



Chicago Cares, Inc.
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*You care about making a difference.
We care about making it easy.
Volunteer!*

Chicago Cares Fact Sheet

Our mission:

Chicago Cares mission is to respond to the critical human service, educational and environmental needs of Chicago by creating, managing and leading effective and innovative volunteer service programs which foster the ethic of volunteerism, promote a sense of community and support our partnerships with community organizations.

Organization overview:

Founded in 1991, Chicago Cares is the city's largest hands-on volunteer service organization. We provide opportunities for area businesses and individuals to improve the Chicago community through participation in creative, structured group volunteer programs that address Chicago's most pressing needs.

Chicago Cares develops more than 170 hands-on, group volunteer projects each month. These projects serve children, adults, seniors, the environment, the hungry and homeless and much more. Our format gives people the opportunity to volunteer at Chicago Cares projects on a flexible basis and has attracted thousands of active volunteers.

Chicago Cares is an affiliate of Hands On Network, a growing alliance of volunteer management and mobilization organizations across the United States, the U.K. and other countries.

How Chicago Cares has made a difference in the community:

Highlights of the past year:

- Read to and mentored 8,600 children
- Renovated 75 under-resourced schools and libraries
- Packed 400,716 pounds of food
- Beautified 44 parks and green spaces
- Served 18,874 meals
- Completed more than 1,900 hours of hands-on service in the Gulf Coast rebuilding efforts
- Introduced a comprehensive educational project series to fill a critical need in select Chicago Public Schools in the areas of math and science, physical fitness, and arts enrichment

Since 1991:

- Created more than 250,000 volunteer opportunities for Chicagoans
- Dedicated over 780,000 hours of service to Chicago
- Created, managed and led more than 17,500 group service projects

Ongoing programs: Chicago Cares creates, manages and leads more than 170 volunteer projects every month. Chicago Cares designs its projects to address the following issue areas:

- Adult education and development
- Children’s education and development
- Teens and young adults
- Environment
- People living with disabilities
- Health and wellness
- Hunger
- Senior services
- Youth in Service (projects that are designed specifically by Chicago Cares to engage area youth in volunteerism, thereby fostering an ethic of community service)

Business Shares: Chicago Cares provides corporations the opportunity to engage their employees in meaningful, hands-on volunteer service. Through our Business Shares program, we use our expertise to meet critical community needs through volunteer events specifically tailored to the community service goals of a company. We manage all the details of the employee volunteer event and help ensure the company has a rewarding experience that, in turn, helps lead to a better Chicago community and enhances the company’s environment. Corporate donations from this program support Chicago Cares’ year-round volunteer programs.

Special service events: Chicago Cares creates, manages and leads the city’s largest single day of hands-on service, the annual **Chicago Cares Serve-a-thon**. On this day, thousands of individuals and businesses join together to bring life back to Chicago schools with new paint and colorful landscaping, restore community centers and revitalize parks.

Chicago Cares also honors the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at the annual **Chicago Cares Celebration of Service** in January. This large service event brings together more than 2,700 individuals and corporate volunteers to complete projects involving at-risk children, seniors, and adults living with disabilities. All projects incorporate Dr. King’s messages of kindness and service. In addition, volunteers have the chance to participate in workshops promoting equality and respect.

Our community partners: Chicago Cares partners with social service organizations, schools and parks in various ways throughout the year. Our staff works with each organization or school to identify its most pressing needs and then creates and manages a project or series of projects that allow Chicago Cares volunteers to meet those needs. The projects are led by trained Chicago Cares leaders and are staffed by Chicago Cares volunteers. We currently partner with more than 180 organizations.

Our funding: As a 501(c)(3) organization, Chicago Cares relies on donations from corporations and individuals as well as grants from foundations to continue making a difference in the community. The Chicago Cares 2007 budget is \$2.05 million.