A Home With No Borders
2018 Annual Report
Dear Friends,

Next year we will celebrate 150 years of impact in Chicago, and it is impossible to look ahead without reflecting on the work that has already been done.

Erie Neighborhood House has served as a home with no borders for a century and a half, supporting people with the tools and resources they need to build a foundation for greater well-being.

We adhered to this blueprint for creating proud, powerful communities in 2018, reaching nearly 18,000 people all across our city.

- We provided legal consultations and represented folks in immigration court and asylum cases.
- We mentored young people and helped them thrive, expanding college and career possibilities in the process.
- We created greater access to trauma-informed therapy and mental health resources in Chicago’s black and brown communities.
- We led cooking workshops and facilitated nutrition education to promote health and wellness in our communities.
- We delivered high-quality instruction to children and youth and helped adult learners excel in the classroom and in the workplace.

Transformative work like this doesn’t happen alone or in isolation. It takes an entire community, united around a shared vision. We are grateful to everyone—staff, community partners, volunteers, donors and advocates alike—who helped people achieve their potential, both here at Erie House and in the communities in which we work.

Thank you for the important role you play in our work toward a more just, inclusive society. We can’t wait to celebrate our 150th Anniversary with you in 2020.

Sincerely,

Kirstin Chernawsky  Patricia Perez  
Executive Director  President, Board of Directors

ON THE COVER: Legal receptionist Veronica Robles looks across the US/Mexico border during a Citizenship & Immigration department visit to El Paso, TX. See page 8 for more about the visit.
Programs

Early Childhood Education
Building kindergarten readiness through NAEYC-accredited care and instruction

School-Age
Fostering social, emotional, and academic growth for children ages 5–12

READS
Tutoring and activities to develop stronger readers in grades 1–3

Youth Options Unlimited (YOU)
Academic support, mentoring and leadership development for youth ages 12–18

Community Literacy and Tutoring
Hands-on tutoring and support for adult learners

English as a Second Language (ESL)
Empowering adults with language and literacy skills

Adult Basic Education (ABE)
A project-based curriculum to expand learning potential

Workforce Development
Training for careers in manufacturing, healthcare and supply chain logistics

Health and Leadership
Workshops and education for stronger, healthier families and communities

Proyecto Cuidate
Violence prevention, counseling and family services through a restorative justice lens

Citizenship and Immigration
Classes, workshops and consultations to support the immigrant community

Buen HOGAR
Culturally responsive resources for residents seeking affordable housing
Clockwise from top left: YOU alum Alex Roman, now an engineer, speaks at the Future of Promise awards dinner; Rose Room students celebrate at a ceremony for kindergarten-bound preschool children; volunteers work alongside school-age students to develop their personal narrative through a My Story Matters scrapbook project; READS students from Little Village visit the Cernan Earth and Space Center; a group of ESL students volunteer at the Marillac St. Vincent food pantry in Garfield Park.

Clockwise from top left: Rosa Sanchez (speaking) and Proyecto Cuidate staff advocate for increased mental health access through the Collaborative for Community Wellness; Health & Leadership hosts a Día de los Niños event for 120 kids and families; citizenship class students attend an ICIRR summit on immigration; three TEAM students who entered Erie House as preschoolers graduate with the Class of 2018; 500 children and families attend the annual Holidays with Heart celebration.

Highlights from 2018
A border that defines home

Four Citizenship and Immigration team members and an Erie House board member flew to El Paso, TX, in October to volunteer with Las Americas, a local agency working in three immigrant detention centers.

Upon arrival, we saw border patrol next to TSA checking passengers’ immigration documents and it hit us: We were in a completely different environment than Chicago. Facing the realities of life on the border and working in the detention centers was a first for most of us, so before we got to work Las Americas staff gave us basic training on how to conduct intakes and prepare detainees for their asylum interviews.

Only one or two of the 40+ individuals we met with would ultimately obtain legal representation. I asked our colleagues in El Paso how they continue to do this work given these odds. “There is value in walking with people and giving them information,” they responded, “even if they don’t end up winning in the end.” It was emotionally and mentally draining working in the detention centers, but we tried to keep this sentiment front of mind as the days passed.

I am so incredibly grateful to Las Americas for hosting us and to Teamsters Local 705 and CLINIC for funding this trip. We not only got a first-hand look into detention work—including struggles and constraints due to the complex nature of these cases—but we now have new tools as we implement and expand Erie’s own removal defense initiative.

-Jane Lombardi
Director of Citizenship & Immigration

From a scenic overlook above El Paso, TX, people look out over the US/Mexico border and the sprawling lights of Ciudad Juarez, Mexico.
Established in 1987, Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center is one of only a handful of non-profits in the El Paso area dedicated to serving the legal needs of low-income immigrants, including refugees and asylum seekers, victims of crime, and families seeking reunification.

In the three El Paso area detention centers Las Americas does intakes with immigrants from all over the world. Many have journeyed thousands of miles, often in very dangerous conditions, to exercise their legal right to seek asylum in the United States. Some will be in the detention center for a few months, others for more than a year. Conditions in detention are stark, and access, even for attorneys, is highly restricted. In the rare instance when a bond is granted, it is often set at levels of $10,000-$20,000—virtually impossible for the average asylum seeker to post.

The El Paso jurisdiction, which serves West Texas and much of New Mexico, is one of the most difficult jurisdictions to get asylum in the whole country. Judges there deny more than 90% of asylum petitions, meaning that someone denied in El Paso could win somewhere else with the exact same case.

Seeing those people who are lining up [at the border] to get their chance to seek asylum, and knowing what’s waiting for them—that they’re just going to get ripped away from each other and put in different detention centers and held...Just knowing that that’s what’s ahead is heartbreaking.

- Megan Davis, Erie House Immigration Attorney
Legal representation is the single most important factor in determining if someone will win or lose their case, but nationally only 37% of those in removal cases secure legal representation.

Additionally, detention exacerbates the challenges immigrants face:

- Detained individuals in removal proceedings are nearly five times less likely to secure legal counsel than those not detained
- Detained immigrants with representation were twice as likely to obtain immigration relief than their unrepresented counterparts
- Represented immigrants who were never detained were nearly 5 times more likely than their unrepresented counterparts to obtain relief

The numbers bring home the importance of the legal work organizations like Erie House and Las Americas are doing, and the incredible need that exists for these services. They can be daunting, but add to the sense of joy when:

- We screen DACA applicants and 22% of them are eligible for permanent relief
- We win a deportation case (Erie’s first!)
- We provide 1251 legal consultations
- We take on 13 asylum and deportation cases
- We work with clients like (from left) Maria, Sheila, Martin, Gloria and Caro and they finally receive their U-Visa or naturalization

As of March 2019:

- 33,116 pending removal cases in the Chicago court
- 869,013 pending removal cases nationwide
- 736 days average wait time for removal cases

It’s important to listen to an asylum seeker as a human being, as opposed to a number, and to understand that what they would have to go back to is so much worse than walking 1,500 miles in a caravan. To be able to bring [this experience] back and tell people is fantastic for me.

- Carlos Ramirez, Erie House Board member
Statement of Financial Positions

As of June 30,

2018  2017

ASSETS

Cash/ Cash Equivalents  1,413,625  1,575,701
Investments  3,018,772  2,835,681
Accounts and Pledges Receivable  1,531,143  1,494,073
Due from Government Agencies  839,187  479,884
Prepaid Expenses  48,675  22,548
Property and Equipment, Net  1,462,239  1,399,738

TOTAL ASSETS  8,313,641  7,807,625

LIABILITIES

Accounts Payable  136,153  121,372
Accrued Expenses  191,747  180,092
Advances Refundable  301,180  336,301
Line of Credit  553,500  58,000

TOTAL LIABILITIES  1,182,580  695,765

NET ASSETS

Unrestricted  5,031,774  5,040,573
Temporarily Restricted  1,599,287  1,571,287
Permanently Restricted  500,000  500,000

TOTAL NET ASSETS  7,131,061  7,111,860

TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS  8,313,641  7,807,625

Statement of Activities

REVENUE  As of June 30, 2018  2017

Private Sources
Foundation, Corporations and Trusts  965,192  1,529,540
Individuals & Board  96,017  158,593
Congregations  15,294  34,923
Special Events  694,158  519,701
Donated Goods & Services  838,862  235,303
United Way of Metropolitan Chicago  120,000  94,000
Government Fees/Grants  5,514,921  5,050,212
Other Income and Program Fees  632,997  591,447
Interest and Dividends  107,059  87,656
Unrealized and Realized Gains (Losses) on Investments  153,745  287,239
Miscellaneous Income  935  1,008

TOTAL REVENUE  9,139,180  8,589,622

EXPENSES

Program Services
Child Care  3,405,395  3,283,134
After School  989,394  837,777
Youth  464,683  403,846
Adult  1,280,776  1,056,500
Citizenship & Immigration  727,826  516,351
Workforce  418,858  404,679
Health, Leadership & Advocacy  255,974  206,087

Total Program Cost  7,547,886  6,706,374

Supporting Services
Management & General  415,521  454,090
Donated Legal Services  421,252  -
Fundraising  735,320  666,753

TOTAL EXPENSES  9,119,979  7,827,217

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS

Net assets - beginning of year  7,111,860  6,349,455
Net assets - end of year  7,131,061  7,111,860

TOTAL CHANGE IN NET ASSETS  19,201  762,405

Statement of Financial Positions

Where Funds Come From

60% Government
12% Other Sources
12% Private Contributions
8% Special Events
7% Program Service Fees
1% United Way

How Funds Are Used

83% Program
9% Management & General
8% Fundraising