



Chicago Cares, Inc.
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Chicago Cares Fact Sheet

Our mission: Chicago Cares mission is to respond to the critical human service, educational and environmental needs of the city 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 premier volunteer service organization. We provide opportunities for individuals and corporations to improve the Chicago community through participation in creative, structured group volunteer programs that address Chicago's most pressing needs.

Chicago Cares develops approximately 220 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 when their schedule allows and has attracted thousands of active volunteers. Chicago Cares service projects introduce volunteers to the social, environmental and educational needs of the Chicago community.

Chicago Cares is an affiliate of Points of Light & Hands On Network.

How Chicago Cares has made a difference in the community:

Highlights from 2008:

- Volunteered in 130 Chicago Public Schools
- Read to and mentored 9,000 children
- Renovated 100 under-resourced schools and libraries
- Packed nearly 400,000 pounds of food
- Beautified 44 parks and green spaces
- Served more than 21,000 meals
- Completed 1,100 hours of hands-on service in the Gulf Coast rebuilding efforts
- Partnered with 225 social service agencies and schools throughout Chicagoland

Since 1991:

- Offered more than 300,000 volunteer opportunities
- Dedicated 1 Million hours of service to Chicago
- Created, managed and led 22,600 group service projects
- Offered comprehensive educational programming in Chicago Public Schools

Ongoing programs: Chicago Cares creates, manages and leads almost 200 volunteer projects every month across the city. Chicago Cares projects address the following issue areas:

- Education (adult and children)
- Environment and Beautification
- Health and Wellness
- Hunger Relief
- Senior Services
- Youth in Service (projects designed specifically by Chicago Cares to engage area young people in volunteerism)

Business Shares: Chicago Cares provides corporations with the opportunity to engage their employees in meaningful, hands-on volunteer service. Through our Business Shares program, we use our expertise to meet pressing community needs through volunteer events specifically tailored to the philanthropic 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 day of 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.

Chicago Cares honors the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at the annual **Chicago Cares Celebration of Service** in January. At the city's largest day of service to honor Dr. King, volunteers complete projects that promote cultural understanding, diversity and community building. All projects incorporate Dr. King's messages of kindness and service.

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 225 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 2008 budget is \$2.4 million.