



2023

# A LETTER FROM *Us*

*It's ya girls - Adriana, Diane, Jaime and Mayra - back again for an end-of-year wrap up.*



When someone asks us to describe what The Southwest Collective is and does, we usually take a long breath and then start with, "Well, we are small but mighty." And that's never rang more true than it has in 2023.

The four of us are the driving force behind almost all of the work you see being done by The Southwest Collective.

Four people. Thousands of hours of advocacy, literal tons of food and goods distributed, countless must-attend community events and so much more. All while raising children, tending to families, working and everything else.

Often, folks will respond not with "why do you do what you do" but "HOW do you do EVERYTHING that you do."

We are driven purely by love, as well as a sense of responsibility to give back what has been given to us.

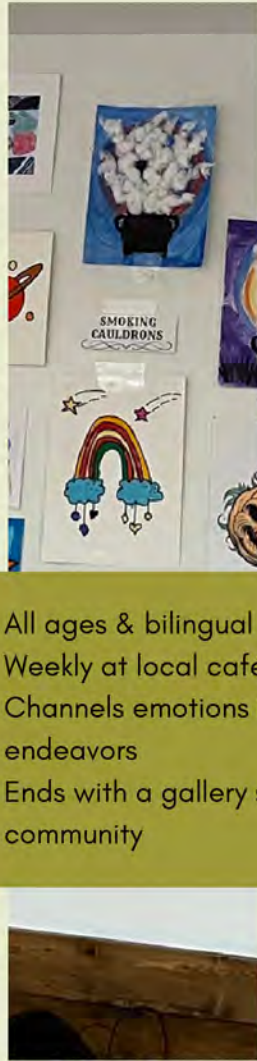
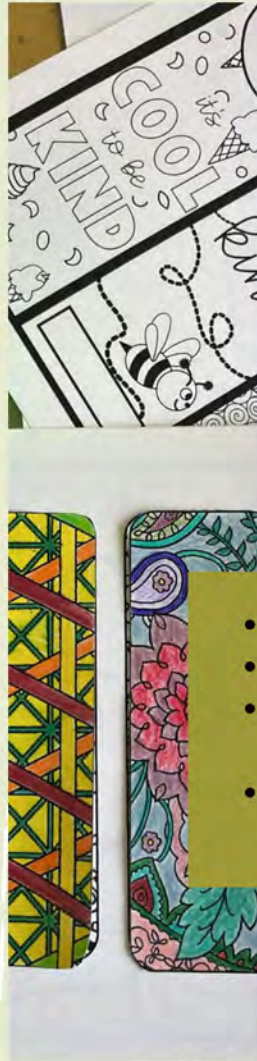
One of the great joys of being part of this group is meeting so many wonderful people and forming lifelong friendships. We encourage you to join us at an event and experience this firsthand.

*Mayra* *Jaime*  
*Diane* *Adriana*

PROJECT BREAKDOWNS

# ARCHER AVE ART CAFÉ

## BRINGING ART-AS-THERAPY TO OUR YOUTH



- All ages & bilingual programming
- Weekly at local café, De Colores
- Channels emotions into creative endeavors
- Ends with a gallery show for the community



THIS PROJECT IS PARTIALLY SUPPORTED BY A TOGETHER WE HEAL CREATIVE PLACE GRANT FROM THE CITY OF CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS & SPECIAL EVENTS AND THE MAYOR'S OFFICE OF EQUITY AND JUSTICE.

THIS PROJECT IS SUPPORTED, IN WHOLE OR IN PART, BY FEDERAL ASSISTANCE LISTING NUMBER, 21.027 AWARDED TO THE SOUTHWEST COLLECTIVE BY THE US TREASURY THROUGH THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN CORONAVIRUS STATE AND LOCAL FISCAL RECOVERY FUNDS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$45,000, REPRESENTING 100% OF TOTAL PROJECT FUNDING.

# FOOD ACCESS

**FEEDING FOLKS AND STAYING HUNGRY FOR PROGRESS**

**POLICY**



In 2024, we will begin co-writing policy and bills to incentivize less food waste, more food re-distribution.

**COMMUNITY**



Free farmers' markets, deliveries to seniors, fridges and pantry boxes ensure that everyone has improved access to nutritious food.

**RELIEF EFFORTS**



Delivering meals and supplies to asylum seekers allows us to welcome them to the city (and our neighborhoods).



# SMALL BIZ SUPPORT

**OUTREACH AND ASSISTANCE THAT'S RIGHT ON THE MONEY (AND RIGHT HERE IN OUR COMMUNITY)**



**HOURS OF SUPPORT PROVIDED IN 2023**

**162**

- Bilingual technical support
- Regular workshops on finance, marketing, law, HR matters and more
- A dedicated source for grants and other opportunities



**INTERESTED IN OFFERING YOUR EXPERTISE TO BUSINESSES? EMAIL US: [INFO@SWCOLLECTIVE.ORG](mailto:INFO@SWCOLLECTIVE.ORG)**

# BIKE ADVOCACY

**FAMILY FRIENDLY BIKE ROUTES  
CREATED SINCE 2020:**

**27**

Our family-friendly routes start and end at local parks across the southwest side. We stick to the side streets, only crossing busy streets like Archer at a traffic light or a stop sign. Check out the maps and ride them at your leisure at [swcollective.org/bikes](http://swcollective.org/bikes).



We hosted monthly community bike rides from March–November in Archer Heights, West Lawn, and West Elsdon. This year, we were able to give away a free adult bike (and helmet, and lock, and lights, and more!) at every ride, courtesy of our friends at Working Bikes.

We’re also advocating for safer streets that include protected bike lanes, which are virtually nonexistent in our communities. We’ve participated in bike jams and “Tour De Grid” events with our friends at Chicago, Bike Grid Now! and have partnered with city officials to help develop a neighborhood bike network in Brighton Park, McKinley Park & Gage Park.

**HELP ORGANIZE OUR 2024 RIDES! EMAIL  
DIXON@SWCOLLECTIVE.ORG**



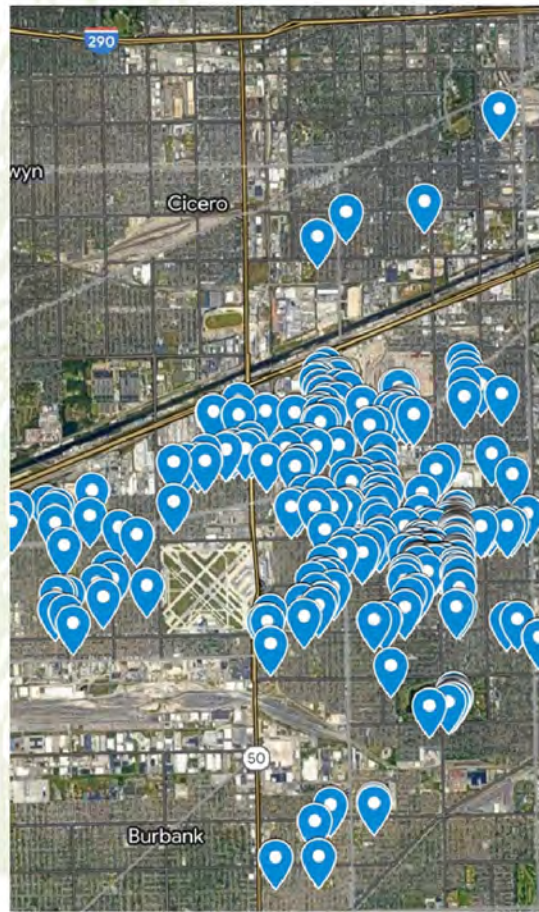
**better  
streets  
chicago.**

# TREE PLANTING

A low tree canopy is no laughing matter. This year, we worked hard to bring about cooler temps, more shade and a better quality of life on the heavily industrial southwest side.

# 714

TREES PLANTED IN 2023



WANT TO HELP US PLANT TREES? REACH OUT TO ROLANDO AT  
[RFAVELA@SWCOLLECTIVE.ORG](mailto:RFAVELA@SWCOLLECTIVE.ORG)



PROJECT BREAKDOWNS

# FREEBIES FOR FAMILIES

**FOUR YEARS OF SHARING.  
HUNDREDS OF FAMILIES SERVED.**

A safe space created for moms to trade gear & clothing - in loving memory of Marlen Ochoa-Lopez.

Moms in search of their village can join us monthly to exchange stuff, meet other parents and learn about community resources.



**GET INVOLVED WITH FREEBIES!  
REACH OUT TO ADRIANA AT  
AVARGAS@SWCOLLECTIVE.ORG**



# WELCOMING NEW ARRIVALS



## A WARM WELCOME

Since September of 2022, we have worked tirelessly to source and provide supplies and meals to those seeking asylum at police stations.

This spring, as folks arrived from Venezuela in droves, we quickly began supporting a meal train and supply drive. Through this work, we also advocated for folks when it came to police interactions and dangerous situations related to navigating an unfamiliar place. It was then that we began collaborating with UI Health, in order to provide a community group therapy session geared toward processing immigration trauma.

## FAMILIES SERVED BY OUR COMMUNITY CIRCLE:

# 360

## POWERED BY GENEROUS SUPPORT & PARTNERSHIPS FROM:



Gracias

Thank YOU

Adriana

Mayra

Diane

Jana

