

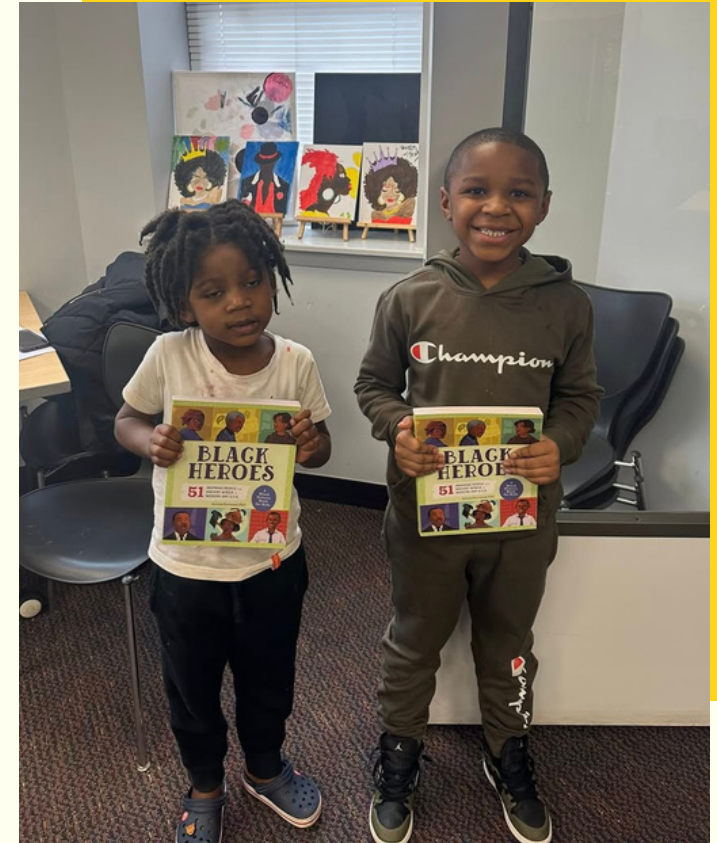
FY2026 Annual Report



***Building Hope.
Transforming Lives.
Shaping the Future.***

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The families we serve deserve the chance to move from crisis to calm, from survival to strength.

From the Chief Executive Officer

Tawana was a resident of Independence House for ten years.

She arrived as a single mother of three, two years out of a homeless shelter. During her time at Independence House, she earned her master's in social work, founded a nonprofit, and raised her youngest daughter, who recently graduated from DeVry University Advantage Academy High School with her Associate's Degree in Business.

This past year, Tawana bought her own home — moving out of Independence House to begin the next chapter.

Her story reflects what happens at Southside Center of Hope and Independence House day by day and year by year.

A transformation like Tawana's often happens very slowly and over several years.

It happens as a family becomes stable, starts to heal, and then gains the skills, tools, and opportunities to create real and lasting change for themselves and for future generations.

This year, the funding landscape for organizations like ours has shifted significantly, creating uncertainty for us and for the people we serve.

For families living at Independence House, funding cuts mean already tight budgets become tighter. They also mean less time to stabilize, heal, and create the lasting transformation breaks generational cycles of poverty and pain.

The families we serve need years, not months. They deserve the chance to move from crisis to calm, from survival to strength.

When funding is cut or threatened, so is that window of possibility, the very space where transformation happens. But here is what we know:

Southside Center of Hope has never been defined by circumstances beyond our control. We have been defined by our response to those circumstances.

Because of that spirit — and because of you — we have been able to meet this year with resilience.

Here are a few of the things your partnership made possible this year:

- Families at Independence House received consistent, wraparound support, even amid a shifting funding environment.
- Residents continued to pursue education, employment, and stability on their own timelines.
- Our team deepened community partnerships to expand the safety net our families rely on.

This is what it means for us to build hope, transform lives, and shape the future. We have committed to doing this work not only in moments of ease, but especially in moments of challenge.

Tawana said it best: *"Broken pieces turn into beautiful things. If you keep putting the pieces together, you create something beautiful."*

With hope,



Chief Executive Officer
Southside Center of Hope

"Broken pieces turn into beautiful things. If you keep putting the pieces together, you create something beautiful."

-former resident
Tawana Pope

Your Impact at a Glance

Every night of safe housing. Every counseling session. Every child in school. This is what your support makes possible.

121

People Served

76 adults and 48 children received housing and case management services

92%

Maintained Housing

23/25 families remained housed at Independence House or in other subsidized housing programs

100%

Children in School

and who received all required vaccinations

2

New Families

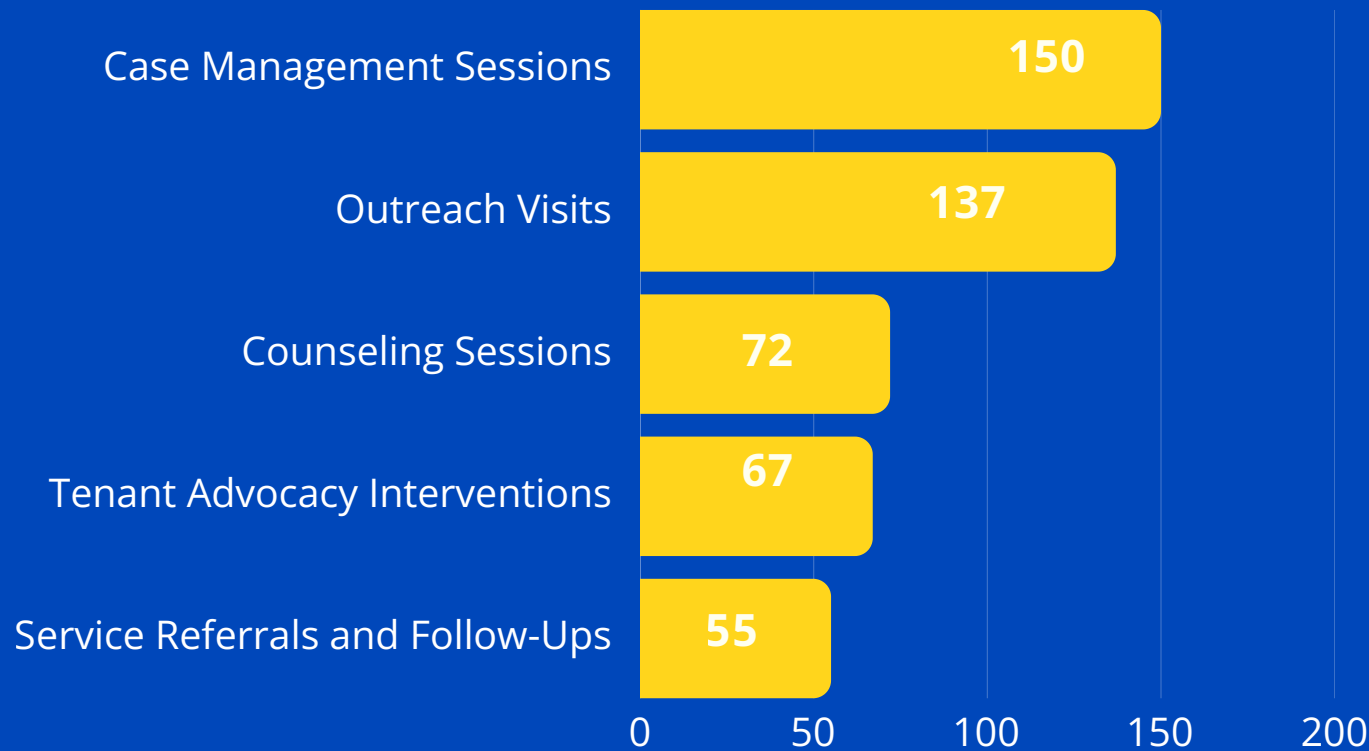
moved into fully furnished apartments



Where Transformation Begins

Southside Center of Hope provides safe housing and comprehensive supportive services for women and their children, empowering them to overcome life challenges, achieve stability, and build independent, thriving futures.

Every transformation begins with a relationship. Here's what our staff delivered — one interaction at a time.



Key Accomplishments

1

SAFE HOUSING, EVERY NIGHT

45,260 nights of safe, secure housing provided.

Before anything else, there is shelter. For families who have experienced chronic homelessness, a safe place to sleep is not a given — it is everything. In FY26, SSCOH provided 45,260 nights of stable, secure housing at Independence House. This is the foundation on which everything else is built.

2

STABILITY, BUILT DAY BY DAY

1,180 documented interactions between staff and tenants.

Stability doesn't arrive all at once. It's built in the small moments: a check-in after a hard week, a referral that connects a mom to the care she needs, an advocate who shows up when there's a problem. For families navigating the lasting effects of homelessness, trauma, and health challenges, this kind of consistent, personalized support isn't a supplement to housing; it's what makes housing last.

3

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

52% of residents are working or in school.

When survival is secure and stability is within reach, transformation becomes possible. In FY26, more than half of Independence House heads of household were employed full or part time, or actively engaged in trade school. For families who arrived in crisis, this reflects something profound: the stability that safe housing provides makes everything else possible — holding a job, pursuing education, building a future.

A Community Built Together

Businesses, foundations, and organizations across Chicago showed up this year for our families with food, clothing, opportunity, and joy.

- Graduation celebrations for Independence House graduates
- Summer opportunities for teens to work as event staff for Lollapalooza, a music festival in Grant Park, and Liv Chicago, a golf tournament in Bolingbrook, IL in partnership with *Kingdom Promotions*
- Free Food Giveaway sponsored by *Black Men United*
- Back-to-School Event with new backpacks filled with school supplies
- Clothing Giveaway in partnership with *The MVMNT*
- Welcome Kits for incoming tenants with household essentials and cleaning supplies
- Domestic Violence Awareness Month event with staff from Connections for Abused Women and their Children
- Winter Coat Giveaway sponsored by the *Reva & David Logan Foundation*
- Thanksgiving Meal Boxes in partnership with *Top Box Foods*
- Christmas Toy Giveaway with donations from the *Legendary Legends Motorcycle Club*
- Holiday Party including food, gifts, and raffles with support from *Lee N' Eddies* caterer and the *Marines Toys for Tots Foundation*
- Black History Month celebration with a Soul Brunch and book giveaway



It's so important that the women bond as a group and help each other. They can find strength in their connections to one another and resolve issues together, in community.

Sister Therese O'Sullivan,
Co-Founder &
Executive Director
Emerita



What Hope Makes Possible: *Tawana's Story*



Having a home gave me peace of mind that things would get better. I knew where I was going to lay my head at night and that my children were safe.

Tawana Pope



Tawana is a licensed social worker, a nonprofit founder, a grandmother of six, and a homeowner. And until December 2025, she was also a decade-long resident of Independence House.

Her story exemplifies the tenacity and strength of the families we work with – and the truth that *building hope, transforming lives, and shaping the future* doesn't happen overnight.

When Tawana arrived at Independence House, she had already overcome challenges that would have defeated most people.

The oldest of 10 children, she grew up as a caregiver when her mother struggled with substance use. Trauma and stress led her down a difficult path for years, including time in and out of jail. But in 2005, she made a decision that would change her life forever: she entered recovery.

After getting sober, Tawana earned her high school diploma and enrolled in college. Then came another storm — a painful divorce, a custody battle, and the loss of housing. For two years, she lived in a homeless shelter.

"There were days I cried in my car so my kids wouldn't see me break down."

When Tawana moved to Independence House in 2015, it was more than a roof over her family's heads — it was a turning point.

With that foundation of safety beneath her, Tawana kept moving forward.

In 2016, she completed her master's degree in social work. In 2018, she launched a nonprofit, Diamonds in the Making Outreach, to provide meals and connection to homeless community members. Today, she works as a Substance Use Disorder Specialist, helping others who struggle with addiction.

For Tawana's daughter Katie, a home at Independence House provided the security she needed to thrive.

Katie graduated from high school this year with an Associate's Degree in Business Administration in addition to a high school diploma. She plans to pursue a career in public policy, driven by a desire to reform systems that make stability difficult for families like hers.



"It shouldn't take 10 years for a woman like my mom to get back on her feet," Katie says. "I want to help change that."

In 2025, Tawana reached a milestone she had been working toward for years: purchasing her own home.

After completing a landlord education class, Tawana bought a two-unit property, reflecting her personal dreams and long-term financial goals. She and Katie closed the chapter on Independence House and began a new one.

Your support makes stories like Tawana's possible.

Every gift to Southside Center of Hope helps women and children move from crisis to stability, from broken pieces to beautiful things.

Thank you!



A History of Hope

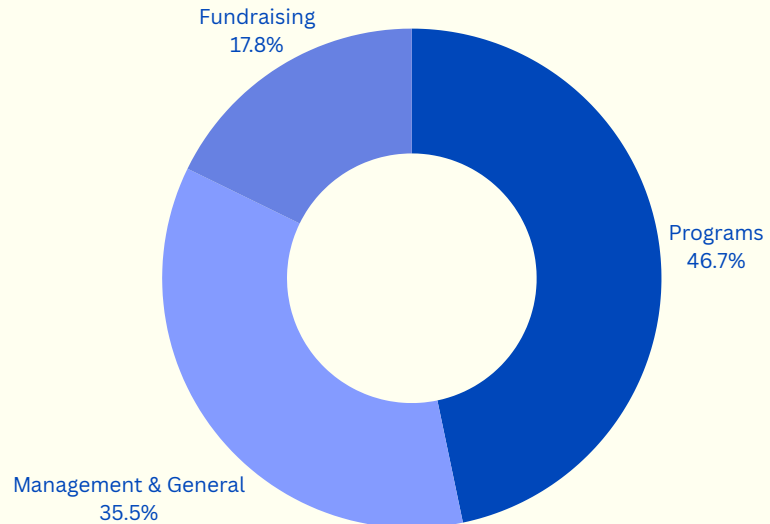
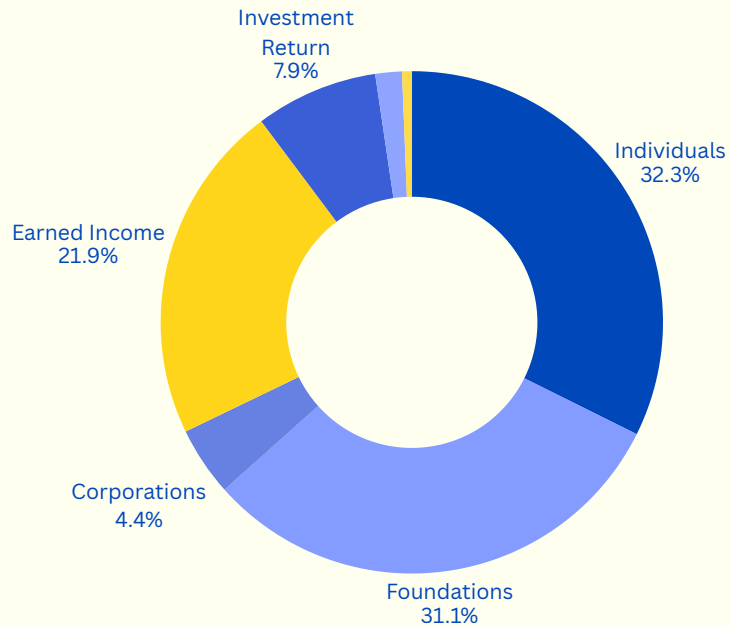
Since 1983, Southside Center of Hope has walked alongside women and children in Chicago who are rebuilding their lives.

Founded as Saint Martin de Porres House of Hope by Sister Connie Driscoll and Sister Therese O'Sullivan, the organization began as an emergency shelter and soon became a long-standing recovery home in the Woodlawn neighborhood. For nearly four decades, the organization provided housing, recovery support, counseling, case management, job training, education, and aftercare to more than 4,000 women and children.

Today, SSCOH provides on-site supportive services at Independence House, a 25-unit Permanent Supportive Housing community in North Lawndale serving women with histories of chronic homelessness and documented disabilities, along with their children and family members.

Through case management, behavioral health support, food access, parenting and life skills education, job readiness, youth enrichment, tutoring, and community-building activities, SSCOH continues its original mission: helping women and children move from crisis toward healing, stability, dignity, and hope.

Financials



Revenue

Individual Gifts	188,797
Foundation Grants	181,260
Corporate Donations	25,950
Earned Income	128,000
Net Investment Return	46,072
In-kind Donations	10,000
Miscellaneous	3,635
Total:	\$583,714

Expenses

Program Services	223,312
Management & General	169,764
Fundraising	84,929
Total:	\$478,005

Corporate and Foundation Partners

Our work is only possible because of the generosity of our donors. Thank you to the following corporate and foundation partners who go above and beyond to support our mission.

Anonymous donor advised fund at The Chicago Community Foundation

B&D Foundation

Bernstein Philanthropic Impact Fund

The Blowitz-Ridgeway Foundation

Chicago Foundation for Women

Exelon Foundation

Helen Brach Foundation

John F. Callahan Family Fund

JP Morgan Chase

JRM & Associates Inc.

Knight Impact Partners

Legacy Global Foundation, Inc.

Madden Family Fund at The Chicago Community Foundation

Mount Carmel High School

The Owens Foundation

Patrick and Anna M. Cudahy Fund

St. Barnabas Church

University of Chicago Service League

W.P. & H.B. White Foundation





Leadership

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kevin Waklatsi, *President*
 Charles E. Beavers, Sr., *Secretary*
 Peter Brown, *Treasurer*
 Sister Therese O'Sullivan, *Emeritus*
 Nihal Afifi
 Deidra Freeman
 Sheryl Morris
 Johnny Sukurs
 Mae Whiteside-Williams, PE

STAFF

Yaisa Hagood, *Chief Executive Officer*
 Coketha Hendricks, MSW, CADC, *Clinical Supervisor*
 Yvonne Afable, *Chief Financial Officer*
 Myisha Ryland, *Program Coordinator*
 Breanna Gray, *Development Assistant*
 Jamie Smet, *Marketing and Grant Consultant*
 Berit Ulseth, *Accounting Associate*
 Fayth Thompson, *Case Manager*
 Tanya Hobson, *Parenting and Life Skills Coach*



Five Ways You Can Make a Difference

1

VOLUNTEER

Individual and group volunteer opportunities are available.

Volunteers may lead workshops, cooking demonstrations, meal-prep, youth enrichment activities, or skill-building workshops aligned with resident needs. They may also assist with administrative work. We would love to chat with you about how you can use your knowledge, expertise, and time to strengthen our community.

2

JOIN OUR YOUNG PROFESSIONALS BOARD

For emerging leaders passionate about giving back.

Whether your work is in finance, marketing, education, real estate, healthcare, or another field, your expertise can advance our mission. Our Young Professionals Board gains leadership skills and connections while serving as ambassadors for Southside Center of Hope.

To volunteer or to learn more about our Young Professionals Board, contact:

Myisha Ryland

Program Coordinator

Myisha.Ryland@sscoh.org

773-643-4182

3

MAKE A ONE-TIME GIFT**Every gift gives hope and change to families in need.**

Housing is only the beginning. For families who are ready to break the cycle of poverty, the supportive services SSCOH offers makes change possible. Your gift funds everything from furniture to meal kits to art workshops to mental health resources and more.

4

BECOME A MONTHLY DONOR**Consistent support creates lasting impact.**

Monthly donors provide dependable funding that helps us plan ahead, sustain critical programs, respond to emerging needs, and provide opportunities and support throughout the year. No monthly gift is too small; each one allows us to serve our community with consistency. It's an easy and meaningful way to make a lasting difference, one month at a time.

5

LEAVE A LEGACY OF HOPE**Ensure Southside Center of Hope can change lives for generations to come.**

You can create a lasting impact through a planned or legacy gift, including naming Southside Center of Hope in your will or estate plan. It's a meaningful way to extend your commitment to our mission well into the future.

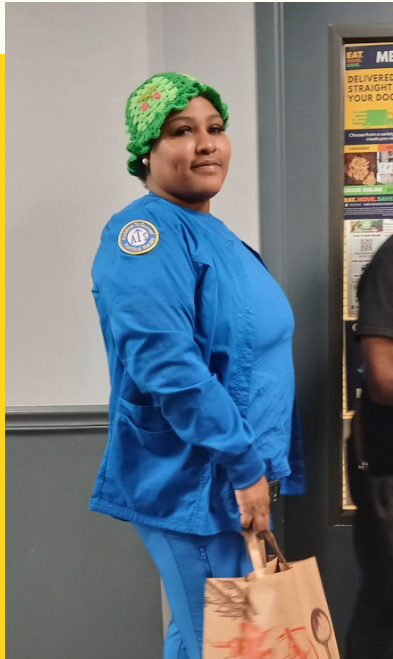
How to Give:**Online:**

Visit SouthsideCenterOfHope.org and click DONATE to make your tax-deductible donation today.

**By mail:**

Southside Center of Hope
820 South Independence Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60624-4112

Let's Keep in Touch!



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