



# RIVER CITY

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Bringing together the best of our city to build a path for families to walk from cradle to career to the glory of God.

## Along the Path: 2017 Year in Review

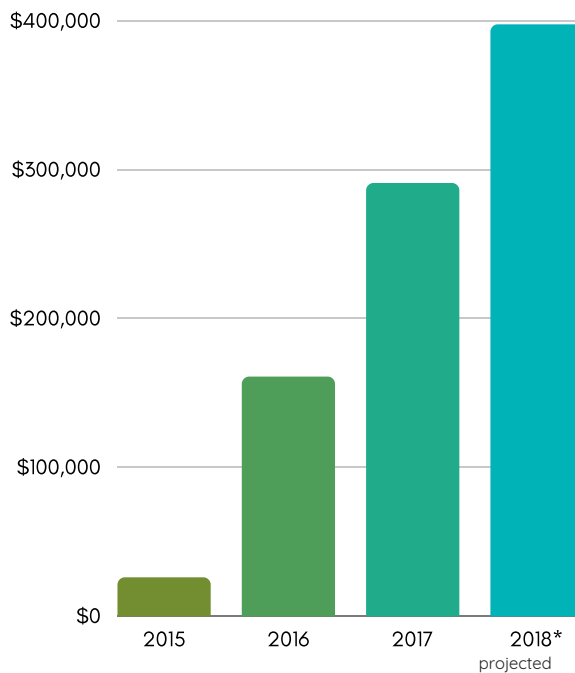
2017 has been a phenomenal year at R CITY full of exciting changes and growth as we've continued to build the path from cradle to career on Chicago's west side. Summer programs for children were expanded with the addition of volunteer teams from around the country, our junior high programs shifted to revolve around mentoring to see greater impact for our most at risk youth and our expanded teen apprenticeship programs now offer year-round opportunities for our teens to learn valuable work skills. The path we have built together has expanded and is providing youth from West Humboldt Park the reliability they have been longing for. THANK YOU for your part in building the path!

**186**  
INDIVIDUAL  
YOUTH  
SERVED

**OVER 75**  
VOLUNTEERS

**26 TEEN**  
APPRENTICESHIPS

### OPERATIONAL EXPENSES



### Master Builders

This summer, our Music Instructor, Aaron Eddy led our children in song writing exercises- and they created and performed two original songs for our end of summer celebration. Their songs would reflect the theme career industry of the week- and as you can guess, the following song was written during construction week.

#### Chorus:

*We are master builders, we keep it solid, it won't wash away*

*We use the bedrock of His foundation Which is love and grace*

*We build because we have a purpose For the human race*

*We are master builders*

#### Verse:

*Sharing and understanding  
Caring and being kind  
Loving from Grace we receive  
That's how we live our lives*

*Reaching beyond ourselves and  
Raising our voices high  
Lifting the name of Jesus  
Boldly we will rise*



# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



## Dreambuilders

During our 2017 programs we found great joy in building our children's programming around exposure to various careers to ignite their dreams about all that their future can hold, and build a foundation through after school enrichment. This summer, one mom dropped off her preschool aged son for programs informing our staff of how shy he was, nervous he wouldn't be able to open up. Just a few weeks later one team of volunteers hosted a picnic in a local park and this mother was astonished at how boldly her little one ran up to greet our staff and volunteers with full confidence. For this little one, walking along the path to career looked like lots of love, a safe space, and getting to try on a fireman's uniform that was 100 sizes too big.



## Mentoring

Last spring, our junior high model for programming shifted to free our staff to engage right at the place of their deepest need- the ability to build strong relationships with peers and adults. For some youth, both school and after school are places where they create chaos, disrespect others and find themselves kicked out of various settings. One young teen created this kind of destruction everywhere: at home, school, and on the block. This fall we have seen great strides along the path as he and other young teens opened up and reached out to mentors to find a way to live life with more peace: choosing not to fight in school, and learning they have a hope and a future. For these teens, moving along the path looks like being tired of the path they are on, and taking the risk of allowing us to walk alongside them on a new path that leads to life.



## Harambee

This year our path from cradle to career expanded with the addition of the Harambee tuckpointing apprenticeship program which started this fall. 22 teens aged 12-18 worked day after day in our neighborhood learning this masonry skill while providing the service for free to low-income seniors. For our youth to move along the path to career, they need skills and experience- someone to take a chance on them so they can enter the work world with supervisors who can vouch for them. For one young woman, she not only developed her tuckpointing skills, but leadership skills as well. She grew into a teen who not only said, "What can I do to get better?" but also a team member who says, "How can I help us all improve?" as she helped teach her peers who were new to the program.

*Coming  
up in  
2018*

### OUR NEW VAN

We're thrilled by how our new van opens up new opportunities for our apprentices and field trips!

### TWO CREWS

This summer we are working towards having two Harambee crews with 32 total youth!

### WIDER REACH

We are strategically developing new partnerships with businesses, churches and individuals.