

SFF Steans Family Foundation

ANNUAL REPORT

2021

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Letter from the Executive Director

If you are reading this report, count yourself fortunate as a survivor during one of the most historical moments of our lifetime. The stresses and uncertainties resulting from the devastating COVID19 pandemic continue to have lasting impact across the globe. Not surprisingly, North Lawndale and North Chicago are disproportionately affected by this crisis. Inadequate health care, premature deaths, loss of employment, the challenges of remote-learning, navigating the safe return to school for students of all ages, and upticks in violence have laid bare long-standing inequities and some of our nation's failure.

But in spite of the immense challenges, our community partners and residents continue to rise above the cacophony with a renewed commitment to dismantle the pandemics of inequality and oppression. They know the pandemic did not begin with the shutdown in March 2020 and have dedicated their lives and careers to not only humbly serve others, but also challenge long-held assumptions and beliefs about what is possible for all children and families regardless of zip code. Their work continues to inspire and encourage us to find new ways to help improve the health and success of the organizations and individuals in the communities we serve.

I invite you to explore the following snapshot of our collective work in 2021. You will learn about an exciting literacy campaign in North Lawndale aimed at increasing the academic preparedness of children from birth through third grade. You will better understand the strategy behind successful teacher recruitment and retention efforts led by District 187 in North Chicago. Finally, you will be informed about the support of a vital Medicaid Technical Assistance Center that increases families' access to quality healthcare.

We are privileged to work alongside steadfast leaders across two amazing communities and look forward to amplifying their good works in 2022!

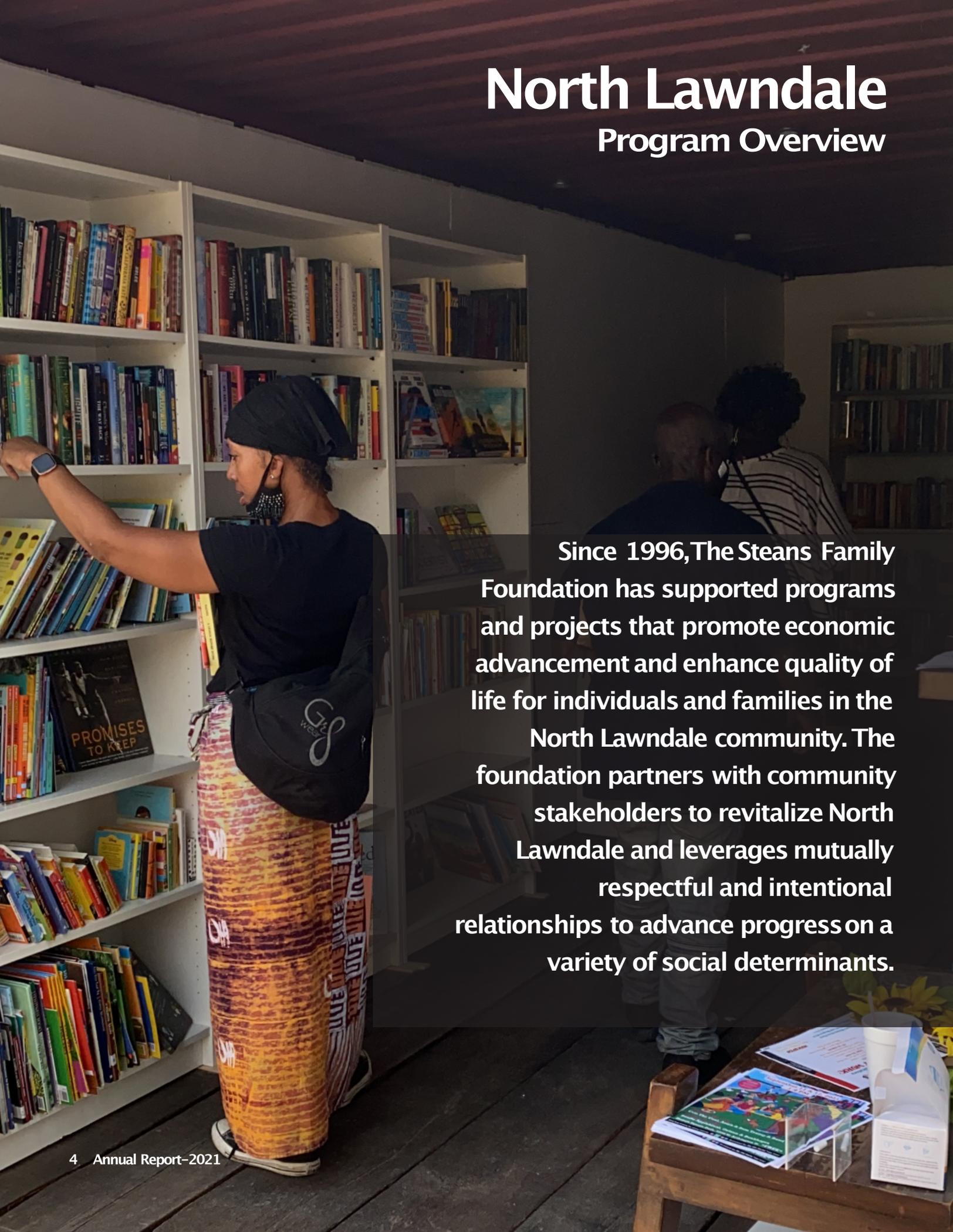
With Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Patricia Ford". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Patricia Ford
Executive Director

North Lawndale

Program Overview



Since 1996, The Steans Family Foundation has supported programs and projects that promote economic advancement and enhance quality of life for individuals and families in the North Lawndale community. The foundation partners with community stakeholders to revitalize North Lawndale and leverages mutually respectful and intentional relationships to advance progress on a variety of social determinants.



Healthy and Safe Communities

Stabilize families through programs that reduce violence and enhance the built environment for greater employment and housing opportunities.



Kindergarten Readiness

Prepare children to enter school with the social and emotional development, pre-literacy, and pre-numeracy skills needed for a strong academic start.



Third Grade Reading Proficiency

Ensure students are reading on level by the end of third grade.



Middle School Numeracy and Literacy

Equip students with foundational skills for 21st Century Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Careers.



Transition to High School

Increase the number of students who are academically and socially prepared to successfully transition into high school.



Postsecondary Access and Completion

Expand the number of students who obtain credentials and degrees that match their ultimate career goals.



Career Readiness and Job Placement

Assure successful and purposeful career attainment for North Lawndale residents who have obtained a postsecondary degree or other professional credential.



North Lawndale Business Expansion Initiative

Grow the number of black-owned businesses and entrepreneurs to create a thriving, local economy and build community wealth.



COVID-19 Emergency Response

Support residents and organizations through emergency funding for safety and stability during the pandemic.

West Garfield Park

Hwy 290

North Lawndale

S. Cicero Ave

S. Western Ave

W. Cermak Rd.

Little Village



North Lawndale was once home to several manufacturers: International Harvester, Sears, Zenith, Sunbeam, and Western Electric. The original 'Sears Tower' (renamed the John D. and Alexandra C. Nichols Tower) is now home to a vibrant group of nonprofit arts, multi-media education, youth leadership development and job training organizations.

Grantees

AARP Foundation
Boxing Out Negativity
Carole Robertson Center for Learning
Celestial Ministries
Chicago Architecture Biennial
Chicago Community Foundation
Chicago Botanic Garden
Chicago Youth Centers
Chicago-Lawndale AMACHI Mentoring Program (LAMP)
Children First Fund: The Chicago Public Schools Foundation
Children's Literacy Initiative
City Year
Communities in Schools of Chicago
Community Organizing & Family Issues
Cradles to Crayons Chicago
Forefront
Foundation for Homan Square
Friends of the Children - Chicago
Gads Hill Center Child Care Facility
Holy Family Ministries
I AM ABLE Center for Family Development, Inc.
Illinois Action For Children
Juvenile Protective Association
KIPP Ascend Charter School - Primary
Ladder Up
Lawndale Christian Development Corporation
Lawndale Christian Health Center
Lawndale Christian Legal Center
LEARN Charter School Network
Legacy Charter School
Link Unlimited Scholars
MAPSCorps
Mikva Challenge Grant Foundation Inc
National Center for Family Philanthropy
National Forest Foundation
New Covenant Community Development
Noble Network of Charter Schools
North Lawndale College Prep Charter High School
North Lawndale Employment Network
Old Town School of Folk Music
Open Books Ltd.
Planning Implementation and Evaluation Org
Project Exploration
Project Lifeline
Public Allies Chicago
Reading in Motion
Reading Power Inc.
Sinai Community Institute
Sinai Health Systems
Spark Program Inc.
Teach for America
Turning the Page
UCAN
United Way of Metropolitan Chicago
University Of Illinois At Chicago
Urban Growers Collective Inc.
UtmostU - Network for Young Adult Success
Young, Black, and Lit
Young Men's Educational Network (YMEN)
YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago

North Lawndale

NL Reads Literacy Campaign

Approximately 70% of students attending public school in North Lawndale graduate or otherwise leave CPS by the time they turn 19 years-old, as compared to Chicago's citywide average rate of 78%. Several factors are important to success in school, but early mastery of literacy skills is critical. The North Lawndale Reads Literacy Campaign aims to amplify the importance of literacy in Chicago's North Lawndale neighborhood and give the community's children the resources necessary for early reading.



The Steans Family Foundation proudly launched the North Lawndale Reads campaign in 2021 in partnership with Open Books and non-profit local partners across the North Lawndale community. The multi-year, multi-strategy NL Literacy campaign is designed to amplify the importance of literacy for school achievement. The project gives the community's parents and children the resources critical for early reading from prenatal experiences through preschool and supports them throughout the first few years of elementary school.

The goal of the campaign is to increase the number of children (birth to 5 years old) who are school-ready when they enter Kindergarten, as well as increase the number of students who meet or exceed grade-level reading benchmarks by the end of third grade.

To achieve this goal, the NL Reads Steering Committee, which consists of representatives from over 30 local organizations, employs four strategies. One focuses on community-based programming that capitalizes on new and existing CPS school partnerships in North Lawndale to provide supplemental literacy support to students who need it most. The second strategy is to facilitate

participation in community-wide events that promote culturally relevant literature and the joy and importance of reading. The third strategy involves place-making by leveraging new and existing spaces, from small businesses to homes, providing books and promote literacy skill development and social-emotional supports for both children and their caregivers. Lastly, the fourth strategy is message saturation which entails the dissemination of key messages that encourage and support child literacy development.

Thanks to the entrepreneurial spirit of Open Books, this inaugural year has seen multiple successes, including the distribution of 26,153 books in the community, the launch and engagement with over 30 community events, the formation of a parent advisory council, and the installation of 14 Little Free Libraries within North Lawndale. Moving into the second year, Open Books, campaign partners and the Foundation are excited to deepen their collective presence in North Lawndale and work towards integrated community-guided literacy activities, messaging, and programs to saturate the community and cultivate a love of reading.

26,153 Books
and counting

We have distributed books within the North Lawndale community through a series of over 30 events and Book Boxes, which can be seen throughout the community, encouraging children and families to “take a book and leave a book”. These Little Free Libraries are managed in partnership with Open Books, a nonprofit community partner.



North Chicago Program Overview

Since 2016, the top priority for the Steans Family Foundation's work in North Chicago has been to improve the educational opportunities and outcomes for the community's young people.



SFF partners with local leaders to:



Early Childhood Development

Help the youngest learners reach their developmental milestones.



K-12 Education

Help children reach their academic and developmental milestones.



Postsecondary Success

Support young adults in realizing their personal and professional goals after they leave high school.



Out of School Time Engagement

Provide youth with a robust array of engaging afterschool and summer opportunities.



Community Support

Ensure there is a strong, diverse social service network across the city to support those who may fall on times of need.

Park City

10th Street

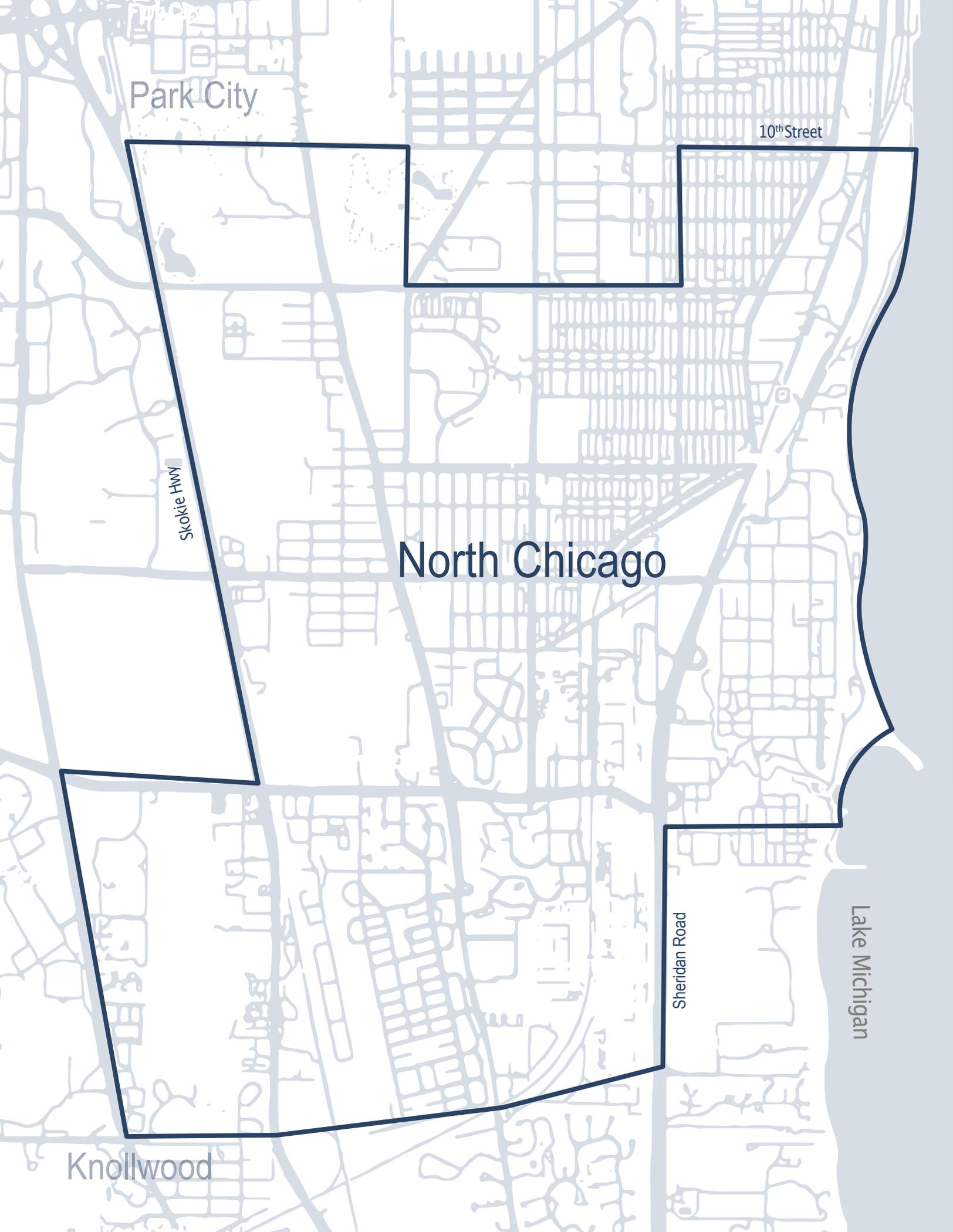
Skokie Hwy

North Chicago

Sheridan Road

Lake Michigan

Knollwood



Grantees

Bernie's Book Bank
Boys and Girls Club of Lake County
Camp for All Kids
Center for Childhood Resilience
Chicago Voyagers
City of North Chicago
College of Lake County Foundation
Cristo Rey St. Martin College Prep
Family Focus
iBio Institute
Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center
Innovations for Learning, Inc.
Keeping Families Covered
Kids Above All
Kids Rank
Kohl Children's Museum of Greater Chicago
Lake County Community Foundation
Lake County Health Department and Community Health Center

LEARN Charter School Network
North Chicago Community Partners
North Chicago Community Unified School District 187
North Chicago Public Education Foundation
North Chicago Public Education Fund
Mano a Mano
Network for College Success
Nicasa
One Hope United
Reading Power
Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science
Teach for America
The Beacon Place
YouthBuild Lake County
YWCA Metropolitan Chicago



North Chicago is home to the Great Lakes Naval Station, which opened in 1911 and is the Navy's largest training installation. Over 20,000 sailors, marines, soldiers, and Department of Defense civilians live and/or work on the installation, which sits on 1,600 acres overlooking Lake Michigan. Most notably, Great Lakes is the Navy's only Boot Camp location; it is where every sailor starts his or her career in the Navy – earning it the proud nickname, the "Quarterdeck of the Navy."

North Chicago

District 187



The Steans Family Foundation is proud to be a partner with North Chicago's Community Unit School District 187 (D187). The Foundation works collaboratively with the district to identify needs, strategize solutions and assemble resources for successful implementation.

One recent example of this work is the Foundation's support for teacher recruitment and retention in the district. For many years, D187 experienced high teacher turnover. In 2017, 40% of the teachers in the district's schools did not return for the next year.

The Superintendent, Dr. John Price, was determined to fix this. As he remarked once, "All students need and deserve stability so that they can develop the relationships that are the foundation for learning."

As a result, the district hired a new Director of Human Resources, Kim

Andes. Ms. Andes consulted with outside experts in the field and researched how other districts successfully solved this problem. As a result of her research, she developed a plan that both increased teacher capacity, while simultaneously decreasing the number of teachers leaving the district.

The plan included: nurturing partnerships with organizations and educational institutions that produce great teachers; convening the district's Principals to develop a consensus, data-driven approach for interviewing and hiring; launching programs to help young teachers gain additional credentials and increase their salaries; hiring both a recruiter and retention specialist to ensure that new teachers received one-on-one attention during the hiring process, and mentoring and support once they started in the classroom.

Teacher retention has increased from

60% to 85%, a number more typical for other school systems.

The Steans Family Foundation helped the district to identify and retain top-tier consulting assistance, encouraged organizations that produce great teachers to partner with North Chicago and become a talent pipeline for its schools, helped the district build data tools so that it could continuously monitor and improve its processes, and rallied other philanthropic entities to join the effort to ensure broad, diverse backing.

It is an example of how collaborative, long-term relationships between the Foundation and its partners can lead to better outcomes and opportunities for the community and its children.

Teacher Retention

Improved 25% as a result of District 187 funding



60%

School Year
2018-19

85%

School Year
2020-21

Policy and Ecosystem Program Overview



Education and Social-Emotional Access

Expand high-quality early childhood learning and development; enhance access to academic, social-emotional supports; increase college degree or other postsecondary attainment for underserved populations.



Employment and Economic Equity

Strengthen the pathway to thriving careers for underserved communities. This work includes building a workforce development system that prioritizes both racial equity and economic growth.



Justice and Rehabilitation

Sustain and expand effective violence prevention models while working to reform the criminal justice system to meet the rehabilitative needs of 18 to 26 year old individuals.



Stronger Communities

Increase the wealth of families in underserved communities of color while supporting efforts and opportunities to organically increase resiliency, agency, and self-efficacy.

The Policy and Ecosystem work builds upon the Foundation's community approach in North Lawndale and North Chicago, with a focus on local and statewide systemic issues that may impede or support the healthy development of individuals, families and communities. The Foundation addresses this work by creating an environment for its partners and leaders to solve systemic problems across SFF's programs.

Grantees

Advance Illinois NFP
Carole Robertson Center for Learning
Chalkbeat, Inc.
Chicago Community Foundation
Chicago Community Trust
Civic Consulting Alliance
Educators for Excellence
Forefront
Healthy Schools Campaign
Heartland Alliance
Hopewell Fund
Illinois Action for Children
Local Initiatives Support Corporation
Metropolitan Planning Council
New America
New Life Centers of Chicagoland, NFP
North Lawndale Employment Network
Northern Illinois University Foundation
Northwestern University
Partnership for College Completion
Purpose Foundation
Robert R. McCormick Foundation
The University of Chicago Urban Education Institute
University of Chicago
University of Chicago Urban Labs

Policy and Ecosystem

Medicaid Technical Assistance Center

The Steans Family Foundation not only invests in community-focused programming and support, but also policy level work that addresses the root causes of systemic economic, educational and social injustice. This work is focused on supporting policy related issues, with the goal to create more equitable community outcomes for both North Lawndale and North Chicago residents. A highlight in 2021 is the Foundation's collaboration across statewide partners to support the creation of the Medicaid Technical Assistance Center.

The Medicaid Technical Assistance Center enhances access to high-quality mental, behavioral and social determinants of health, which is critical to individuals' ability to succeed in school, work and life. Too often the lack of access to these services are felt disproportionately by individuals who don't earn a living wage and are in communities of color, undermining the best intentioned educational, workforce, violence prevention, or other programs.

Medicaid, due to the nature of the federal matching and entitlement, versus the grant-based structure, offers an attractive way to scale services through public funding. With that said, in order to realize this potential, providers must have the expertise, capacity, and infrastructure to bill Medicaid for services. The Illinois Collaboration on Youth (ICOY) recognized during the state budget impasse, and the devastating effect on its member organizations, there

was the need to assess and potentially help build this capacity among human service providers in Illinois.

In 2018, ICOY set out to better understand human service providers' readiness to bill Medicaid, especially in the context of the shift to Medicaid managed care (MMC) in Illinois. Responses from 134 providers across the state, including some North Lawndale partners such as Sinai Community Institute, Juvenile Protective Association, and Family Focus, led to key findings including the following:

- Most (60%) of providers indicated they do not have a Medicaid Managed Care (MMC) contract and may, therefore, be navigating MMC for the first time very soon;
- Smaller providers and providers serving predominantly communities of color are the least prepared to bill MMC, in both measurements of readiness and billing infrastructure capabilities;
- Survey respondents indicated a broad consensus for technical assistance and training in Medicaid operations and MMC contracting; 90% identified topics they would like assistance with, many of them around the basics of Medicaid enrollment (76%).

Given the clear need for technical assistance and capacity-building, ICOY quickly mobilized to pilot a Medicaid Technical Assistance Center (MTAC). Based on a

successful model from New York, the pilot provided a series of trainings to smaller community-based providers across the state reaching 700 participants in person and also posting virtual trainings that were viewed over 2,200 times.

Concurrently, ICOY worked with policymakers on a plan to sustain and scale the MTAC by establishing it within state government where the center would be better positioned to reach a greater number of providers and operate through both state and

Medicaid Facilitates Access to Care

A large body of research shows that Medicaid beneficiaries have far better access to care than the uninsured and are less likely to postpone or go without needed care due to cost.



federal funds. In 2021, the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus helped champion the MTAC as part of a series of healthcare reforms, codifying the MTAC in law and transitioning the center into the Office of Medical Innovation. This remarkable pilot-to-policy trajectory, which occurred in a little less than three years, would not have been possible without the vision of ICOY and support from the Steans Family Foundation to test, innovate, and ultimately scale this approach.

“The program that started as a pilot will now be transitioned to the Office of Medicaid Innovation to continue to assist community-based providers for Medicaid Managed Care. We pushed our legislative agenda during 102nd General Assembly’s Legislative Session, which allowed for the Act to officially become law. We could not celebrate this passage without acknowledging that we would not have gotten this far without the help of you and your foundation, so thank you!”

- Illinois Collaboration on Youth

Foundation Giving

Areas of Impact

North
Lawndale

\$6,845,325

North
Chicago

\$2,860,244

Policy &
Ecosystem

\$1,542,095



Total Giving
\$14,264,554

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