

Executive Director Letter

Dear St. Joseph Services Family,

Happy Fall!

As we continue to forge ahead with programming in these unique times, I am proud and encouraged by the resolve and determination of our staff, volunteers, partners, and students. The hard work and planning by everyone on the SJS staff has enabled us to open some programming to in-person classes, while also expanding classes that remain digital. Volunteers

have helped us every step of the way with their efforts making these transitions, both in-person and virtual, go smoothly. SJS community partners assisted us in forming new and creative ways to provide resources to those in need. Students and parents have shown incredible patience and gratitude, as we all work together for normalcy and safety.

The SJS community has truly collaborated in so many ways. As uncertain as the future feels at times, it is comforting to know that the SJS team is helping us serve each other and will pull us through to the brighter days ahead.

Thank you for all of your efforts and support of SJS. It is making a wonderful and long lasting impact! Take care and be safe.

God Bless,
Guadalupe Preston

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Executive Director

SJS Holds Successful Coat & Clothing "Drive-Thru"



SJS was thrilled to partner with CC's Wish List to help create a coat and clothing drive-thru with a social distancing twist. CC's Wish List, a program of the Lavin Family Foundation, provided SJS with over 100 youth and adult winter coats in addition to boots, sweaters, and other warm clothing. SJS staff members picked up the clothing and coats, and then started planning how to distribute everything in a safe and effective manner. The idea of handing out the items to families in their cars was proposed, and thus the "SJS Coat & Clothing Drive-Thru" was formed. SJS worked with St. Angela School to use their parking lot and design the drive-thru route.

Over 60 cars and families took part, and SJS was able to distribute every single item. It was an incredible and fun day for staff to be able to see community families again and help pass out the clothing. One family expressed how grateful they were that SJS was able to put on a coat and clothing drive-thru during these challenging times.

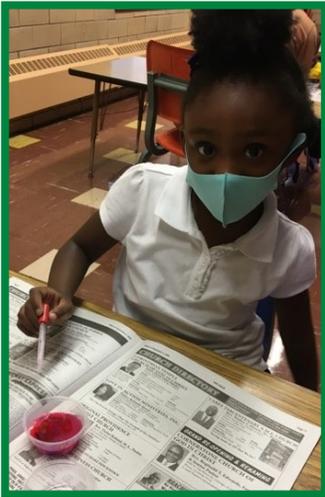
SJS would like to thank CC's Wish List, St. Angela School, and SJS staff for putting this wonderful event together!



Developing Youth

Youth Programs Transition Back to In-Person Classes

Youth programming has welcomed back students to in-person classes, and we are very excited! After months of planning and implementing safety protocols and equipment, SJS held on-site programming for the first time since March. The After School Program in Austin opened on August 18th, while programming in Humboldt Park opened on October 5th. In Austin, SJS is continuing to serve students at St. Angela School with safe, engaging after school activities, including homework assistance and tutoring. SJS revived the Youth Mentoring Program for in-person classes here as well. The Open Gym Program reopened in June and has provided organized basketball games to over 100 youth and young adults since reopening. In Humboldt Park, SJS is now serving second through eighth grade students from four Chicago Public Schools with e-learning assistance and after school programming.



Staff and students alike were happy to be back and participating in programming. Although things are slightly different with implemented safety protocols including temperature checks, masks, regular hand sanitizing, desks with plexiglass dividers, and social distancing, it has been uplifting to see one another in person. A parent of an After School Program student shared, "My son had felt isolated doing his school day at home and online. Being able to see friends at SJS has made him much happier and has even improved his grades. We are so grateful for SJS."



Great job SJS Youth Programming staff!



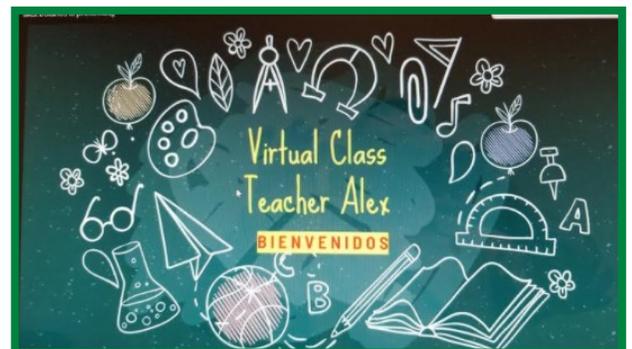
Educating Adults

Adult Education Digital Classes Growing and Helping Students Vote

SJS Adult Education staff members and volunteers have continued to work tirelessly to ensure digital programming is readily available to our students. English as a Second Language classes are providing students throughout Chicago and Glenview with online instruction designed to improve their literacy skills. Volunteers have been an integral part of helping create lessons that engage students even in an online environment. Our Computer Literacy digital classes now serve three groups of students every week and have increased attendance by over 20% since summer.

An amazing achievement outside of the classroom was students registering and voting in the recent election. SJS was able to assist ten students with their registration and provide information on the various ways to vote safely. Students were eager to participate and felt proud to be part of our nation's democratic process. One student noted, "I am so excited to vote and have my voice heard!"

SJS is proud of the work staff and volunteers do to help students in the classroom and beyond!



Meet SJS' and Chicago's Very Own: Alex



SJS Computer Literacy Manager Alex received some much deserved recognition when he was spotlighted on WGN's "**Chicago's Very Own**" this month. WGN reached out to SJS and Alex after he was recommended for the weekly highlight of local residents helping out their community. The story aired during the WGN noon news broadcast on Friday, November 6th and again on Monday November 9th. It focused on how Alex has gone above and beyond in helping ensure his Computer Literacy students were able to continue classes remotely, as well as for continuously checking in on their well-being and needs during the pandemic. Alex has worked hard to gather donated computer equipment for students in need, and he handed them out from Josephinum Academy one morning in October. On his own time, he then worked with his students to make sure all the computers were working properly and that all students could sign into their Computer Literacy classes. His efforts have helped many students continue taking classes to improve their technology skills, which allows them to stay connected with family and friends through emails and video calls.

The WGN story did a tremendous job showing the passion that Alex has for working with his students and the incredible bond he has formed with them. Footage of Alex with his longtime students and lunch buddies, Juan and Sophia, was very moving and uplifting. It is no wonder that his students all appreciate him so much.

Alex, you are truly an inspiration and definitely one of SJS's and "**Chicago's Very Own!**" [Click here to view the clip of Alex on WGN.](#)



Virtual Format Provides New Ways to Enjoy 16th Annual Fall Festival: Tailgate Style!



The 16th Annual Fall Festival just wrapped up a two night digital event with live music and a grand prize raffle drawing. As with most gatherings planned for 2020, the Fall Festival was altered to ensure the safety of guests and staff. SJS decided back in August to move the Fall Festival to a completely online format over two separate nights. The Kick Off event was held October 2nd with the finale following on November 14th. This new format presented some challenges but also created an opportunity to provide entertainment in a different and innovative fashion. The implemented changes helped successfully create two enjoyable gatherings of the SJS community.

A huge contributor to the enjoyment was the amazing music of Jim Sullivan. Jim had played at the very first Fall Festival as part of the Sullivan Brothers Band back in 2004. Jim graciously offered his talents as he sang and played acoustic guitar for both nights. His traditional Irish sound gave everyone a unique live home concert while getting together online to celebrate St. Joseph Services. Jim was also generous enough to donate all sales proceeds during Fall Festival to SJS from his new album *Catch the Heart Off Guard* (available online through Spotify).

Another great new feature of the Fall Festival was a raffle drawing for a cash prize. Guests received an entry into the drawing for every \$100 donated to the event. SJS was blessed to have received donations during the first night and all throughout October and November. As the final night came to a close, the grand drawing took place and longtime SJS supporters Michael and Nancy Pins were the lucky winners!

SJS is so thankful for everyone who helped make this year's Fall Festival such a special event. Guests and supporters made an incredible impact on raising resources for SJS programming, while the hard work of our volunteers and staff created a truly outstanding experience.

Thank you to all for continuing to make Fall Festival so awesome!



Meet Three Members of the SJS Board of Directors

An important part of SJS's ability to provide programming throughout the Chicagoland area is due to the behind the scenes efforts of our Board of Directors. These volunteers are a collection of local professionals, Daughters of Charity, and longtime donors that work together to ensure that SJS continues on well into the future.

For the next several newsletters, we will highlight three or four of our Board Members. In this newsletter, please meet Owens Shelby, Stella Gayton, and Richard Stefan and learn about each of their reasons for serving on the SJS Board.

"I joined St. Joseph Services (SJS) because I was born and raised in an area that SJS continues to provide services for adults and kids to help improve the community. I am excited to be a part of an organization that truly cares and provides assistance for the communities that need it." - Owens Shelby



"The reason I decided to spend some of my free time at SJS is because I am passionate about having a hand in providing opportunities to underserved communities. SJS shines a light on opportunities outside of their regular day to day of the people they serve." - Stella Gayton



"I have a strong desire to share gifts of time, talent, and treasure – SJS gives me the opportunity to do all three in support of their inspiring mission." - Richard Stefan



#GIVING TUESDAY

St. Joseph Services is so grateful for the amazing support you continue to provide us. As the holiday season approaches, we are preparing for Giving Tuesday on December 1st and inviting others to celebrate the season by donating to help create positive change. Giving Tuesday is a global generosity movement unleashing the power of people to transform their communities. It is a day that invites individuals to do good, such as showing up for an issue or a cause they care about.

This year has been challenging for most due to the COVID-19 pandemic. and Humboldt Park are facing difficult times with lost jobs, lost homes and a lack of food, with an increase of violence in these neighborhoods. Your support is crucial to our mission, allowing us to provide services to these communities in need. Your generosity carries even greater significance during these uncertain times, as SJS continues to strive towards our goal of transforming lives to transform communities.

The communities we serve in Austin



Program Locations

**St. Joseph Services
Administrative Office**
1501 N Oakley Blvd
Chicago, IL 60622
(773) 278-0484
(at Josephinum
Academy)

Austin
1332 N Massasoit Ave
Chicago, IL 60651
(773) 796-5110
(at St. Angela School)

Austin
501 N Central Ave
Chicago, IL 60644
(at Austin Community
Family Center)

Humboldt Park
1510 N Claremont Ave
Chicago, IL 60622
(773) 278-0485
(at St. Aloysius Parish
Monsignor Thiele
Center)

Avondale
3043 N Francisco Ave
Chicago, IL 60618
(at Resurrection Parish)

Glenview
3535 Thornwood Ave
Glenview, IL 60026
(at St. Catherine Labouré
Parish)

