

# WELCOME HOME L'ARCHE CHICAGO



ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2025

July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025

# WHO WE ARE

L'Arche Chicago's mission is to celebrate the unique value of each person and to create lifelong places of belonging through small, residential homes that empower residents with intellectual disabilities to share their gifts with their neighborhood, city, country, and world, as part of an international federation.

## Years Living at L'Arche Chicago



**24.67**  
Longest Years

**8.76**  
Average Years  
\*4 new core members with less than one year

## Core Member Age

*age range 28-67*



**67%**  
Ages 21-50

**33%**  
Ages 50+

## Our Community



**15**

Core Members

**10**

Live-in Assistants

**31**

Live-out Assistants



# LETTER FROM OUR COMMUNITY LEADER

We have had a remarkable year at L'Arche Chicago! **The year began with perhaps the biggest milestone in our organization's history: the completion of our built from scratch, universally designed, and ADA accessible home in Oak Park.** The home was the culmination of hundreds of staff and volunteer hours dedicated to thoughtfully designing a home where our core members (adults with an intellectual disability) can age in place comfortably. Built at ground level and equipped with features like an elevator and roll-in showers, the home fills a vital gap in accessibility for the long waitlist of individuals in the state of Illinois who are waiting for settings that provide this level of care and support.

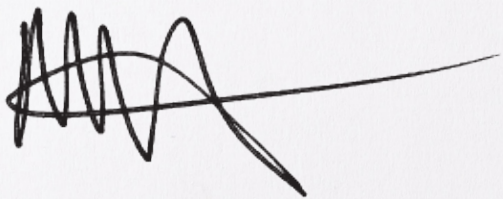
After growing 40% in organizational size with the addition of our new home, we turned to our existing homes to ensure that they met the same level of accessibility and functionality. In January, we began construction on Peace House to make its first floor more accessible and practical for both the core members and people who assist them. This project created a new, ADA accessible bathroom (complete with a self-opening toilet lid!), an open kitchen, an accessible back staircase, and an office space to safely and privately administer medications.

And if that wasn't enough construction for the year, we also started projects to add solar panels to almost all of our homes to continue our commitment to sustainability that we began during the construction of our newest home (which produces almost 90% of the energy it uses thanks to sustainable building choices including geothermal heating and cooling, efficient windows, and all electric appliances).

But our most exciting highlight from the year was welcoming four new core members into our community! What a joy it is to be invited into the lives of these individuals—to begin to build relationships of belonging and celebration together, to share life together.

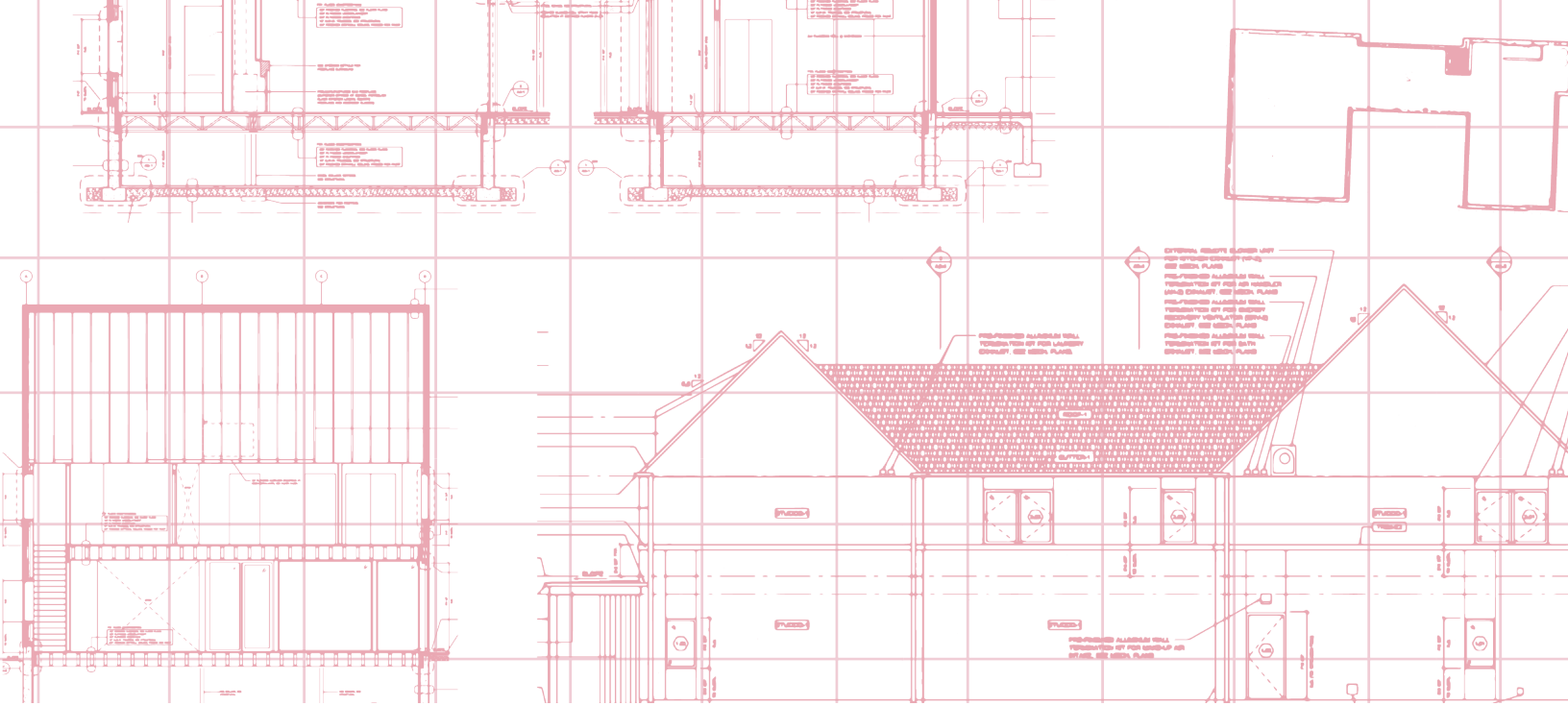
L'Arche has an important mission that is transforming lives each day. We felt that especially strongly this year as we grew and expanded in all the ways above, and we couldn't be more grateful for your partnership in that work. We have grown our footprint, strengthened our roots, and most importantly, continued to transform lives because of you.

**Thank you for being a part of L'Arche Chicago!**



Mic Altena  
**Executive Director  
& Community Leader**





# HOMES WITH A MISSION

## JAY'S REFLECTION

Jay joined L'Arche Chicago in August 2020 as a Live-Out Assistant. Beginning at Angel House, Jay has shared life at each home before taking on his current role as Peace House Manager.



**“A home in L'Arche works as a home for its people; realizing this vision has been the driving force of our last few years.”**

It is hard to overstate the importance of the home. Its place is fundamental. In the best case, it holds and expresses the elementary wishes for safety, warmth, familiarity, and rest, affording the type of repose which makes every sheltering nook, every passage over the threshold, the announcement of wellbeing. Even the labor that sustains it is different, for what is done for and in one's home is inalienably for oneself and one's own. **Its care is one's own.**



L'Arche Chicago has always seen its community and mission emerging from the life in its homes, recognizing this link between care work and home life, that success in the former entails the good of the latter. But for us, imagining a home that affords all the above experiences means placing the particular needs of our residents at the center. A home in L'Arche works as a home for its people; realizing this vision has been the driving force of our last few years, not just in constructing St. Joseph House, but in the renovations past, current, and planned at each of the other three homes.





This year, Noah and John moved into our new universally designed home, St. Joseph House. Noah tells me he really likes his new space, and emphasized the concerts he has in the courtyard as one of his favorite things at the new home. John still says he “couldn’t believe it” that he got to move to the new red house and told me things have been going “good.” Jean saw a total kitchen and bathroom renovation completed at Peace House. When I ask her if she’s enjoying the new kitchen and bathroom, Jean gives me from the top of her voice the biggest “YEAH!” you’re likely to ever hear.



These small indications fit with what I’ve observed. These spaces are far less frustrating for core members to use than before. Wider doorways mean fewer bashed knuckles for wheelchair users; having a bathroom directly connected to your room makes all the difference if you need to use it multiple times a night, not to mention how grab bars in all the right places and space to maneuver just make for greater privacy, independence, and join the dots of agency and need in ten thousand invisible ways. The homes simply work for them in ways they did not before, and their needs and intentions reflected in the structures they inhabit have, I think, contributed to a deeper feeling of belonging as well as a stronger sense of pride. Each more accessible feature, every change the community enacts together that takes seriously their world on their own terms, multiplies how their homes can really feel like *home*.



**Angel House**  
Chicago  
Est. 2000



**Friendship House**  
Forest Park  
Est. 2015



**Peace House**  
Forest Park  
Est. 2014



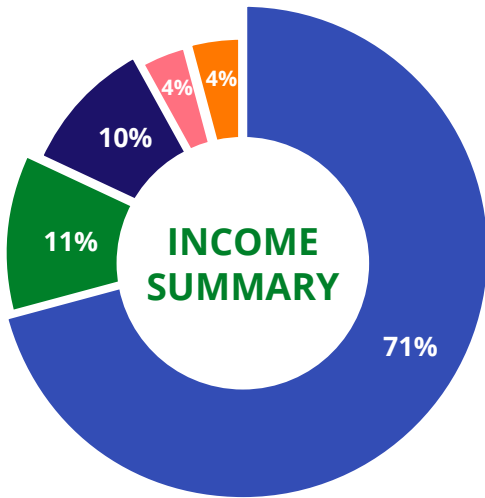
**St. Joseph House**  
Oak Park  
Est. 2025

**At all of L’Arche Chicago’s homes, we blend quality care with accessibility.**

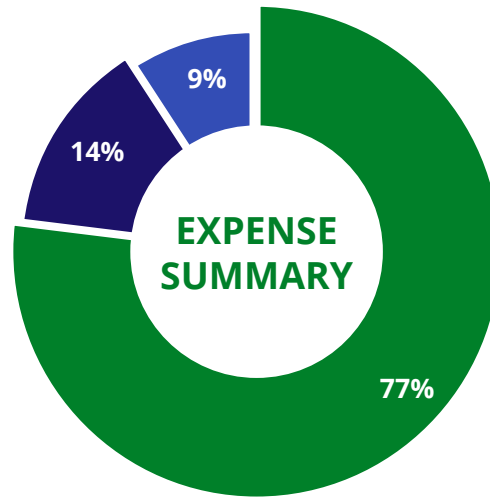
# 2025 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW



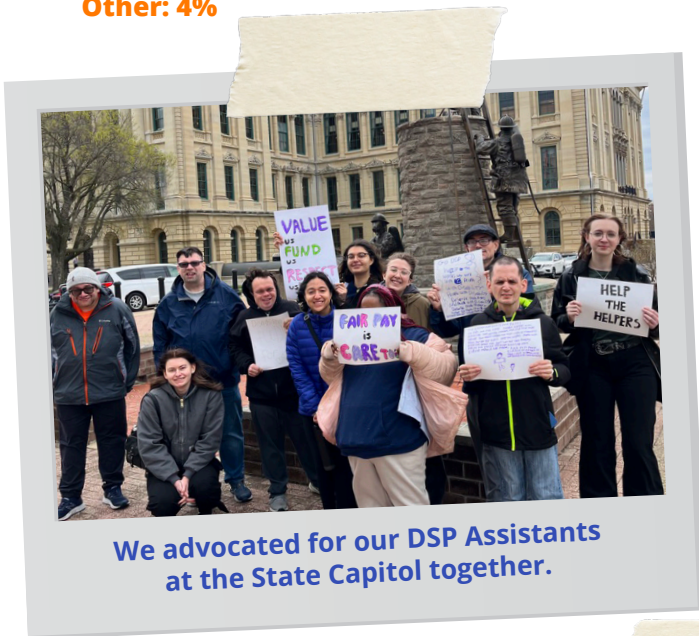
For more detailed financial information, please view the full audit on our website.



**Government Funding: 71%**  
**Individual Contributions: 11%**  
**Grants: 10%**  
**Events: 4%**  
**Other: 4%**



**Program Services: 77%**  
**Administrative: 14%**  
**Fundraising: 9%**



We advocated for our DSP Assistants at the State Capitol together.



Annalise and Tim enjoyed their weekly tradition of making milkshakes.

## THIS IS WHAT DIGNIFIED CARE LOOKS LIKE AT L'ARCHE CHICAGO

- Low Core Member: Assistant Ratios
- Donor support helped bridge the gap - raising meal funding from the baseline state rate of \$2.55 per meal to \$7.90 per meal, allowing us to provide balanced, fresh meals that better meet each person's dietary needs.
- Fresh Paint at Three Homes
- New Energy-Efficient Appliances at Peace House
- New Home: St. Joseph House
- Peace House Kitchen Renovation for Improved Accessibility
- New Office With Ample Room for DSP Trainings



Noah shared his astronomy facts during a trip to the planetarium.



John enjoyed the "good life" during St. Joseph House's vacation.

## THIS IS HOW L'ARCHE CHICAGO PROMOTES ADVOCACY AND CONNECTION

- All-Community Day Retreat With 15 Core Members and 32 Assistants/Leadership
- Advocacy Trip to Springfield for Increased DSP Wages
- Anders and Cassie in the Inclusive Leadership Group
- 5 L'Arche USA and L'Arche International Retreats
- Regional L'Arche Gathering with over 150 Participants from Seven Existing and Emerging Communities
- Weekly Assistant Meetings that Deepen Mission and Relationship



Diana shared her secret coffee recipe with Iggy.



Chris journeyed to the top of the Willis Tower.

# THANK YOU FOR A GREAT YEAR!

You made everything that happened in the past year possible.

## ORGANIZATIONS

Abt  
ADM Investor Services  
Anchor Advisors  
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois  
Bob Carter's Auto Body  
Burke Beverage  
Chicago Board of Trade Foundation  
Chicago Transom Partners  
College of DuPage Buffalo Theatre Ensemble  
Community Mental Health Board of Oak Park Township  
Demar Inc.  
Dr. Scholl Foundation  
Ecolab Foundation  
Elements Architectural Group  
George M. Eisenberg Foundation For Charities  
Grace Lutheran Church and School  
Grand Appliance  
Graybill Wealth Management  
Gulf Trading Corporation  
Hinsdale Bank and Trust  
Jackson National Life Insurance  
Lakshmi Foundation  
Laughing Acres Family Foundation  
LPL Financial  
Mary Seat of Wisdom  
Maxwell Trading Restaurant  
Michael E. Murphy Foundation  
Microsoft  
Morningstar  
O'Sullivan's Public House  
Ozinga Foundation  
Paramount Theatre  
PwC US and Mexico  
Relation Insurance  
Russell & Josephine Kott Memorial Charitable Trust  
Service Club of Chicago  
Smith Tieken Foundation  
St. Clement Parish  
St. Giles Catholic Church  
Standard Lumber  
The Symphony of Oak Park River Forest  
The Albertsons Companies Foundation  
The Chicago Community Trust  
The Coleman Foundation  
The Helen V. Brach Foundation  
The United Center  
Thrivent  
Turano Foundation  
Vizient  
Workday



## INDIVIDUALS / FAMILIES *(with donations totaling \$100 or more)*

Tony and Janet Abri  
 Julianne Agudo  
 Anthony Alagna  
 Gene Albert  
 Robert and Kimberly Albrecht  
 Dan and Sandi Altena  
 Mic and Shinae Altena  
 Gary and Katie Arnold  
 Ron Arturi  
 Jurate Aukstakalnyte  
 Hope Babowice  
 Adam and Alex Baig  
 Josephine Baird  
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 Simcha Barkai and Lucy Msall  
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Steven Zimmerman  
Jack and Linda Zucco

L'Arche Chicago is grateful to those who made a gift as a tribute.

#### In Memory Of

Bridget Gnabsil  
Elbert Lott  
Laurence Msall  
Catherine "Katie" Phelan

#### In Honor Of

Casey Chrzan  
Buffy Feinstein  
James Phelan  
John Phelan  
Tim Stone

## OUR HEARTFELT THANKS!

Friends, this has been a landmark year for L'Arche Chicago. I want to share my heartfelt thanks to the many donors, friends, and family members who have generously supported us this year. Your gifts provided us the opportunity to improve the quality and accessibility of our homes for our core members. Peace House underwent a significant rehabilitation for a new, enlarged, and accessible kitchen, bathroom, and office space. Further, we delight in the opening of St. Joseph House. Not only is the house completely accessible for the core members who live there, but it has more than enough space for all our core members and assistants to gather each week for celebrations and shared meals that are significant touchpoints in our L'Arche community.

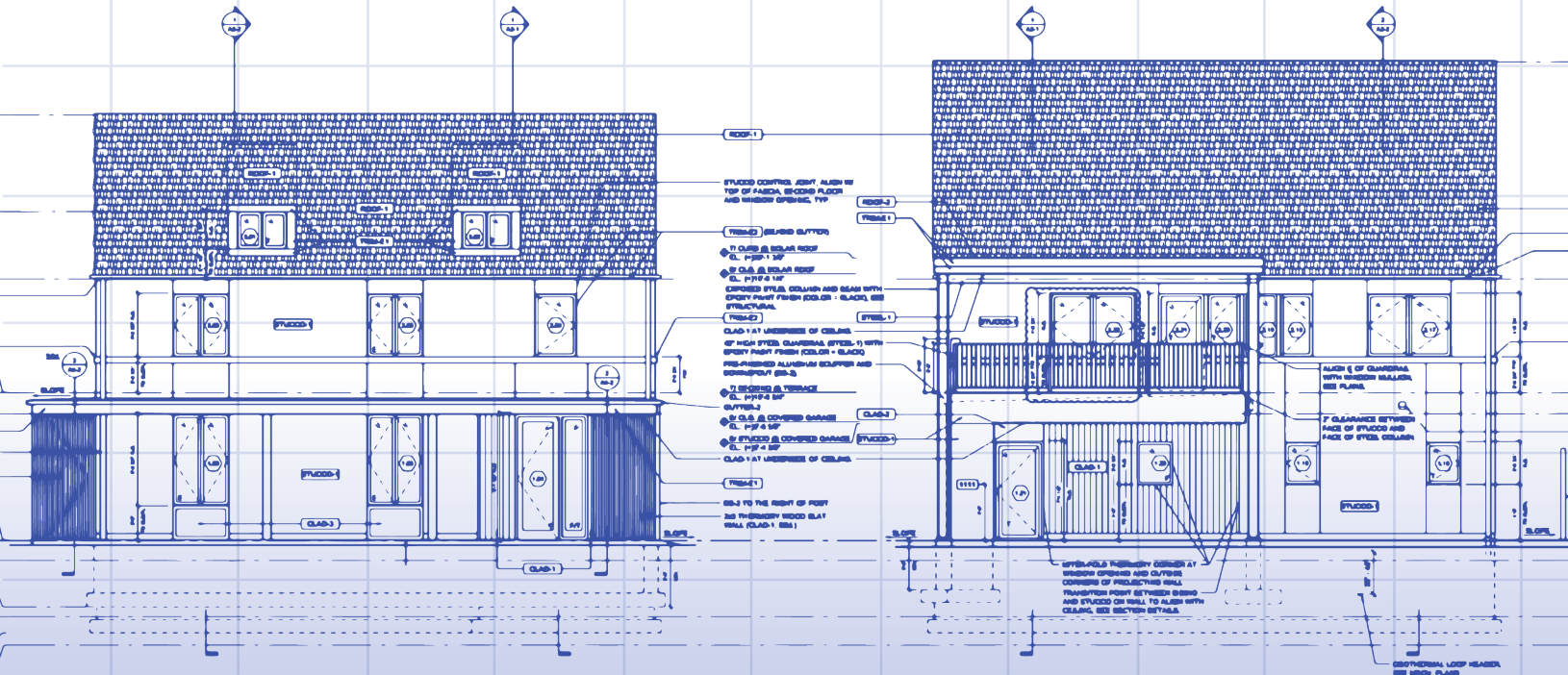
The completion of St. Joseph House allowed us to welcome four more core members for a total of 15 individuals. There have also been many remarkable quality of life outcomes that have resulted from your donations: strong friendships have developed; new leisure habits have been created; enhanced independence and utilization of public transportation; every core member now is productively engaged in work or day programming; core members with limited mobility now have easy access to spending time outside; formerly introverted individuals choose to engage and eat meals with others; each house is often filled with joyful conversations and connections; and so much more. The gifts you so kindly offered have been, and always will be, used wisely for the good of our core members and community. Words cannot convey how thankful I am (indeed, we all are). **Thank you.**

Kimberly Bryze, PhD, OTR/L  
**Board President**





L'ARCHE  
Chicago



## Contact Us

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7507 Madison St.  
Forest Park, IL 60130

708-660-1600  
[www.larchechicago.org](http://www.larchechicago.org)

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