



concordia place matters

Summer 2016 Edition

Celebrating 35 Years of Serving Chicago's Children and Families

2016 has been a year of both reflection and forward-thinking. The year marks the 35th anniversary of Concordia Place, and - not coincidentally - the 35th anniversary of Rev. Nicholas Zook starting his call as the pastor of [Concordia Lutheran Church](#).

On May 5, 2016 more than 40 past and present Concordia Place leaders gathered for the Leadership Reunion in the downtown offices of Plante Moran. Guests enjoyed the chance to reconnect with old friends, meet some new business professionals, and learn more about the next chapter for Concordia.



Guests at the Leadership Reunion learn more about the future of Concordia Place



From the makeup of the congregation, to the physical space, to the number of people that consider Concordia to be their second home, Concordia Lutheran Church is not the same as it was in 1981 either. On June 12, the congregation joined together to thank Pastor Zook for his 35 years of ministry - a ministry focused not only on the needs of its church members, but also the community at large. In traditional Lutheran style, the worship service was followed by a potluck chili cook-off and cake!



Coming up on September 29, 2016 is an opportunity for ALL to join in on the ultimate 35th anniversary celebration - **GO Gala 2016!** With the theme to "celebrate the kid in all of us," guests will enjoy adult game night festivities (think Giant Plinko and Blackjack) along with music, a silent and live auction, open bar, and gourmet buffet all with the goal of raising \$250,000 for Concordia Place. The evening will also honor four Growth & Opportunity (GO) Award recipients - Mary Ellen Caron, Trinita Logue, Bonnie Lopez, and Dan Formeller. The support of these individuals made the initial concept, as well as the expansion into Avondale, a reality.

Mark your calendar for September 29th at Venue One in Chicago's trendy West Loop (1034 W. Randolph). Tickets go on sale July 25th and sponsorship opportunities are available now.

For more information on **GO Gala 2016** or how you can become involved in celebrating our 35th anniversary, contact Cameron Nelson, Director of Advancement, at 773-463-1600 x421 or cnelson@concordiaplace.org.

Summer Camp at Concordia: Expanding Space AND Minds

According to the National Summer Learning Association, "brain drain" isn't just a myth. In fact, the loss of academic skills over the summer is a significant cause of the achievement gap between lower and upper-income children. **Concordia Place School-Age 365** enriches lives all year, allowing learning to continue uninterrupted. This year, we are expanding the reach of our 10-week, full-day **Summer Camp**, serving additional children in need of engaging summer opportunities and experiences.

By converting the Annex at Concordia on Whipple to a Summer Camp classroom, we will be able to offer more children a chance to learn and develop when school is not in session. Keeping children in our community safe and occupied during the summer, children are exposed to fun team-building games, creative expression and crafts, enrichment workshops, in addition to cultural field trips.

For example, past educational excursions have included trips to the Shedd Aquarium and the Chicago History Museum. Responding to the needs of working parents in the community, **Summer Camp** is open the first day of Chicago Public Schools' summer break (June 22) up until the final day before school resumes (September 2).

In 1981, Concordia Place began as a small after-school program serving 12 local children. Thirty-five years later, **School-Age 365** is growing and thriving, allowing a new generation of children to experience the joys of a Chicago summer.



School-Age 365 Summer Camp visits the Chicago History Museum

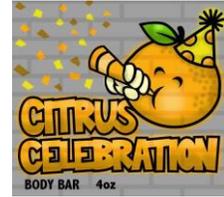
Orange-you glad we're 35?!

To mark Concordia Place's milestone year, the **Ruckus Entrepreneurs** have created a special "citrageous" scent. Released in April, the "orange-believable" 35th Anniversary product line of teen-made, all-natural body care products features notes of lavender, rosemary, lemon verbena, and of course, orange.

The 35th Anniversary product line includes: Citrus Celebration soap (\$6); Orange Bliss shea balm (\$6); and Double-O Orange lip balm (\$3).



What's even more "orange-ageous" is that for every **Ruckus product** you purchase, you are also helping to provide for someone in need. In 2015, Ruckus Entrepreneurs instituted their own social mission, the **BOGO Project** (or Buy One Give One), where for every Ruckus product purchased, a like product gets donated to a person less fortunate. Through BOGO, more than 500 products were donated last year alone.



So join in the celebration! Ruckus products can be purchased at:

- Local Foods (1427 W. Willow)
- Starbucks Pop-up Shops
 - July 9th: Southport & Roscoe
 - August 12th: Lincoln, Irving and Damen
 - September 10th: Addison & Sheffield
- Gallery 37 (66 E. Randolph)
- I Heart Chicago (O'Hare International Airport- Green Terminal)
- www.ruckusteens.org



To learn more about Ruckus Entrepreneurs, visit www.ruckusteens.org.

Serving More

Concordia Place is proud to announce the arrival of its new mission sister program, **Concordia Day**! Concordia Day early learning will open its doors to Chicago's youngest citizens in early August. Operating as a social enterprise, Concordia Day's mission is to use the power of giving to help transform lives beyond those we serve.

Concordia Place's goal is to open three Concordia Day centers by 2020. These centers will focus on serving children 6 weeks through 2 years old. The first Concordia Day will open at 4809 N. Ravenswood in Chicago's Ravenswood neighborhood.

A joint report (2010) issued by the National Executive Service Corps and City University of New York stated, "In today's economic climate, nonprofit organizations are seeking means to generate additional income to supplant a declining economic stream of traditional revenue. Social enterprise activities offer nonprofit organizations the opportunity to generate earned income which in turn will provide consistent cash flow to further the mission of the organization."

Concordia Day is essential to the operations of Concordia Place, but through Concordia Day, we will also increase the total number of children we serve by 60%.

To learn more about Concordia Day, please visit www.concordiaday.org or stop by for a tour. Open House tours will occur every Tuesday at 10am and Friday at 4pm beginning July 8th.



Corporate Volunteerism Supports Giving Tree Project Goals

In Fall of 2015, Concordia Place kicked off its first ever Giving Tree Project, a multi-faceted campaign focused on generosity not just during the holiday season, but the whole year through. We are so grateful for the gifts we have received! While the children have lessons on generosity in the classroom, the staff and family fundraising campaign exceeded the financial goal by 20%! In addition, parents have shared their time and talent in the classrooms and beyond. Additional hands have even been recruited!

Karen Semone, parent and Associate Partner at [VSA Partners](#), along with husband Ethan and 10 other VSA employees, gathered on May 26th to replace the woodchips in the Concordia on Seeley playlot. Wheelbarrows, shovels and rakes, with a good dose of humor, promoted the hard work of the VSA crew. Although it rained the night before, the weather was mild and sunny for the transformation of the playground, and a good time was had by all!



VSA Volunteers at Concordia on Seeley

On June 10th, Concordia on Whipple hosted 31 volunteers, including parent Erin Mendoza, from [Deloitte](#) for their annual [Impact Day](#). This is a worldwide day of service for the company, and this is the second year they have chosen Concordia Place as a partner. Projects included painting, weeding, gardening, washing walls in the school, and even resealing the parking lot. Not even the 90 degree heat could stop the progress as all projects were completed ahead of schedule! One Deloitte consultant who was participating in her 10th Impact Day commented that this day was the most organized day she has ever been a part of.



Deloitte volunteers at Concordia on Whipple

"Volunteer days are important to Concordia Place because it saves money, so we can direct more funds toward our mission of serving all of Chicago's children and families." - *Brenda G. Swartz, Concordia Place President & CEO*

Proactive in Early Learning

Over the past year, our Early Learning teachers and staff have partnered with [Pediatric Therapy Network \(PTN\)](#), positively intervening in the lives of very young children with a developmental delay. This successful collaboration was funded by a generous grant from the Prince Charitable Trust.

Last year, nearly one in three children served in our [Early Learning program](#) were identified with a developmental delay or diagnosis. While our teachers are qualified as early childhood educators, our partnership with PTN allowed staff to work with expert occupational, speech, and physical therapists in intervening with at-risk infants, toddlers, and two year-olds. The results have been absolutely amazing! Teachers have rearranged their classrooms to

accommodate children with unique needs, specialized equipment and toys were purchased, and individual plans were developed that supported these children in meeting important social, emotional, physical, and cognitive milestones.

Read on and see how Concordia Place's Early Learning program supports the growth and development of ALL of the very young children we serve!



Think these little ones are just having fun? Well, they are, but they're also developing balance by navigating those slippery, moving balls. They're developing their senses through a new and interesting tactile experience. Finally, they're making lots of new sounds, building speech and language development.



There's more going on here than building. These two are learning to guide their hands and fingers in manipulating objects. It's not as easy for toddlers as it is for you and me! Children this age need lots of opportunities to build the types of fine motor skills that will, for example, allow them to later hold a pencil in school.



Many children with developmental issues are overwhelmed by the sounds and activity of a vibrant early learning classroom. Enter structured group play! Guided by teachers in fun parachute play, children develop positive coping skills that can then be transferred to the many new experiences they will face in their young lives.

Funders' Corner

Since 2011, the [FDC Foundation](#) has been a strong partner and ally of Concordia Place Teen Leadership. With a focus on improving nutrition for Americans, the [FDC Foundation](#) has supported our efforts to expose teens to gardening in addition to preparing and eating family-style meals using fresh and locally-grown produce. This partnership has also allowed Concordia Place to promote physical fitness and alternative exercise to Chicago teens through Yoga and Zumba classes, plus hiking excursions at State Parks where teens enjoy their natural surroundings. Thank you, [FDC Foundation](#), for your continued generous support!



Because of you, we change lives. DONATE TODAY!

Concordia Place changes lives. We hear this time and time again from those we serve. In order for us to continue the quality programs for which we are known, we need your support. We need you to know that for every dollar donated to Concordia Place, we use that dollar wisely to make a difference for the more than 800 we serve each year. [Make your donation by June 30](#) to help us end our fiscal year strong.