





Community Client-Centered Dignity Reliable Resourceful







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### Dear Friends,

I am excited to formally share the reimagined Core Values that guide Care for Real's work and interactions with the community. Supported by our mission of fostering healthy and equitable communities by helping neighbors and families overcome food insecurity with dignity, our Core Values are **Community**, **Client-Centered, Dignity, Reliable, and Resourceful**.

You can read the definitions for each core value on page 4 of this report, but first, I'd like to share the words of our clients, volunteers, and staff that embody these values.



### Community

"That's ultimately why I'm here: to be part of the community I live in and help out the Care for Real way." – Max, Program & Warehouse Associate

### **Client-Centered**

"The food certainly increases my wellbeing, my quality of life. I am very appreciative, believe me. I don't know what I would do without Care for Real." – Client

### Dignity

*"I believe preserving someone's dignity is essential in service, and Care for Real has never failed to treat clients with warmth, kindness, and humility." – Arturo, Volunteer* 

### Reliable

"Care for Real has been in my corner for about 8 years, still with me in spite of everything that has happened, the pandemic, my physical health changing. I knew Care for Real was going to be right there." – Client

### Resourceful

"Care for Real always makes it work." - Jen, Director of Development & Communications

Care for Real was founded more than 53 years ago by community leaders working together to help neighbors in need. Today, I am inspired by the over 1,000 unique volunteers and hundreds and hundreds of financial supporters who came together last fiscal year to help us provide services to over 10,000 individuals in need from 4,345 households in our immediate community. From the grade schooler who saved quarters and dimes for months to donate, to the staff members who maneuver the pallet jack in our 6,000 square foot facility, to the volunteer who served 400 hours in just over a year, this community comes together every day to live out the mission and values of Care for Real.

Sincerely,

Gregory Gross Executive Director

## **From the Board Chair**

Dear Supporters,

Halfway through my second term as Board Chair, I am marveling at all the organization has faced and overcome since I began my first term. Through every hardship, opportunity, and change in plans, we have been able to count on you, our supporters, to stand with our team as we charge ahead. The community has answered every call we put out. When we asked for more volunteers, shifts got filled. When we asked for diapers, ready-to-eat foods, and Black hair care products, shelves got stocked. When we asked for financial support, gifts were made.

Together, with your support, we were able to provide fresh and nutritious food to 10,134 individuals through 33,617 food pantry visits. These numbers represent our most immediate neighbors. The family you see playing at the



park. The young man serving you dinner at your favorite neighborhood restaurant. The elderly person you always see at the pharmacy. Care for Real is a community of neighbors helping neighbors. The needs of the neighbors we serve continue to change and our commitment to feeding every neighbor who visits Care for Real remains the same. Your generosity to Care for Real helps us live out our Core Values of Community, Client-centered, Dignity, Reliable, and Resourceful. Together, we advance our mission of fostering healthy and equitable communities by helping neighbors and families overcome food insecurity with dignity.

With sincere thanks,

The Rev. Jim Nixon Board Chair



# The of Care for Real

Care for Real is a true community organization. Through every evolution throughout our 53-year history, Care for Real has been about neighbors helping neighbors. Most of the staff live in the neighborhoods we serve. Many volunteers can walk to their shifts. Staff and volunteers know the neighbors we serve by name. Community is at the heart of Care for Real.

"Communities thrive when we come together in these beautiful ways. I am so grateful to be a part of this beauty right here, two blocks from my own home."

Kate Polgar
Director of Programs



"The staff and volunteers make sure the client is treated like you would treat your family."

– Arul Dedicated Volunteer



"A great joy for me has been seeing so many of the same people each week and getting to know one another."

– Annie Weekly Volunteer



"I work to pay the rent, that's literally all it covers, and I still don't qualify for a Link card. I feel bad having to come here because I always thought food pantries were for people who didn't work. Thank you for making me feel welcome."

– Rogers Park Client



"I feel right at home here which is a sentiment I've heard echoed by many volunteers and clients alike."

– Izzy Development Associate

## Mission & Values

### Care for Real fosters healthy and equitable communities by helping neighbors and families overcome food insecurity with dignity.

Feedback from volunteers and staff and survey results informed the development of Care for Real's core values. Our core values guide our work and service approach to fulfill our mission.

**Community**: Community is at the heart of Care for Real. We always have been, and always will be, about neighbors helping neighbors. Together, we care for real.

**Client-Centered**: We honor and recognize the unique and diverse needs of each neighbor we serve through our client-choice model, clothing closet, and referral program.

**Dignity**: We recognize the inherent value and worthiness of each member of our community by delivering our services with compassion and respect.

**Reliable**: We have served as an essential resource for members of our community for more than 50 years. Neighbors facing food insecurity know they can count on Care for Real.

**Resourceful**: We intentionally and thoughtfully use the resources we have available to meet the specific needs of the communities we serve. Care for Real always makes it work!



## **Our Programs**

Care for Real is a reliable source for food, clothing, and support for thousands of families each year, distributing food five days a week through our locations in Edgewater and Rogers Park. Neighbors living in the 60626, 60640, 60645, 60659, and 60660 zip codes are welcome to visit either pantry on a weekly basis.

"What I love about the Care for Real community is how much people genuinely care for each other. The love here is strong." – Max, Program & Warehouse Associate

Honoring the dignity of every neighbor served is a priority. The current warehouse is filled to capacity and food distributions still take place outdoors. The team continually modifies operations to streamline food distributions without compromising the quality of service. Offering a modified clientchoice model, neighbors visiting the pantries let us know their preferences at registration. The Food Rescue Program that operates seven days a week helps us offer plant-based products, glutenfree foods, ready-to-eat items, food for faith-based diets, milk alternatives, and even flowers. After receiving their groceries, clients are invited to look through their groceries and can send anything they don't want or need back to be restocked.

### "You are saving my life. I can't believe I can come once a week. Thank you. I can't thank you enough."

### - Care for Real Client

We saw surge after surge in need for assistance during fiscal year 2022-23. The war in Ukraine led to high transportation costs, supply chain issues, and exorbitant food prices, bringing a 332% increase in first-time clients to Care for Real. Emergency SNAP benefits and other pandemicrelief programs ended. Seniors were especially impacted. More migrants and asylum seekers began arriving in our area. The increase in refugees and asylum seekers intensified the demand for more translation support, weatherappropriate clothing, and ready-to-eat foods. Through every increase and change in need, Care for Real makes it work.



"You could tell the love she put into it when I saw the things she picked out for me. She was thinking about me when she packed this. I appreciate it so much." - Home Delivery Client

Launched during the pandemic, the Home Delivery Program continues to be a critical resource for homebound and vulnerable neighbors. Home Delivery clients receive bi-weekly check-in calls that provide a point of connection to our most isolated community members. The staff can also identify the unique needs and preferences of every Home Delivery client. We have a special shelf full of items saved for Home Delivery clients and often get feedback about how meaningful personalization is for them.

"I'm so grateful to be a part of showing love in such a tangible way." — *Nicole, Volunteer* 

## Our Programs continued



Marie's Clothing Closet had 3,216 visits throughout the fiscal year. Our dedicated clothing closet volunteers keep the space organized and provide a dignified experience for every family who visits. The need for in-season clothing soared as more migrants arrived with little to no clothing. Partner organizations referred many new neighbors to Care for Real for weather appropriate clothing. We are one of the few sources for free clothes in the area.

"Volunteering is not even about giving just your time. It's about receiving; learning all the wonderful lessons from your fellow teammates and the clients we serve, learning that you can take a challenge that's bigger than what you've done in the past, and sharing the gratitude that the clients have for life."

### – Wilson, Volunteer

The Pet Pantry expanded during fiscal year 2022-23. Previously offered one day a month, now clients can request dog or cat food when it's available at every food distribution in Edgewater every 30 days. SNAP benefits do not cover pet food. We never want a neighbor to be faced with the choice of feeding themself or their pet. Care for Real serves every member of the household, including the furriest ones!

SNAP benefits also do not cover personal care items such as toiletries, diapers, menstruation products, or Black hair care products. All Care for Real clients live below the poverty line. For neighbors living paycheck to paycheck or with no income at all, personal care items can be out of reach. Like the Pet Pantry and Marie's Clothing Closet, we rely on in-kind donations to keep personal care items in stock.

"This past year, it's been rough. I was down to skin and bones. I've been getting so much better, and I really appreciate you guys. You guys have really come through for me and brought me the things that I like and put me back on the road to recovery."

- Care for Real Client



Care for Real's team of Social Work Interns worked on developing referral guides to connect food pantry clients with partner organizations that address housing, health, immigration support, and more.

"Care for Real is so devoted to making sure that all clients are treated with respect and dignity and all of the staff and volunteers truly care about making sure that all of the basic needs of clients are met."

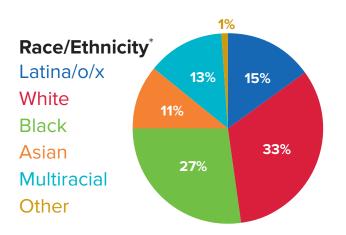
- Rachel, Social Work Intern

## Our Impact

Together with your support, Care for Real served thousands of neighbors during fiscal year 2022-2023. We are proud to adapt and evolve to meet the community's needs.



### **Demographics of Households Served**

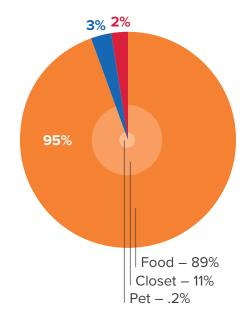


\* Please note data reflects head of household only

## Financials

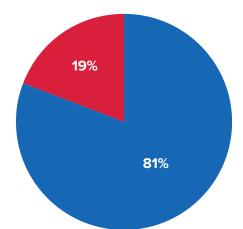
### FY 2023 Expenses

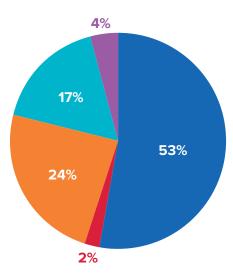
April 1, 2022 – Marcl	n 31, 2023
Total	\$5,910,929
Administration	\$166,578
Fundraising	\$144,902
Total Programs	\$5,599,449
Food Pantry	\$4,991,814
Closet	\$594,997
Pet	\$12,638



### FY 2023 Revenue

April 1, 2022 – March 3	31, 2023
Total	\$7,020,372
In-kind donations	\$5,687,587
Cash	\$1,332,785





### **Sources of Funding**

Individual Donors Faith and Community Organizations Foundations Corporations and Businesses Government

## Supporters

Care for Real relies on thousands of supporters to help us help thousands of neighbors. We are grateful for the many ways individual donors, businesses, foundations, religious organizations, and others support Care for Real's mission. The following list recognizes donors who made a total contribution of \$500 or greater in fiscal year 2022 – 2023 (April 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023).

Meal Makers are monthly donors whose consistent giving sustains Care for Real programs and helps us plan for the future. \* Indicates recurring monthly giving during the 2021-22 fiscal year. Every effort is made to list donors accurately. We apologize for any errors or omissions.

#### \$50K-99,999

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### Tributes

A contribution to Care for Real is a special way to honor loved ones in your life. The following individuals were honored with a gift made between April 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023.

In Honor Of Jan & Rich Aaron All those in need Aunt Sally Mary Clare Barker Brian Barnick Bast, on his 5th birthday Brian Bean William Beermann Pam Behnke David Berger Bertha Blattner, Kathleen Gregory, & Chris Brown Sarah Bornstein Michael Bowers Linda Bryant Caitlyn, Brigid, & Nora Jean Campbell & Wright Haider Care for Real Board of Directors Care for Real Staff & Volunteers Christie Carmody Cath Carpenter Jessica Carson President Jimmy Carter Jerry Case Louise Champlin Chi Omega Sarah Claypoole & Raza Lamb Eric Clinch Karen & Kevin Conway Marlon Cook Dan Cottone

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Joel Kuipers The Rob Kurtz Family Latin Family Jules D Law Samantha Link Alton Lvnum Mustafa Maboud The Brian McKinney Family Les McNamara The Mrs. Mary Mercer Family The Aaron Mervis Family The Ms. Jessica Mervis Family The Mr. & Mrs. Chuck Mervis Family Rob Milburn **Rachel Miller** & Daniel Learner Teresa Murphy Nina Newhouser Dorothy Nygren Janet O'Brien **Our Neighbors** Patrick Pappas Van Perrine Kate Polgar Joanne & Terry Prorok Ana S. Ramirez Adrian Randolph the Mike Rich Family Gwen Riggio Lester Rockoff Hannah Rogers & the **TEAM LEWIS Foundation** Jenn Ross & Peter Segall Susan Rubin Elfant Mel Ryley

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### Tributes continued

#### In Memory Of

Raoul Adorno **Rita & Cletus Albert** Christine Alexander Doris & Dirk Beintema David Berger Alexis Berry Sally Bleeks Sarah Murdock Bolster & Patrick William Ryan Molly Boren Joan & Dr. Born Brenda Marguerite (Marge) Ann Britton My Brother George, Parents Jim & Mary Broussard, & Palermo Aunts & Uncles Les Brown Mike Calcagno

Cameo, my guide for over 10 years **Robert Carey** Sheila Clerkin Diane Cousino Gary Davis Mrs. Minnie L. Dillard Raymond DuCasse Freda duFour & Kathryn Bayles Lowell Dunlap Karen Feiler Zelda & Joe Fishman John Fryer Lois Gould Theresa Winters' Dog, Guthrie Helen & Don Halverson Janice E. Harpest Mary Catherine Hayes Tony Hollenback Babette Inglehart Liz Ippolito

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### Volunteers

Care for Real volunteers make our work possible. Last fiscal year, CfR volunteers served nearly 40,000 hours; the equivalent of over 20 full-time staff members! We rely on the support of over 1,000 annual volunteers to help distribute food five days a week by registering clients, stocking shelves, picking up donations, packing groceries, managing the clothing closet, supporting with administrative tasks, sorting donations, and being a friendly and welcoming face to every neighbor we serve. See below for volunteers who served 25 or more hours in fiscal year 2022-23.

\* Indicates volunteers who served more than 100 hours during the 2022-23 fiscal year.

Joseph Agno\* Bisi Ajayi\* Nicholas Alejandro Jessica Alles Maddie Anderson **Cheryl Anderson** Kristen Anderson Signe Anderson\* Natalia Andriyanenko\* Bonnie Bagdon\* Liz Barr DoriAnn Basaraba Luke Baumel Sofia Benslimane Henry Benton Dana Berkowitz Matt Biety Wendy Biety\* Donna Bloom\* Eric Blum Fern Bogot\* Brenda Bonds Julie Bonk Sarah Bornstein\* Kamil Bosak Kristin Boyd\* Connor Boyle Alyssa Brandon Carrie Breitbach\* Mirella Bruno Daniel Burke

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Mia Gurrieri Arturo Gutiu Maria Hamada Kate Harken Eileen Hartnett Wicklin Marilyn Haverly\* Matthew Hayes\* Sandra Hazel\* Sue Henning\* Bob Henning\* Maricela Herrera Lopez Drew Hill\* Lainey Hizon PeriLyn Hoffman\* Ray Hofmann Kay Holler Erinn Huttas Khadijat Ismaila Carmen Jaeger Arul Janakiraman\* Marianne Jankowski Ryan Jarnagin Allison Jarrett Lisa Jarvis Jasleen Jaswal Abha Kapila\* Rose Karasti Beth Karlin Mari-Ann Karolin-Costanzo Debbie Kern\* **Raul Kirkpatrick** 

### Volunteers continued

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### CHICAGO-BASED VOLUNTEER SPENDS FIVE DAYS A WEEK FIGHTING FOOD INSECURITY DAILY POINT OF LIGHT # 7435 DEC 1, 2022 BY POINTS OF LIGHT

f \chi in



Anyone who volunteers at Care for Real's Edgewater location knows Eileen Sviokla! Eileen has given more than 1,600 hours since she began volunteering with us in May 2021. We nominated her for a Daily Point of Light Award to acknowledge her commitment to Care for Real and her community. In December 2022, Eileen was featured as Daily Point of Light #7435!

"What I admire about Care for Real is that it's all about serving the clients' needs. The clients come first. You can build relationships, there's trust. That's very important to me."

### In-kind Partners

Care for Real relies on dozens of in-kind partners to keep shelves stocked to serve thousands of neighbors each year. The Food Rescue Program secures about 40% of the 2.1 million pounds of food we distribute each year, with the remainder donated from nonprofit partners. Individuals, foundations, local businesses, and community groups collect personal care items, baby products, clothing, and pet food to help us meet the unique needs of every family we serve.

Amazon Church Amtrak Bagcraft Bites Asian Kitchen Buddhist Temple of Chicago City Fresh Colectivo Copia/Getir Decatur Classical School Jewel/Osco Dom's Kitchen East Point Condominium Inc

Ebenezer Lutheran Edgewater Glen Association Fortune Fish Greater Chicago Food Depository Hooked on Fish Illinois Quilters Inc. JAB Produce Jameson Loves Danger Lakewood Balmoral Residents' Council Leapfrog Group

Local Foods Mariano's Marillac House Metropolis Coffee Mintel North Shore Baptist Church Panera Penzeys Spices **Renaissance Charitable** Foundation Rogers Park Montessori School Saddle & Cycle Club

St. Andrews Women's Philoptochos Society St. Gertrude Parish Sunset Foods sweetgreen The Black Girl Social Club Chicago Chapter The Grand Food Center The Phillips Family Fund The Silver Foundation Thorndale Beach South Condo Association Trader Joe's Vertigo Group Inc. Whole Foods

### **Board of Directors**

April 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023

The Rev. Jim Nixon Chair Alton Lynum Vice Chair Jane Clifford Treasurer Jennifer Schmidt Secretary Don Cortelyou Blair Harvey William Massey Kim Mendiola Julian Morris Neda Nozari Nina Newhouser Claire Rooney

### **Board of Directors** as of October 2023

The Rev. Jim Nixon Chair Alton Lynum Vice Chair Jane Clifford Treasurer Jennifer Schmidt Secretary Don Cortelyou Nassir Faulkner Blair Harvey Gee Hoon Lim William Massey Julian Morris Nina Newhouser Neda Nozari Nelson Rosario Larry Svabek

### Staff

as of October 2023

Gregory Gross Executive Director

Shana Conner Senior Warehouse & Distribution Manager

Caroline Covarrubias Program Associate

Nate Davis Transportation Manager

Michael Gatsby Warehouse Manager

Jen Kouba Director of Development & Communications

Karen Kuehn Warehouse Manager

Max Levavi Program & Warehouse Associate

Marshawn Martin Warehouse Associate

Kate Polgar Director of Programs

Jake Pullen Warehouse Associate

Jari Ramos-Orbe Programs & Partnerships Manager

Izzy Reno Development Associate

Alex Surovietz Warehouse Associate

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Care for Real is a 501(c)(3) organization. Contributions to Care for Real are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.