



*Helping Change the
Way Behavioral
Health Services are
Delivered on the West
Side of Chicago*



SPECIAL EDITION | NO 9 | March 3, 2025

Collaborative Bridges Opens Wellness Center in Garfield Park

An Evening of Dedication and Inspiration

By Patrick Dombrowski, Executive Director

On Feb 11, we were grateful for the opportunity to showcase our West Garfield Park Wellness Center to the greater care community. This milestone advances our mission to expand access to care and create low-barrier, recovery-focused services.

It was inspiring to hear the passion of our leadership—both within our Collaborative and from our elected officials—who recognized the vital role of preventative community care in addressing long-standing health and economic inequities on the West Side.

Many of our speakers spoke of the pillars of the Illinois Black Caucus, and these remain critical to our work, in keeping the compounding impact of health outcomes and economic access and opportunity at the forefront in our work, and how the disparities in our systems impact our black and brown communities the most.

As the Medicaid Safety Net system faces unprecedented strain, the work of Collaborative Bridges and the Wellness Center has never been more vital. Our efforts to prevent unnecessary hospital admissions help alleviate the pressure on emergency rooms, ensuring they remain able to serve those in urgent need effectively. Our Wellness Center plays a key role in expanding access to care and supporting a healthier, resilient community.

We are dedicated to creating a welcoming space for the West Side community to enhance their well-being through the work we are doing together. We look forward to working together and supporting each other's work. Our ability to work together towards common goals has never been more critical. Please feel free to reach out if we can assist in any way.

Thank you once again for your support. Would love to hear from you on ways we can support your organization and commitment to the West Side. Please [email](#) us or call us at (872) 235-0777.

- Patrick



From left to right: Dana Kelly, Illinois Department of Health and Family Services; Tesa Anewishki, The Loretto Hospital; Donald Dew, Habilitative Systems; Representative Camille Lilly, 78th District; Kerri Brown, C4 Chicago; Senator Mattie Hunter, 3rd District; Patrick Dombrowski, Collaborative Bridges; Cook County Commissioner Tara Stamps; Alderman Emma Mitts; Rev. Ira Acree, St. John Holiness Baptist Church; Alderman Jason Ervin



Notable Quotables from the Grand Opening Celebration

"We have to do more, but we cannot do it without you. Your concerns, your vision, your dreams are what we the [State] legislators and the City Council and the Commissioners of the Cook County have to work together to bring that forward."

- Representative Camille Lilly, Illinois General Assembly.

"We expect a lot from you all. Kerri, Donald...all the partners...I'll be coming and checking on you. If you fall off track, we can get you back on track because it's important that you remain on track and stay focused."

- Senator Mattie Hunter, Illinois General Assembly

"A person's zip code should not be a factor in their ability to find the quality health services. This center exemplifies the concept of bridging the gaps residents face when it comes to health care, housing and other health related social needs. It's amazing to see a physical representation of partnership."

- Dana Kelly, Chief of Staff, Illinois Department of Health and Family Services

"Thank you so much for truly creating a safe place because mental health is not a fixed position. Any one thing in our life can throw us off. So, we must be gentle with each other in this moment."

- Commissioner Tara Stamps, Cook County

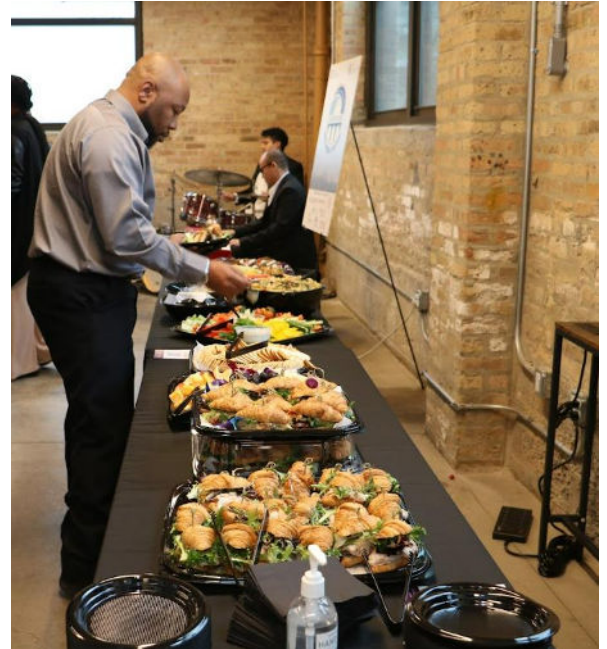
"The West Side is the epicenter of a lot of trauma, a lot of pain and a lot of issues. I'm thankful for the work our legislators to bring these resources to the table bring this level of collaboration."

- Alderman Jason Ervin, Chicago City Council

Closing Blessing:

"God, ignite a revolution of hope that transforms lives. May this wellness center forever stand as a monument to our commitment to care for one another, and may its work inspire the change."

- Rev Ira Acree, St. John Holiness Baptist Church



Alderman Emma Mitts



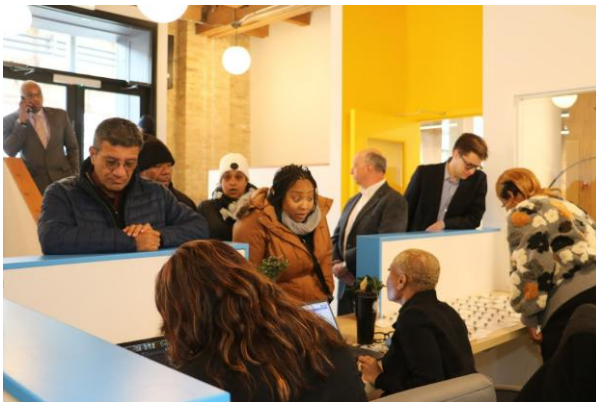
Representative Camille Lilly, Illinois House

Click to See Media Coverage from the Opening



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Collaborative Bridges is part of the Illinois Department of Health and Family Services' Healthcare Transformation Collaboratives.

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