



Fiscal Year 2020 Annual Report

**Together we can  
end child sexual abuse.**

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Dear Friends,

**The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted all of our lives**, and as I write this, I pause to send each of you well wishes and my gratitude.

Since opening our doors 19 years ago, nothing has impacted Chicago Children's Advocacy Center more than the challenges this pandemic has presented. As an essential service, we remained open and quickly pivoted our service delivery model to meet the needs of our children and families.

As we struggled with the pandemic and adjusted to our new way of working, we were then confronted with the social unrest brought forward by the killing of George Floyd. The renewed protests and demands for racial justice led us to examine our role in battling systemic racism and overcoming racial biases—in ourselves as well as our partners in the criminal, judicial, health, and child protective systems.

Children's Advocacy Centers were created over 30 years ago to bring a more victim-centered and child-friendly approach to the traditional policing model. Now, more than ever, ChicagoCAC and our partners are well-positioned to respond to our community in a trauma-informed way. We confront our own biases as we work to do better, be better, and ensure that we always live up to the promise of our approach.

**The shining stars in this darkness are you, our champions.** The generosity of our donors, community-minded corporate partners, private foundations, and government funders enabled us to remain open and focused on the children.

You have made it possible for us to remain resilient. As you review this report, Take pride in your investment and the difference you have made. For this, I thank you.

**Until we can meet again, be well.**



**Char Rivette**  
Executive Director

## Battling abuse and restoring lives



When a report of child sexual abuse is received in Chicago, ChicagoCAC is the *only* nonprofit authorized to lead the response. Coordinating the work of child protection, law enforcement, and medical agencies, we facilitate the investigation and infuse our trauma-informed care throughout to ensure the safety, health, and well-being of abused children.

Staff members of the following agencies work alongside ChicagoCAC staff and collaborate with us at the center. As a team, we work together in a trauma-informed and victim-centered approach, with team members communicating together, determining next steps, and protecting the children we serve.

Together, we are united with these partners to help each child tell their story—in their own words—to people who will listen, seek justice on their behalf, and set them on their path toward healing:

- ★ **Illinois Department of Children & Family Services (DCFS):** DCFS investigators assess the child's safety and decide whether abuse is indicated or unfounded.
- ★ **Chicago Police Department:** Special Investigations Unit detectives investigate allegations of sexual abuse by collecting evidence to determine whether a crime has been committed and arresting alleged perpetrators.
- ★ **Cook County Health:** Board-certified child abuse pediatricians from John H. Stroger, Jr. Hospital of Cook County run ChicagoCAC's on-site medical clinic. Clinicians provide comprehensive, trauma-informed exams, collect forensic evidence, and ensure clients and their siblings' health and safety.
- ★ **Cook County State's Attorney's Office:** State's attorneys provide legal expertise to determine whether a case of abuse can be prosecuted.

## Responding to the need: 2020 impact

In Fiscal Year 2020 (July 1, 2019-June 30, 2020) ChicagoCAC coordinated a multi-disciplinary response to 2,369 reports of child abuse:

- 1,601 cases of sexual abuse
- 365 cases of witness to violence
- 271 cases of risk of harm
- 94 cases of physical abuse
- 38 cases of sex trafficking



**1,924** children and their families were provided with advocacy services.



**1,887** forensic interviews were conducted.



**3,006** children participated in child life services.



**384** children and their families received mental health services.



**357** children were given medical exams.



**1,273** families were driven to the center.

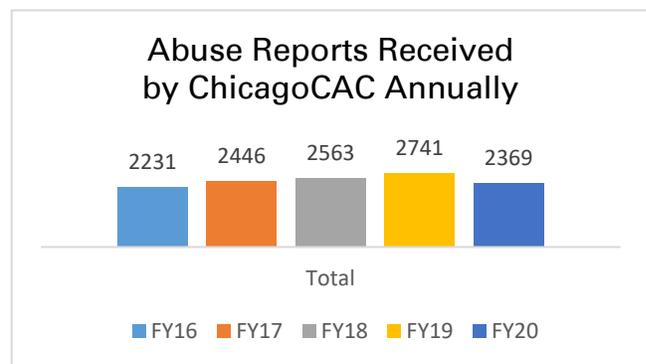


**40,511** people learned abuse prevention best practices.

## Reported cases of child abuse dropped due to COVID-19

Due to the pandemic, Illinois started closing down the state in March, with schools closing on March 17, 2020. The stay-at-home order mandates continued throughout the fourth quarter of FY20 (April-June).

As an essential service provider, we remained open in March and April to emergency cases but decreased the number of children seen daily in the center in order to implement safety measures. The social distancing requirements of the stay-at-home order—in addition to the reduction in abuse cases reported as children were isolated and removed from direct contact with teachers and other mandated reporters, resulted in a 42 percent decrease in forensic interviews and advocacy cases in the 4th quarter of FY20.



We experienced a significant drop of 16 percent in abuse referrals received from FY19 to FY20, which runs counter to the steady increase in cases received over many years. This reduction is consistent with other statistics published nationally on the rate of underreporting of abuse due to the pandemic.

The Child Life team saw a 19 percent decrease in the number of clients served, providing 12,532 service hours. The reduction in service hours is also directly related to the pandemic.

The Family Hope Center quickly converted to telehealth at the start of the pandemic. The number of therapy sessions completed increased from the previous year by 13%, from 6,082 in FY19 to 6,897 sessions in FY20.

## Investigating and advocating



Every report of child abuse that ChicagoCAC receives is coordinated by our Intake team, which activates our collaborative trauma-informed response process.

Each family is then assigned an advocate who greets them and gives them a guided tour of our medical clinic, interview rooms, and Child Life space.

ChicagoCAC has a Child Life team—something few CACs have—to provide compassionate, caring, child-led play to help children prepare for their forensic interviews and participate in medical exams.

Our forensic interviewers help each child tell their story, while the detective, DCFS investigator, and state's attorney assigned to their case watch through a one-way mirror and use the evidence collected to aid in their investigations. After the interview, these partners collaborate on a course of action, and the advocate provides immediate therapeutic support and connects their families with much-needed services during this tumultuous time.

Mac, our comfort dog, was used in 77 forensic interviews this year to help calm and reassure children at our center. Preliminary data indicate that his presence may make children feel more comfortable sharing their stories with our interviewers and partners.

## Providing hope and healing virtually

During the week of March 9, realizing the pandemic was upon us, we researched telehealth options and chose Zoom as the best option due to its HIPAA compliant, encrypted version. A week later, on March 16, all mental health services transitioned to a virtual format (or phone if the family did not have access to the Internet).

Initially, some families declined remote services, wanting to wait for in-person to resume. Eventually, most of these families engaged to some extent.

The move to telehealth went well overall, with families able to engage at a high rate (75%). However, the quality of therapy was impacted by the following challenges:

- Many children and parents don't have a secure private space in the home for their therapy sessions.
- It's difficult to engage children who developmentally would benefit from play or movement-based therapy.
- It's harder to engage children online and assess their symptoms.

Nevertheless, we believe that telehealth, due to its ability to decrease access barriers, will continue to be offered as a treatment option for families in the future.



In February, we marked the first graduate from ChicagoCAC's new Problematic Sexual Behavior-Cognitive Behavioral Therapy group, the first of its kind in Chicago for children ages 7 to 12. Utilizing a curriculum developed by the University of Oklahoma's National Center on Sexual Behavior in Youth, our therapists work with these families weekly in a virtual format.



## Adapting prevention education to a virtual world

Our Education, Prevention and Policy team adapted their work in mid-March to be completely virtual, and now offers our full menu of educational trainings for adults over Zoom. Over the last several months, many training events have been held virtually, and we have been able to share our message of prevention with adults who need to hear it.

Thanks to funding from the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, we have revised our Keeping My Family Safe workbook and produced seven prevention videos for educational purposes.

## Working on policies that prevent abuse and protect children

Our policy advocacy plans changed dramatically in March due to the suspension of the Illinois Spring Legislative Session. Since then, we've been preparing to advocate for increased funding for CACs during the 2021 Legislative Session.

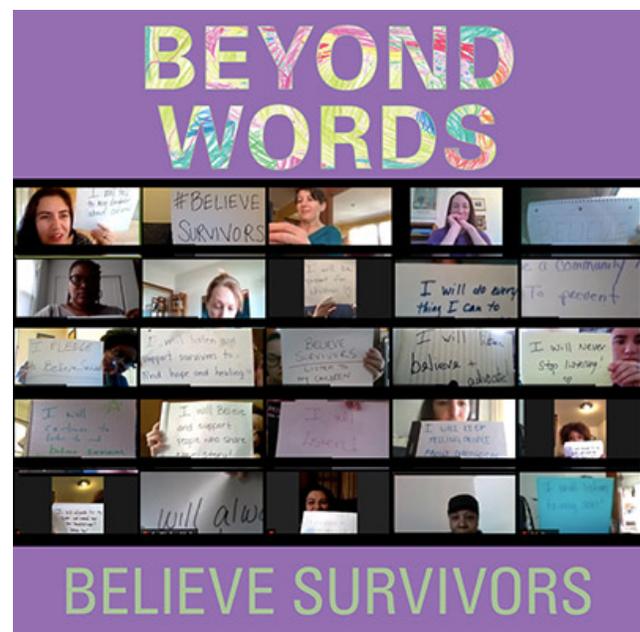
Our Executive Director was appointed to the Make Sexual and Severe Physical Abuse Fully Extinct (Make SAFE) Task Force this year. Created by Public Act 101-0531, which ChicagoCAC helped to write and pass in 2019, this group met regularly to address issues concerning the sexual abuse of students in school-related settings. Along with other Chicago Prevention Alliance members—a group of more than 20 youth-serving organizations in Chicago providing sexual harm prevention education to young people—we provided a presentation to task force members in June.

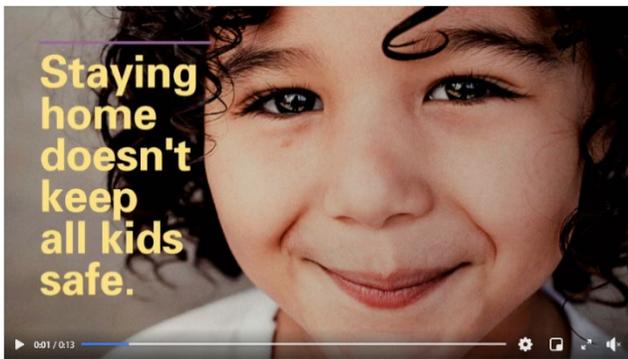
The task force submitted recommendations and best practices for preventing sexual abuse of students in school settings or by school-related perpetrators in a report to the Illinois General Assembly.

## Honoring survivors of child sexual abuse with Beyond Words

Beyond Words, hosted by our Community Advisory Council, is an annual reception to recognize April as Child Abuse Prevention and Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Originally planned as an in-person event, Beyond Words 2020 was held online and debuted prevention education videos featuring Council members sharing their perspective on prevention based on their own experiences.

The videos highlight the importance of an adult's role in keeping children safe. Nearly 50 event attendees showed love, support, and solidarity with survivors—with attendees holding messages on handmade signs.





## Shining a light and raising awareness

Because of the city and state's stay-at-home order in March, children were no longer with school staff daily. Trained experts and mandated reporters are often the first to spot and report signs of abuse. We needed to get the word out quickly that children in isolation at home with adults under increased stress are at greater risk than ever of abuse. It was crucial for all adults to keep an eye out for the children they know, and to call the DCFS hotline if they saw or heard any sign of abuse.

With an in-kind donation of services from marketing agency SmallGood and the cooperation of CBS News, we created an advertising campaign called Shine a Light to raise awareness of this public health crisis. Ads were shown on local television stations an estimated 11.4 million times. And with additional digital exposure, we were able to reach nearly 12 million people with our message.

## Luminary virtual auction and raffle

Because of the pandemic, we were forced to cancel our annual Luminary Award Dinner in May, an event with budgeted revenue of \$500,000. Thanks to the rapid response of our volunteer committee members and help from our Board of Directors, we pivoted plans and shifted to an online fundraising campaign featuring a virtual auction, raffle, and corporate sponsorships. The efforts paid off—raising \$290,000 in financial support.

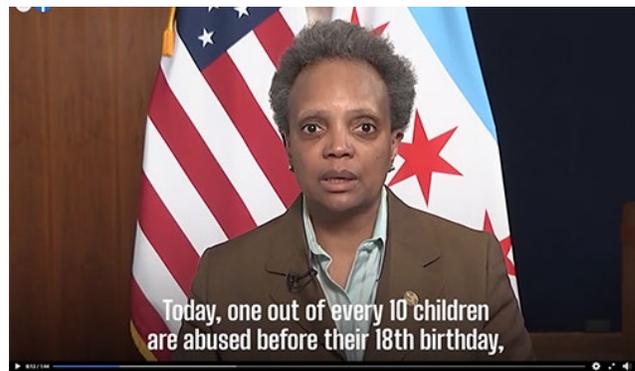
## Luminary Award Recipient Mayor Lori Lightfoot

Mayor Lightfoot was chosen as ChicagoCAC's Luminary Award recipient for 2020 because of her unwavering commitment to Chicago's children's health, safety, and well-being. In her video acceptance speech, she said,

"Child abuse doesn't stop because of COVID-19; it just becomes harder to see. Today, one out of every ten children are abused before their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, and 90 percent of those children know who their abusers are.

"Chicago Children's Advocacy Center stands at the forefront of our city's efforts to defend victims of child sexual abuse, along with other types of abuse impacting children.

"While I would have preferred to accept this award in person, I'm no less honored to have been chosen as ChicagoCAC's 2020 Luminary Award recipient.



"We all know that abuse thrives in periods of isolation, and I'm concerned, just as you are, with the impact COVID-19 has had on the already terrible circumstances facing too many of our children.

"With our children out of school and isolated at home, they no longer have direct contact with teachers, counselors, and other adults who are trained to recognize abuse.

"That's why now we must double down on our efforts to do the best we can to be a luminary for all of Chicago's children during this challenging time."

## Foundation Supporters

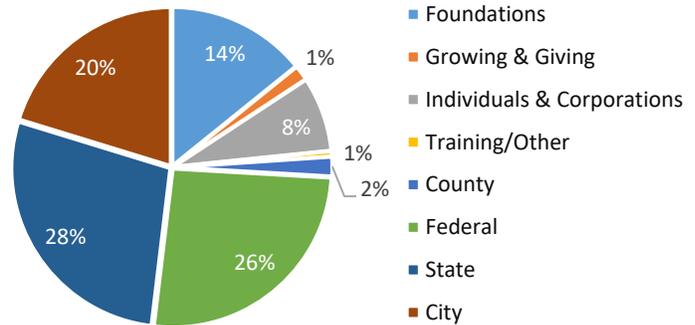
- ★ Paul M. Angell Family Foundation
- ★ The Blowitz-Ridgeway Foundation
- ★ Bright Promises Foundation
- ★ Charities Aid Foundation of America
- ★ Chicago White Sox Community Fund, a McCormick Foundation Fund
- ★ Child's Play Charity
- ★ CME Group Community Foundation
- ★ Col. Stanley R. McNeil Foundation
- ★ A.G. Cox Charity Trust
- ★ The Crown Family
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- ★ United Way of Metro Chicago
- ★ VNA Foundation
- ★ Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation
- ★ W. P. & H. B. White Foundation
- ★ Anonymous (3)

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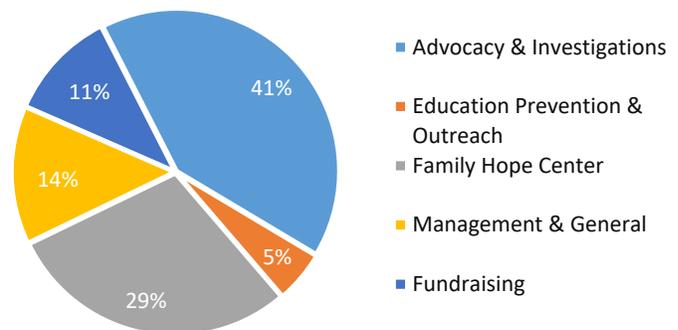
- ★ Chicago Department of Family and Support Services
- ★ Chicago Department of Public Health
- ★ Cook County Justice Advisory Council
- ★ Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority
- ★ Illinois Department of Children and Family Services
- ★ Office for Victims of Crime, US Department of Justice
- ★ Office of the Illinois Attorney General

## Fiscal Year 2020 Finances: July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020

Total Revenue: \$6,250,863



Total Expenses: \$ 6,571,113



Net Assets June 30, 2019: \$6,143,768

Net Assets June 30, 2020: \$5,823,518

Change in Net Assets: \$(320,250)

The above presentation is unaudited and excludes the net effect of a 10-year lease donated by the City of Chicago, as well as in-kind contributions and contributed services.

## ChicagoCAC is a National Children's Alliance Accredited Member

The National Children's Alliance, which maintains rigorous standards for children's advocacy centers across the United States, renewed our accredited membership in FY2020. This renewal represents our ongoing commitment, excellence, and adherence to NCA's high service standards to our community's children and families.



**Backed by**  
**National Children's Alliance®**  
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## In-Kind Supporters

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- ★ AT&T FACES Midwest
- ★ Erin Lavin Cabonargi
- ★ CBS 2
- ★ C+R Research
- ★ Chicago Beyond
- ★ Pamela Dawn
- ★ Nandi Duszynski
- ★ Equity International
- ★ Larry Ettner
- ★ Adrienne Fasano and Craig Bell
- ★ Sally Garon
- ★ Glenstar Asset Management, LLC
- ★ The Gnome Colony
- ★ Hilton | Asmus Contemporary
- ★ Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP
- ★ Illinois Sports Facilities Authority
- ★ Illinois State Police Forensic Science Center at Chicago
- ★ Chris Kenney and Maureen Kenney
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- ★ SmallGood, Ltd.
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- ★ Total Quality Logistics
- ★ United Airlines
- ★ Philip I. Waitzman
- ★ Mara & Liam Walsh
- ★ Marcus Yado
- ★ David Yarrow



## Sharing joy for the holidays

Our December 2019 Holiday Toy Drive was a huge success thanks to generous donors, volunteers, and staff. We received over 1,200 new toys and gift cards and distributed gifts to over 600 children. Each December, the children we serve and their families enjoy this event, which includes festive activities, food, and an opportunity for caregivers to “shop” (free of charge) for gifts for their children.

This year’s event featured cookie and ornament decoration, face painting, a hot chocolate bar, and self-care items for caregivers. Volunteer groups and corporate sponsors, including the Junior League, the ChicagoCAC Associates Board, Huron Consulting Group, QTS, and Morgan Stanley, contributed to the event and facilitated activities each night.”



## Back to School Drive

In August of 2019, we provided over 600 children we serve and their siblings with backpacks stuffed full of school supplies for the start of the school year. For this annual campaign, we partner with corporations and donors to gather the materials needed for kids to succeed in school and give their parents one less thing to worry about.

We are grateful to the 20 companies and many volunteers who collected school supplies and donated backpacks.

## Corporations & Organizations

- ★ ADP, LLC
- ★ AFLAC
- ★ Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago
- ★ Antares Capital
- ★ Bank of America (Shorewood)
- ★ Barclays
- ★ Barnes & Thornburg LLP
- ★ C+R Research
- ★ Catholic Bishop of Chicago
- ★ CDW Corporation
- ★ Chicago Bears Football Club, Inc.
- ★ CIBC Bank USA
- ★ Cigna Healthcare of Illinois, Inc.
- ★ ComEd, an Exelon Company
- ★ CRC Group
- ★ Dell
- ★ Deloitte Consulting LLP
- ★ Delta Dental of Illinois
- ★ Double Good
- ★ Emcor Services Team Mechanical
- ★ Fifth Third Bank
- ★ Friends For Foxx
- ★ Golan Christie Taglia LLP
- ★ Health Care Services Corporation
- ★ Horizon Therapeutics plc
- ★ Humana
- ★ Huron Consulting Group
- ★ Innovation Fulfilled LLC
- ★ JLL
- ★ Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP
- ★ KPMG LLP
- ★ McKinsey & Co.
- ★ MEDIQUUS Asset Advisors, Inc.
- ★ Medtronic Foundation
- ★ MetLife
- ★ Niantic Charitable Trust
- ★ Quality Technology Services (QTS)
- ★ Ryan Specialty Group LLC
- ★ S&P Global Foundation
- ★ Stifel
- ★ UnitedHealthcare
- ★ University of Chicago Medicine Comer Children's Hospital
- ★ USG Corporation
- ★ VistaNational Insurance Group, Inc.
- ★ W.W. Grainger, Inc.
- ★ Walgreens
- ★ WGIRLS Chicago
- ★ Wintrust Financial Corp.
- ★ Anonymous (1)

## Celebrating A Night of Heroes

Our fall event, A Night of Heroes, was held on October 2, 2019, at TAO Chicago and raised over \$195,000. 450 ChicagoCAC supporters and friends gathered to raise money to end child sexual abuse in Chicago. The guests enjoyed a reception with craft cocktails, delicious Pan-Asian food, a silent auction, a raffle, and a brief program.

Ashley Lauren, a survivor of child sexual abuse who received services from ChicagoCAC at the age of 17, shared her story of abuse and her journey of healing to a rapt audience, saying:

"I'm alive for a reason, and I believe it's to show people who are dealing with trauma that mountains can be moved, healing is possible, and regardless of what they have fallen victim to, they are heroes.

"We aren't simply raising money, we are adding to a legacy that will surpass its time. We are saying yes to giving young survivors a chance to hopefully one day stand here, thriving and speaking on how they've broken the cycle of victimization with the help of a community of heroes like you."



A Night of Heroes was co-chaired by Advisory Board Chair Gregg Elstien and Board member Kahlil Hogan. John C. Robak (Chair of the Chicago Police Foundation and CEO of Greeley and Hansen) and Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul served as the Superhero Host Committee Chairs (pictured above with Char Rivette and Cook County State's Attorney Kim Foxx).

## Individual Donors \$1,000+

- ★ Howard and Frankie Alper
- ★ Wendy and Bob Anderson
- ★ Michael and Helen Arkes
- ★ Alan Bell
- ★ Leslie Bluhm and David Helfand
- ★ Stephen Briggs
- ★ Maree G. Bullock
- ★ Debra Cafaro and Terrance Livingston
- ★ Marlies Carruth and Paul Strauss
- ★ Craig Christianson
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- ★ Melissa and Myron Washington
- ★ Ed and Laura Wiertel
- ★ Tim and Teresa Wilson
- ★ Anonymous (2)

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Pictured left to right: ChicagoCAC Executive Director Char Rivette, Jake Hamlin, Board of Directors Member Lauren Hamlin, Board of Directors President Ryan Sullivan, Wendy Elstien, and Advisory Board Chair Gregg Elstien.



## Leading the way to a world free of child abuse.

### How your contributions help:

- ★ \$5,000 sponsors a day of services for five children and their families, including crisis intervention, family advocacy, child-friendly forensic interviews, supervised child life activities, and transportation.
- ★ \$1,000 supports ongoing, virtual telehealth therapy services, providing a vital lifeline to abused children and their families.
- ★ \$500 enables two children to receive developmentally appropriate, trauma-informed forensic interviews, the first step in a child abuse investigation.
- ★ \$250 funds a one-hour Spanish language prevention education session for 25 parents.
- ★ \$100 contributes one healing art therapy session for a child who struggles to speak about their trauma.
- ★ \$50 provides healthy snacks and games for children visiting the center.

Please donate whatever you can right now and bring us one step closer to ending child sexual abuse.

### Ways to give:

- ★ Recurring Gift
- ★ Memorial and Honorary Gifts
- ★ Goods and In-kind Gifts
- ★ Corporate Matching and Sponsorships
- ★ Gifts of Stock and Securities
- ★ Planned and Estate Giving

[Learn more at CHICAGOCAC.org/donate](https://www.CHICAGOCAC.org/donate)



