and self-reliant adults. The SOS Children's Villages model differs from traditional foster care in emphasizing the following four components: 1) Children live together with their siblings, 2) Children receive care and support from a full-time, professionally trained Foster Parent, 3) Children grow up in a private, single-family home, 4) Children are supported by the Village, designed as an intentional community of care.

SOS Children's Villages Illinois 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; a 14-home Village (opened in 2014) in the Roosevelt Square Community of Chicago, as well as Casa Tepeyac (acquired in 2011), a facility that offers preventative and in-home services in the Back of the Yards neighborhood of Chicago.

SOS Children's Villages Illinois celebrates a 100% high school graduation rate, compared to a national average of 50% for children in foster care. In November 2015, *Chicago Magazine* named SOS Children's Villages Illinois one of the "Best Charities in Chicago." For more information on SOS Children's Villages Illinois, visit sosillinois.org.

About Maestro Cares Foundation:

Since the launch of its first home for orphaned boys in the Dominican Republic in 2014, the foundation has opened youth homes, community centers, foster homes, and launched an education program in Lima, Peru. All together the foundation has committed to 17 projects in 9 different countries providing safe and healthy environments for over 1,000 orphaned and disadvantaged youth in countries like such as Colombia, Mexico, Bolivia, Guatemala, El Salvador, as well as the U.S., to name a few.

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