



You may have heard The Center of Concern is 40 years old this year!

In honor of our 40th Anniversary we are planting **Pinwheel Community Gardens** around the community to increase awareness about our services and to brighten the community with colorful pinwheels.

Earlier this year, we talked with many of our home-bound older adults and asked them about the toys from their childhood that they fondly remember; the Pinwheel was one of many nostalgic toys mentioned that brought them joy and happy memories. So, we thought what better way to help celebrate the Center of Concern's 40 years of service than the iconic Pinwheel that many older adults remember?

Community Gardens include a sign of explanation and can be in Memory of or in Honor of someone. We'll take care of Pinwheel planting unless you'd like to plant them yourself. And, for every Pinwheel we sell, \$1.00 will be put into a drawing and the purchaser's name will be entered. On October 12th, the date of our 40th Anniversary Celebration, one name will be drawn to win.

JOIN US IN CELEBRATING OUR 40TH ANNIVERSARY AS A PINWHEEL COMMUNITY GARDEN SPONSOR OR PURCHASE A PINWHEEL FOR YOUR YARD.

**PLANTED
IN THE
COMMUNITY
SINCE 1978**

The Center of Concern and the "The Round Up" App have partnered together to allow you to automatically donate the change from your credit or debit card transactions to the Center of Concern! You can now donate your change to help Home-bound Older Adults and the Homeless, from as little as \$2.00 dollars a month to whatever you would like to give. You

select the amount of change you want to give every month to the Center of Concern. Go to your App store, search for the "Round Up App", and download the app to your phone. You can also use these links to sink your phone's web browser:

RoundUpApp.org/i Phone
RoundUpApp.org/Android

**Donate
your
change
to the
Center of
Concern**

NEED HELP?

If you, or someone you know or love needs help, don't hesitate to reach out to the Center of Concern, we're just a phone call away. Call 847-823-0453 or email concern@centerofconcern.org.

CenterSpotlight

SUMMER 2018



SUPPORTING FAMILIES.
STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY.



**Volunteer
Spotlight**
**Joanne
Toenings**

Joanne Toenings has volunteered at the Center of Concern for four years, primarily as a Receptionist two half days every week, as well as helping at all of our special events. As a receptionist, she answers, compassionately listens, and directs phone calls; makes Telephone Reassurance calls; and greets clients and visitors at our front desk with kindness, grace, and professionalism. She has helped at all of our fundraisers, doing anything and everything we ask of her.

Joanne is an active member of our community and also serves as an unofficial 'ambassador' of the Center. Wherever she goes, Joanne tells people about her work at our agency and the many services we provide to residents struggling with challenges relating to aging, homelessness, and accessing resources to remain in their own homes.

Without question, Joanne is an exemplary volunteer who continues to show her dedication and commitment to the Center of Concern. We have been abundantly blessed to have her as a volunteer.



LETTER from the DIRECTOR John McNabola

This spring is more exciting than ever as we celebrate the Center of Concern's 40th year of supporting residents to build a stronger, more compassionate community. The dedication of our founder Dee Heinrich and countless others who have recognized the importance of our mission for many years has been truly remarkable. This past year, our Programs and Volunteers delivered over 12,000 services and over 5,000 hours of volunteer service to help residents overcome hardships and maintain their independence with dignity. In this newsletter, we share information on "Pinwheel Palooza", signifying our presence in the community and other activities that build awareness of our social services programs. In this, our 40th year of service, I thank you for your continued support of our founder's legacy which has been a shining light in our community these many, many years.



Celebrating Our Interns

The Center enjoyed hosting three interns this year, all preparing for careers in professional social work. Mary attends Loyola University while Edith and Claudia attend Northeastern Illinois University. Their internships provided 'hands on' experience in the Social Sciences. They helped with 'walk in' clients, answered phone queries, visited and called older adults, visited clients in nursing homes, arranged services such as "friendly visitors" to isolated persons, helped the homeless with housing assistance, assisted people who had a temporary loss of income with rent assistance, and generally applied local resources to a variety of human needs. They also assisted with the Older Adult "Lunch With Us" program.

We all really enjoyed their commitment and celebrated the time they shared with us with pizza at the office on their last day!

Consider Becoming a Senior Companion

Are you looking for ways to improve your overall health and well-being while also making an impact in your local community? *If so, look no further, join us!*

Senior Companions are essential to helping many older adults remain independent in the community. Senior Companion volunteers provide companionship and assistance to an average of 2-3 clients for a minimum of 15 hours per week. A volunteer might take a homebound senior grocery shopping, assist an individual learn a new life skill, or escort a client to a medical appointment.

And you aren't just making a difference in the lives of others! You're helping yourself! After only one year of service, the majority of volunteers report a decrease in anxiety, depression, loneliness and social isolation. They also report enhanced physical capacity and higher life satisfaction.

Think it can't get any better than that? *Well, it can!* Income eligible volunteers also receive a non-taxable/non-reportable hourly stipend, meal and

mileage/transportation reimbursement, supplemental accident/liability insurance while volunteering, paid holidays, vacation and sick days as well as pre-service and ongoing training.

Still wondering if you're too old or if you have anything to offer? You aren't and you do! The Center of Concern's oldest Senior Companion volunteer is 96 years old and he's been serving his community for more than 10 years! You do not need medical or technical skills to be a Senior Companion. All you need to know is *how to be a friend*. Senior Companions offer senior adults contact with the world outside of their homes and make their lives less lonely. Along the way, Senior Companions find out that few things feel as good as knowing you are needed.

If you're 55 years of age or older, live in Suburban Cook County and are interested in learning more about the Senior Companion Program, or think you know someone who might be, please visit our website or call 847-823-0453 for more information. It's never too late to make a difference!



Our Volunteers Serve Breakfast Sunny Side Up!

The Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast was held on April 17 to honor our volunteers during National Volunteer Week. Nearly 70 of our wonderful volunteers attended breakfast at the Summit at Uptown, which highlighted the contributions they have made to our clients and our communities. As ambassadors of our agency, we continue to depend on our volunteers' support, professionalism, and dedication as we embark on our next 40 years of service. They are the backbone of our agency, and we appreciate them all!



Client Spotlight

CENTER OF CONCERN

instrumental in helping Sarah go from hopeless to hopeful

BELIEVING in Sarah

Sarah called the Center of Concern in September 2017 looking for employment counseling and assistance. During the course of gathering her information, we found out that she had lost her job and her apartment, had been living with a friend, and most recently sleeping in her car. She also wanted to know where she could safely park at night to sleep. We recommended that Sarah register with the local homeless shelter (PADS). When she pulled into the PADS parking lot, Sarah became frightened because she was being followed. It turned out to be a company that repossessed Sarah's car and her home.

Sarah found a job as a part-time bus driver. She had to leave the shelter by 5:00 a.m. each day to get to the company, but she was willing to do whatever it took to get back on her feet. Sarah was very excited to receive new shoes donated to the Center of Concern from Naot Footwear and Waxberg's Walk Shoppe in Niles. She described the shoes as massaging her sore feet with each step she took. St. Paul of the Cross in Park Ridge also helped with transportation assistance.

Names and other identifying information has been changed to protect the client privacy.

Adding to her difficulties, Sarah fell and injured her knee and was unable to continue working at the bus company. She met with the Center of Concern's employment counselor and revamped her resume to apply for new opportunities.

On March 1, the Center of Concern was able to place Sarah in one of our *Rapid Re-Housing* spots. We connected her with several landlords and one of them was happy to help her. She had lost all of her possessions when she couldn't pay for her storage locker, but this new apartment came fully furnished. PADS provided her with kitchen utensils and pots and pans and the Center of Concern brought donated food.

During one of our assistance sessions, Sarah said on her 60th birthday she'd love to be able to take a bath and wash some vegetables. She couldn't believe how much she missed those small luxuries. Sarah is currently receiving unemployment benefits, looking for employment and is living in a safe home that allows her to take a bath and wash some vegetables—*she got her wish*.