

EMBRACE
LIVING
COMMUNITIES

Annual Report

2023

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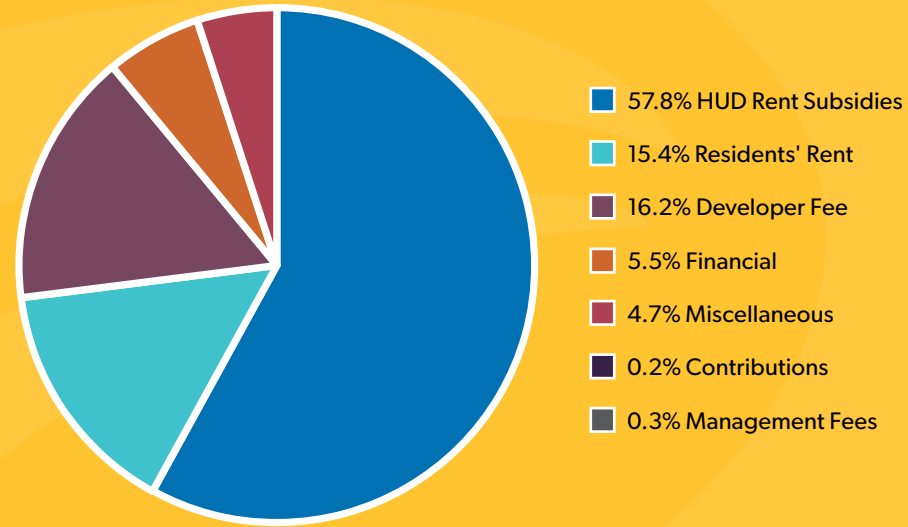
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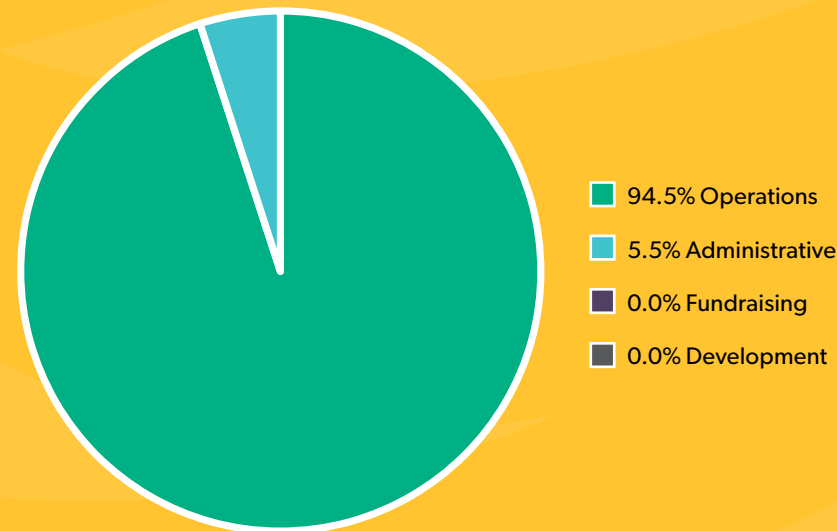
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2023 Total Income*
\$43,077,362



2023 Expenses*
\$43,489,535

*This preliminary report is presented on an unaudited basis.

How do you embrace life?



Dear Fellow Affordable Housing Advocate,

How do you embrace life? Do you cook for your family in your kitchen, lose yourself in conversations with friends, garden in your backyard or play on a sports team?

However you embrace life, it likely involves some combination of home and community. At Embrace Living Communities, we strive to provide our residents with a place where they can find both. By doing so, we deinstitutionalize affordable housing and offer our residents something deeper than just a place to live.

Our social service coordinators work tirelessly to connect the seniors and individuals with disabilities who they serve with robust programming that fosters connections among residents and encourages healthy lifestyle choices.

In addition to the 446 apartments we've already given a complete makeover, we're also in the process of renovating some of our communities to include more common outdoor and recreational spaces to help facilitate these programs.

None of this would be possible without your support because, while we do receive government

funding, it does not provide the level of support necessary to foster a sense of home and community. That's why we're making it a priority to apply for grants from like-minded organizations and ask for donations from individuals who are passionate about our residents like we are.

Our staff has also been lobbying on Capitol Hill and in the statehouse to increase funding so all seniors and individuals with disabilities can access quality affordable housing.

For now, Embrace Living Communities stands as an exemplar of what affordable housing should look like. We would not be able to provide this best-in-class affordable housing to seniors and individuals with disabilities without your enduring support. This annual report celebrates what your donations, time and enthusiasm for our mission have made possible. Let's keep it going.

With gratitude,

Ralph Gaines
Chief Executive Officer
Embrace Living Solutions



Renovating for better living

When Elizabeth Roman came to Embrace Living Communities a few months ago, she was homeless and bouncing from one friend's house to another.

"My car was my closet," she said. Now, she has a safe and friendly place to rest and make friends.

"I'm very, very happy. I don't feel alone. I was afraid that when I'd have my own apartment I would feel very lonely. I don't. Everybody talks to each other," she said. "There's a group of ladies that play games outside of the elevator in our lobby and they've invited me to play with them, and they're just very, very kind people."

Elizabeth sits in the newly renovated community atrium with Ginny Wroblewski, who has been living in Castle Towers for eleven years.

"(Castle Towers first felt like mine) when I realized there were people I could have friendships with," said Ginny. "I wasn't just staying in my apartment. There were actually things to do here and I enjoyed the community."


Now, both women call Castle Towers home, as many have for over a century.

Only one brick remains from the building originally called German Evangelical Orphanage & Old People's Home Society of Northern Illinois. And while our name has changed a couple of times, our mission to provide comfortable, safe and affordable housing has remained unchanged. Today, Embrace Living Communities boasts 29 communities across Illinois, Missouri and Florida that ensure seniors and individuals with disabilities can age with dignity and respect. ▶



"I'm very, very happy. I don't feel alone."

Elizabeth Roman, resident, speaking with Castle Towers Property Manager Laura Martinez.



"I realized there were people I could have friendships with. I wasn't just staying in my apartment. There were actually things to do here and I enjoyed the community."

Ginny Wroblewski, resident, enjoying the new pool table in the atrium at Castle Towers.



We're now positioning ourselves to serve the coming generations by renovating our communities. We have completed eight renovations since 2022, including Castle Towers in 2023. In 2024 we expect to complete four more.

And, we're considering our senior residents' needs down to the design details.

"The main thing I love – and you're going to laugh at this – is the toilet paper holder. It's moved forward. We don't have to stretch backward, it's easy to use, and I just get a kick out of it," said Ginny with a chuckle.

We're also prioritizing bigger picture initiatives like community and fitness.

The new buildings have ample communal spaces where residents can enjoy time together and feel proud to invite family and friends.

"This building has a big party room and I'm looking forward to having some reunions, asking my cousins and friends and family to come by and have dinner together," said Elizabeth.

Each of the renovated buildings also has a state-of-the-art fitness center that has been encouraging residents to stay active. They're already seeing results.

Ewa Michałowska-Halaburda, a Castle Towers resident with major back and spine pain, has made huge strides since using the fitness center daily.

Since using the fitness center, she feels stronger and more comfortable walking short distances.

"I feel stronger and I'm just very happy about this. (The fitness center) is right here, so it's so accessible," Ewa said. ■

Creating communities where health and living meet

We are taking big steps in upgrading our properties to include healthier, safer and more accessible living spaces for seniors and people with disabilities, along with rooms to house new equipment such as SciFit rehabilitation equipment, treadmills and personal use exercise items.

41%
of Embrace Living Communities have been renovated since 2020

2,249
residents accessed **149,070** services during 2023

980
Programs focused on Health and Wellness were offered

98%
of residents participated in social services during 2023



Common chronic health conditions among our senior residents are **less prevalent** when compared to generational peers thanks to our health and wellness programs.

Support Better Living
embraceliving.org/give

"I feel stronger and I'm just very happy about this. (The fitness center) is right here, so it's so accessible."

Ewa Michałowska-Halaburda, resident, utilizing the new state-of-the-art fitness center.





Programming to *live and thrive*

Every year, we review resident demographics and needs at each of our communities. From there, our social service coordinators design programming that meets deficits, often partnering with community organizations to provide specialized services.

Recently, our focus has been on increasing our residents' mental and physical wellness. For many, this means making sure they are socially engaged.

Nearly one in four adults aged 65 and older are socially isolated, according to a 2020 report from the National Academies. Seniors are more likely to live alone, lose family and friends and battle chronic illnesses that keep them home.

There is strong evidence that social isolation increases one's risk of premature death at a rate that rivals smoking, obesity and physical inactivity. It was also associated with a 50% increased risk of dementia, 29% increased risk of heart disease and 32% increased risk of stroke.

And our residents notice the positive effect being socially active has on their wellbeing!

"Just to mingle with the children visitors, the staff, and the tenants – it's good to come out and do that. I don't have time to just sit and feel depressed. I like to stay active," said Lousia Purnell, a five year resident at Castle Towers.

Programming is not just a nice thing to have in affordable housing communities. It's a must. However, federal funding doesn't cover the full extent of what we need to provide programs to all our residents. That's why we need donations, grants and volunteers to fill in the gaps.

Wellness Programming

This year, we've focused on providing our residents with wellness programming.

Many of our communities have implemented the *Aging UnLonely* initiative, an evidence-based program that uses art to encourage social connection. The process of creating art offers a change for reflection and allows older adults to explore new forms of expression and communication. Then, sharing art with others provides an opportunity for connection.

We've also found that art is a great way to form social connections beyond language barriers. This is important to us because 13 languages are spoken across all of our communities!

In the coming months, we hope to introduce more mental health programming to continue combating the loneliness epidemic. All coordinators were certified in mental health first aid last year, ahead of U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development recommendation.

We're also focused on promoting physical fitness because many of our residents come to us needing to develop healthy habits and learn how to care for their aging bodies.

Urmila Date, a resident at our Immanuel community, lives a very active lifestyle thanks to our programming and great spaces. Our regular fitness classes keep her busy.

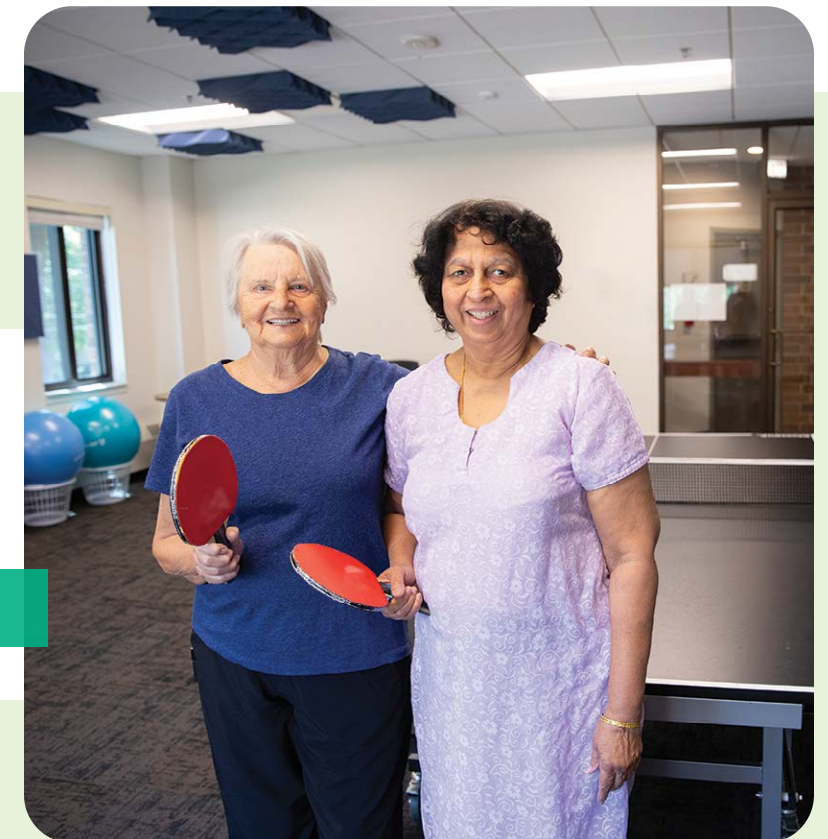
"The arthritic exercise is today, then aerobic exercise is on Tuesday and sometimes I join chair yoga on Saturday," she said.

When she's not attending a workout class, she's likely in the new workout facility playing pingpong with her neighbors.

Our communities on Chicago's South Side are also participating in the University of Chicago's SHARE Network. The program was designed to address the unique health care needs of older adults living in Chicago's South Side, which has few geriatric specialists and even fewer who understand the ▶

"I love to play table tennis so every day I play."

Urmila Date, resident, playing table tennis with her friend Valerie in the Immanuel activities room.





“I don’t have time to just sit and feel depressed. I like to stay active.”

Louisa Purnell, resident, enjoying the outdoor areas of Castle Towers.

sociocultural background of our residents. Their medical staff regularly visits our communities to provide “Healthy Aging” education. Recently topics covered include *The 4Ms of Age-Friendly Care: What Matters, Medication, Mind (Mentation), and Mobility; Living Well: Chronic Conditions; Resiliency Techniques; and Life Skills and Wellness Lifestyle*. In 2024, we are partnering with Advocate Aurora Health to provide Connect to Thrive programming to reduce social isolation and loneliness.

We’re also in the third year of our *Let’s Get Moving Challenge*, which encourages residents to be more active. Each resident gets a pedometer to monitor their movement and reach step goals. It’s been a fabulous way to keep our residents active. The program and its ongoing success have been made possible by generous grants from Congressional Church of Deerfield and United Church Funds.

Embracing Generations

Louisa makes a point to attend all the afternoon interactive puzzle and board game events. It keeps her mind sharp and reminds her of her time working in childcare.

“I’m gonna show them how to play one game. But then they end up showing me how to play another game,” she said, fondly recalling a recent game of Uno.

Intergenerational programming between local student groups and our residents has proved to be an effective way to reduce social isolation for all our residents. And, these programs are special because they’re reciprocal. Everyone involved benefits. The students arrive to our communities with a fresh energy that uplifts our residents, and they leave with wisdom from the residents.

“I’d win or they’d beat me. It’s just been very nice working with the kids,” Louisa said.

Below are some examples of other intergenerational partnerships our residents and local students have been enjoying across our communities.

- Rockford University students regularly visit Greencastle of Mulford to help residents better use technology.
- One of our long-standing programs is between the Chinese Immersion School in Barrington and our Greencastle of Barrington. It’s a wonderful opportunity for the students to practice their Chinese and the residents to practice their English.
- Our residents at North Orchard Place also cherish their relationship with the Latin School of Chicago. Students regularly come with goody bags and arts-and-crafts for everyone to enjoy together. ■





Activism through *advocacy*

Affordable housing faces many challenges, so it's important for us to remain engaged in policy discussions. The largest challenges facing the affordable housing sector today:

1. Lack of social service coordination. *Federal funding only provides money for social service coordinators if they are included in a PRAC (Project Rental Assistance Contract) building's supportive service budget, so many affordable housing communities lack this integral staff because they aren't a PRAC building and don't have the outside funding to cover these salaries.*
2. Constant risk of funding cuts. *The federal government is always looking to see where it can scrap, scratch and reduce costs. Affordable housing providers constantly have to be on the defensive to ensure essential services aren't cut.*
3. Racial disproportionality. *We need to be thoughtful about building affordable housing communities in the places that need them most. There is currently a disproportionate lack of affordable housing in communities of color.*

Our Director of Social Services and Quality Assurance Jennifer Truppa has gone out to Washington D.C. several times over the last year to express these challenges and advocate for positive change. She always starts her conversations with congressional staffers by sharing stories about our residents.

One of the bills that she has been pushing for is the Expanding Service Coordinators Act, which seeks to expand funding for social service coordinators at federally funded housing.

Embrace Living Communities has a social service coordinator at each of our locations, but many other organizations across the country aren't as lucky. We believe helping older adults age well through access to quality programming is a right, which is why we are working toward securing that right not only for our residents but on a national level.

We're also committed to bringing elected officials to our communities so residents can share their concerns and experiences themselves.

Every election day, we transport our residents to the polls so they can vote. And, when possible, we bring government services to our residences.

In February, the Illinois Attorney General's Office visited Greencastle of Garfield to educate residents about identity theft. Our residents learned about the state's Identity Theft Hotline, which provides Illinoisans who have been victimized with one-on-one assistance as they work to report and resolve the wrongdoing.

And, in June, we also hosted one of the state's first ever Mobile DMVs at Greencastle of North Aurora community in partnership with Representative Barbara Hernandez and the Illinois Secretary of State. Residents were able to renew their identification cards and voter registration right in their backyards!

Partnering in our mission

The energy is palpable when you walk through the doors of an Embrace Living Community. Our residents are bubbling over with life and our social service coordinators are energized to help them make the most of every day.

We look forward to continuing to provide best-in-class affordable housing by continuing to renovate our communities, prioritize mental and physical wellness programming and advocate for our residents' needs. None of this would be possible without your support.

So, thank you for being a partner in our mission to ensure all seniors and individuals with disabilities can age in a welcoming and affordable home. The peace of mind and support our communities provide enable our residents to embrace life. ■

“Our work is more important now than ever before as the nation focuses its attention on improving health outcomes; and, social service coordinators are uniquely positioned to engage our residents in onsite wellbeing programs which assist residents in meeting their health and well-being goals.”

Jennifer Truppa, Embrace Living Communities
Director of Social Services and Quality Assurance

Our Partners

Corporations and community organizations play a critical role in furthering our mission. We thank our corporate and philanthropic donors for not only their monetary support, but for volunteering and directly impacting the lives of our residents. Thank you for creating an environment where our residents can age with strength and dignity.

FOOD

Aurora Interfaith Food Pantry
Barrington Township Food Pantry
Black Men United
Blue Freedom Farms
Blue Heron
Fish Food Pantry
Food Donation Connection
Greater Chicago Food Bank
In As Much Food Pantry
Just Roots
Kenwood Community Outreach
Marie Wilkenson Food Pantry
Morgan Park Food Pantry
Northern Illinois Food Bank
Open Kitchens
Sauk Valley Food Pantry
St. Paul's United Church of Barrington
The Community Meal
HOME HEALTH
Addus Home Health
Assure Home Health
Athletico Physical Therapy
Best Care Health
Bridgeway Services
CTS Health
Citadel Healthcare
Community Care Systems, Inc. (CCSI)
Crown Home Health

Crystal Home Health Care
Eagles Home Health
East Bank Center
Help At Home
In-Home Care Connection
Infinite Care Home Physicians
Infinity Home Care
Integrated Home Care Services
JenCare Senior Medical Center
Jessie Brown Veteran Administration
Northern Illinois Foot and Ankle Specialists
Oak Street Health
Premier Home Health
Pro-Medica
Wellspring Home Health
PODIATRIST
At Your Door
Dr. Akerele
Dr. Bogadir
Dr. Chi
Dr. Coscino
Dr. Marczk
Foot Care Complete
Midwest Foot and Ankle
Wheaton Family Foot Doctors
VISION
Ageless EyeCare
Dr. LaVallee
Lighthouse for the Blind
HEARING
Americans for Better Hearing

Center for Sight and Hearing
Chicago Hearing Society
EDUCATION AND WELLNESS
Allure Health Services
Alzheimer Association
Arthritis Foundation
Be Fit Physical Therapy
Beacon Mental Health
Blue Door Neighborhood Center
Bone and Joint Institute
Burkhiya Group
CAPS (Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy)
Caption Call
Elderworks
Equal Hope Foundation
Garfield Counseling Center
Hands of Hope Counseling
Haymarket Treatment
Heartland Hospice
Heritage Woods – Various Locations
Humana Healthcare
Lifescape Community Services
Metropolitan Family Services
Midland Bank
Midwest Foot and Ankle
Neptune Society
NorthShore Senior Center
Northern Illinois Hospice

PT Solutions
PAWSitive Therapy Troupe
People's Resource Center
Powerback Rehab
SHARE Network (UofC Med)
Senior Crime Stoppers
Swope Health
The National Kidney Foundation
Thresholds
University of Illinois Extension Center
Westside Task Force
White Crane Fitness
COMMUNITY
Barrington Chinese Immersion Council
Bensenville Library
Big Heart
Catholic Charities
Clay County Social Services
Community Assisted Rides
Downers Grove Library
DuPage County - Ride DuPage (transportation)
DuPage Senior Council
DuPage Senior Services
Elmhurst Library
Glenview Public Library
Jewel/Osco – Various Locations
Little Brother Friends of the Elderly
Mane in Heaven

North Suburban Library
North Suburban Library
Northland Clothing Center
Northland Sheppard Center
Palatine Senior Center
Palatine Township
Public Outreach Agency Team
RTA / PACE Transportation Services
Ride in Kane (transportation)
Rockford Public Library
Salvation Army
Something Good in Englewood
Various Alderman
Various Fire Departments
Various Police Departments – Coffee with a Cop
Village of Bensenville
Village of Downers Grove
Village of Glenview
STATE AGENCIES
Illinois Attorney General
Illinois Secretary of State
Illinois State Treasurer
Missouri Seniors to the Parks
HOSPITALS
Advocate Health
Elmhurst Hospital
Good Samaritan

Loretto Hospital
North Kansas City Hospital
Rush Institute for Healthy Aging
University of Chicago Medical Center
FINANCIAL STABILITY
Center for Disability and Elder Law
Prairie State Legal
Premier Medicare – Enrollment
INTERGENERATIONAL
Barrington High School
Black Hawk Middle School
Boys and Girls Club of Rockford
Chinese Immersion School
College of DuPage
Downers Grove Girl Scouts
Forest Adventure Collective
Fremd High School
Geneva Girl Scouts
Geneva High School
Glenview High School
Harlem High School
Herrick Middle School
His & Hers Barber School
Latin School of Chicago
Major Adams Academy
Palatine High School Orchestra
Radical Love
Rockford University
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Various
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We recognize Embrace Living Communities' most invested supporters, who are committed to growing our impact and advancing housing equity across the United States.

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Amazon Smile
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Orgstory
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Puckett's Flooring
Salamone's Restaurant
Stenstrom
Supply Company
Tree Care Enterprises
United Church
Walmart
Warkin Electric
Willis Towers Watson



Help create communities where health and living meet

We're furthering our impact on resident health and well-being by providing new trainings to our team members, revitalizing common community spaces and expanding programs to more residents. *Invest in the wellness of all our residents.*

OUR MISSION

To support seniors and people with disabilities by helping them age with dignity in affordable and welcoming communities that embrace living.

SERVING RESIDENTS IN

*Greater Chicago
Rockford, Illinois
Kansas City, Missouri
Greater Tampa Bay
Sarasota, Florida*



Embrace Living
Communities

Affordable. Welcoming. **Home.**

1900 Spring Road, Suite 450, Oak Brook, Illinois 60523

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