



INSPIRED NEWS

ACCOUNTABILITY = RESPECT

If you have been a member of the Inspiration Corporation family for a long time, you know that dignity and respect are core values that guide all our relationships, internal and external. Inspiration Corporation strives to treat our supporters with dignity and respect by reporting on our work in a thorough, accessible and transparent way.

We have taken a number of steps recently to enhance our accountability. We redesigned our web site (inspirationcorp.org) to include comprehensive information about all of our programs and opportunities for volunteers and donors. On the site, you can find copies of our annual reports, financial reports, and newsletters.

We also participated in the Chicago and Northern Illinois Better Business Bureau's Online Charity Evaluation Program, meeting 98 of 100 standards for charitable accountability. To meet every standard next year, we will add a more detailed, program-by-program accounting of expenditures in our audited financial statements – a task that will be made easier with new financial management software.

Inspiration Corporation strives to devote 85% of our resources to our programs serving homeless and poor people and 15% or less to administration and fundraising – a high level of efficiency, especially for an organization our size. We served more than 1,600 individuals over the last year, and hope to do more with your support in the year ahead. If you have any questions about Inspiration Corporation or would like to arrange a tour or learn more about our operations, please contact John Pfeiffer, Deputy Director, at jpfeiffer@inspirationcorp.org or (773) 878-0981 ext. 219.



MEET MICHAEL

One of Inspiration Corporation's newest Board members is also a graduate of Inspiration Corporation's programs. Michael Hunley is an alumnus of Cafe Too. Since graduating from Cafe Too in August 2004, Michael has worked at Food For Thought catering, where he is a chef.

Michael proclaims he has been cooking "all my life." His father started him "flipping burgers" and cleaning at the family restaurant on the west side when he was 10 years old. Unfortunately, Michael developed a substance abuse problem by the time he was 13. Now 50, Michael has been clean for four years. He was referred to Cafe Too after obtaining his food-service sanitation license from an agency which did not have extensive culinary skills training. When Michael told his case manager that he wanted to pursue a career as a chef, she referred him to Cafe Too, where he passed the entrance tests and was admitted.

Life is now good for Michael: he lives on the west side with his wife of one year; his employer is thrilled with his performance; and lately, he has turned down offers to work elsewhere.

THE VIEW FROM BROADWAY AND WILSON...

Lately, I've been thinking about volunteers. Chicago is ranked the 12th worst city in the U.S. for homeless people. The demand for food banks and shelter beds is higher than it has been in years, and I'm thinking about volunteers. Well, it cheers me up.

We are nothing without our volunteers. We are our volunteers. Sure Inspiration Corporation now has over 60 employees, three locations, 28 units of housing and growing, a restaurant (a really nice restaurant), training, training, and more training – it's like we are a real social service agency. But the core, the essence of who we are, who we have been, is the volunteers. It's people who see a need and they go fill it. Just like Lisa Nigro did 17 years ago with the red wagon. Just like Mike does most Wednesday mornings starting at 5 a.m.

I am thinking about volunteers like Steven Gross who has been taking photos at our art auction for years and recently took a bunch of panoramic shots of Uptown that we hung in Cafe Too (the aforementioned restaurant). And Barbara Becker who has been teaching yoga classes for our guests and alumni for at least five years. And Penny Simmons who has volunteered with the Friday morning crew since we were located on Wilson. And Sophia Iawono-Lemonides. And Brian and Michael and Kelly and Charlie and Karen and Kristen and Deborah. Because when it seems like we will never end homelessness or poverty or ever have justice in this world, I think about the volunteers. It cheers me up.

On this page, you see a tribute to one of our most dedicated volunteers, Jonathan Goldsmith, and one of his employees, Keith Will. This special relationship started in the kitchen at Inspiration Cafe and has grown into a remarkable friendship. When it seems like we will never end homelessness, I think about stories like this and I know that we really do make a difference in people's lives.



Chris Persons
Executive Director



RELATIONSHIP FORGED

When you walk into Spacca Napoli Pizzeria on Chicago's north side, a warm smile from an unassuming figure will greet you. That smile belongs to Jonathan Goldsmith, a long-time volunteer of Inspiration Cafe and Spacca Napoli proprietor.

Jonathan's relationship with Inspiration Corporation began the first month Inspiration Cafe opened in 1989. He began as a cook on Sunday mornings, a task he gladly undertook for three years. Since that time, Jonathan has served on the Board of Directors and the Advisory Board; volunteered for Inspiration Corporation's Art Auction (now One Inspired Evening) and Anniversary Dinner; hosted a retreat for Inspiration Corporation guests, alumni, and staff; and served as principal chef for the guest/alumni holiday party.

Keith Will enrolled in the Cafe Too Restaurant Skills Training Program in March 2005 after being referred by Heartland Human Care Service. After graduating in July 2005, Keith served as Cafe Coordinator for Inspiration Cafe for nearly seven months. He then served as a Milieu Manager at the Cafe while he took part in Inspiration Corporation's Housing and Meals Programs.

Jonathan met Keith a year ago, when Keith was recruited to help transport artwork for Jonathan's wife. Keith left Jonathan with such a wonderful impression that Jonathan kept him in mind for future tasks. Jonathan remarks, "Keith is humble and a hard worker."

When Jonathan decided to embark on the construction of his restaurant, he contacted Keith. Keith assisted him during the construction phase and was hired fulltime after the restaurant opened five months ago. Jonathan says, "Keith has shined. He is a wonderful example of what The Cafe can do." Keith now has a job at Spacca Napoli, health insurance, and an apartment found with the help of both Jonathan and Inspiration Corporation's Housing Locator Program. Keith reflects "My relationship with Jonathan goes beyond work. It's a friendship. He's like a big brother." Jonathan affectionately refers to Keith as his "right-hand man". Keith reflects, "My relationship with The Cafe will never end. They made all of this happen for me. I don't think I can ever repay the Cafe."

ONE INSPIRED EVENING

This past March, with the fusion of Inspiration Corporation's annual Art Auction and the Employment Project's annual Dream Job Gala, One Inspired Evening was born, providing an inspired night of live music, auctions, and raffles that grossed over \$100,000 for Inspiration Corporation's programs and services for homeless and low-income Chicagoans. Our dedicated committee led by co-chairs Liz Sarnik and Rose Ann Anschuetz garnered the support of over 100 generous volunteers. One Inspired Evening would not have been possible without donations from more than 100 artists, dozens of restaurants that donated gift certificates, and the seven great Dream Job donors. With more than 550 guests in attendance, it is you that we thank for One Inspired Evening's success.

Thank you to our generous sponsors:



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

UNIQUE

Andreas Kapsalis Trio, Botanicals, Bridgeview Bank, Burstein Family Foundation, Good's of Evanston, Halls Rentals, Intelligentsia Coffee & Tea, Joel Langer, Rick Kogan, Krusinski Construction, M. Fishman & Co., Bert Menco, Metalco Incorporated, Mickey's Linen & Towel Supply, Narnia Productions, Olympic Dodge, The Private Bank, Real Life Weddings, Thomas Richie, Luke Seeman, Smithburg Family Foundation, Terry Dowd, Inc., and Sandy Weisz.

If you are interested in participating in next year's One Inspired Evening, please contact Angela Brown, Events Manager, at (773) 878-0981 ext. 222 or abrown@inspirationcorp.org.

INSPIRATION CAFE'S ANNIVERSARY DINNER

will be held Friday, November 11. This intimate French dinner with wine pairings is an unforgettable evening. To reserve seats before we sell out, contact Diane Pascal at (773) 878-0981 ext. 204 or dpascal@inspirationcorp.org.

WHO MAKES IT POSSIBLE:

LINEN & TOWEL SUPPLY, INC. **MICKEY'S**

Mickey's Linen services textile rental products to the hospitality industry. Inspiration Corporation is fortunate to receive items like aprons, linens, dishtowels and uniforms from Mickey's.

This relationship dates back nine years, when Cynthia Brown of Mickey's, responded to a call requesting the donation of linens for an event. Cynthia made the donation and then came out to see Inspiration Cafe. She began serving meals, and eventually, joined the Board of Directors.

Mickey's began supplying Inspiration Cafe and The Living Room Cafe. When we began the Cafe Too program, Mickey's provided chef wear to students to help them feel like real professionals and boost their self-confidence. Mickey's now also supplies the Cafe Too restaurant.

At the same time, Cynthia's involvement grew to include volunteering for programs involving guests and alumni and special events, recruiting friends to participate, and countless other acts of kindness. Cynthia has shared her love of Inspiration Corporation with her family, who join her in attending events and providing support.

"Mickey's is thrilled to be able to help the Cafes - we have not only watched them grow but have watched them transform the lives of so many," Cynthia says of the partnership.

TEAM INSPIRATION

is once again lacing up their sneakers and training for the 26.2 mile LaSalle Bank Chicago Marathon to be held on Sunday, October 22. Registration for this year's race closed at a record pace - filling the 40,000 available slots six

months before the event. If you are registered for the marathon but have not joined a charity team, please think of Team Inspiration. We are still in search of registered runners, corporate sponsorships, and cheer crews for race day. To sponsor a runner please visit www.inspirationcorp.org.

For more information on how you can join the running battle against homelessness in Chicago, please contact Angela Brown, Events Manager, at (773) 878-0981 ext. 222 or abrown@inspirationcorp.org.



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CAFE TOO PICK OF THE MONTH



Sharon Ako, Cafe Too's Head Chef Trainer, enjoys Cafe Too's Waldorf chicken salad sandwich. "The pita bread was so fresh and soft, and the chicken salad was delicious with its plump, sweet red grapes, crunchy walnuts and creamy dressing. Mmmmmmm. I ate every bite! I had mine with crispy, crunchy, lightly salted potato chips."

Cafe Too, located at 4715 N. Sheridan Road, (773) 275-0626, is open Mon. 7-10am, Tues. and Wed. 7am-3pm, Thurs. and Fri. 7am-8pm, Sat. 9am-8pm, and Sun. 9am-3pm.

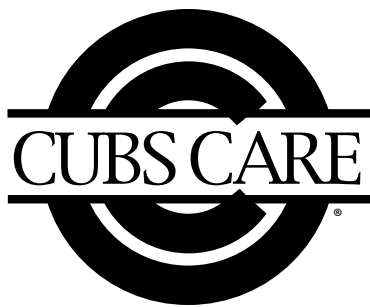
Come enjoy morning coffee, smoothies and pastries, lunch, dinner, and weekend brunch in the summery splendor of the Cafe's outdoor dining area. BYOB. All major credit cards accepted.

CREDITS

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INSPIRATION CORPORATION SCORES A HOME RUN WITH CUBS CARE



Inspiration Corporation was awarded \$5,000 from Cubs Care, a fund of the McCormick Tribune Foundation, in support of Community Voice Mail. A check presentation luncheon was held on April 10, 2006 at the Wrigley Field Stadium Club. John Pfeiffer, Deputy Director, accepted the grant award on behalf of Inspiration Corporation from Ernie Banks, former Chicago Cub and Hall of Famer. Chicago Cubs spirit and generosity filled the air as Cubs Care awarded more than \$1 million in grants to local social service agencies.

Since 1999, The Employment Project has provided over 6,000 Chicagoans a lifeline to potential jobs, homes, healthcare, and services through Community Voice Mail. Community Voice Mail provides a toll-free number to as many as 1,300 homeless and phoneless people at one time, allowing them to access their messages by pay phones free of charge. Through 50 participating agencies at more than 63 different sites, Community Voice Mail works directly with homeless and low-income individuals who want to regain stability in their lives, primarily through employment.