

Social services center reopens for Woodlawn community

BY KIM DRELIICH
NEWS STAFF

Community members from Woodlawn and beyond gathered to celebrate the opening of the Living Room Cafe, a center providing social services to the Woodlawn community, at its new 806 East 64th Street location on Tuesday evening. The event and ribbon-cutting ceremony featured speakers like Living Room Cafe founder Jennifer Kihm and Illinois State Senator Kwame Raoul.

Situated just across the street from its previous location on 64th Street and Cottage Grove Avenue, the Living Room

Cafe, now enjoys one-third more space to accommodate participants' needs, including private offices for counseling and a larger kitchen, according to John Pfeiffer, deputy-director at Inspiration Corporation, the nonprofit organization that runs the center.

Founded in 1995 by Jennifer Kihm, the Living Room Cafe was designed to help people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless through counseling and referrals, said Judith Bobbey, director of Clinical Services for Inspiration Corporation. The center offers restaurant-style meals—two

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State Senator Kwame Raoul

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diners and two breakfasts each week—
as well as case management services to
all participants.

The Living Room Cafe offers weekly
meetings with case managers for guests,
who must find stable housing and a
source of income in order to graduate
from the center. Along with a place to
live and steady employment, the perks
of graduating include access to an after-
school program for kids, recreational
activities, employment services through
Inspiration Corporation, and support
groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous
and Narotics Anonymous, according
to Pfeiffer.

In his welcome address
Executive Director Ch.
Persons said that though the
has changed, the Living Room
commitment to treating peo
respect and dignity would not.
Khim said that 10 years
“planted a small seed in WC
which was “nurtured into a
emphasizing that the space rep
new phase for the Living Room
Reflecting on his years in pub
Raoul noted that grassroots
such as the Living Room Cafe, do
do not receive adequate attention.
Raoul said that he was proud
center and its accomplishments