



# CIRCESTEEM

## 2025 ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

(773) 732-4564 | [WWW.CIRCESTEEM.ORG](http://WWW.CIRCESTEEM.ORG) | 4730 N. SHERIDAN RD.

RESPECT YOURSELF & OTHERS, RESPECT  
SPACE RESPECT THE MAGIC SIGN, CULT  
TEAM AWESOME, KEEP THE PEACE, PRO  
POSITIVITY, NOTHING!, HAVE FO  
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# CIRCESTEEM AGREEMENTS

**RESPECT  
YOURSELF  
& OTHERS**

**KEEP  
THE PEACE**

**RESPECT  
THE  
SPACE**

**PROMOTE  
POSITIVITY**

**RESPECT  
THE  
MAGIC SIGN**

**TRY  
EVERYTHING!**

**CULTIVATE  
TEAM  
AWESOME**

**HAVE  
FUN!**



# RESPECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS



**Summer Camp:** During the summer of 2025, 637 youth enrolled in summer camp. Programs operated on a weekly cycle, Monday through Friday from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm, allowing families to choose one or multiple sessions. In total, the camp offered 11 sessions — representing 11 full weeks of programming — from June 16, 2025, through August 29, 2025.

**Summer Tour:** We had 23 kids enrolled in performance Troup, and put on 27 shows, With more than 2,000 attendees.



**After School/ In School :** In 2025, we served 6 schools across Chicago through our ASA's, reaching approximately 110 youth through the program.  
we reached 181 youth through our In School Residency program.

**Programming:** 60% of our programming is offered free of charge



**HWCW:** In 2025 we served 209 youth through HWCW located in Gage Park, Pilsen, Rogers Park, Humboldt Park, and Uptown.





# RESPECT THE SPACE

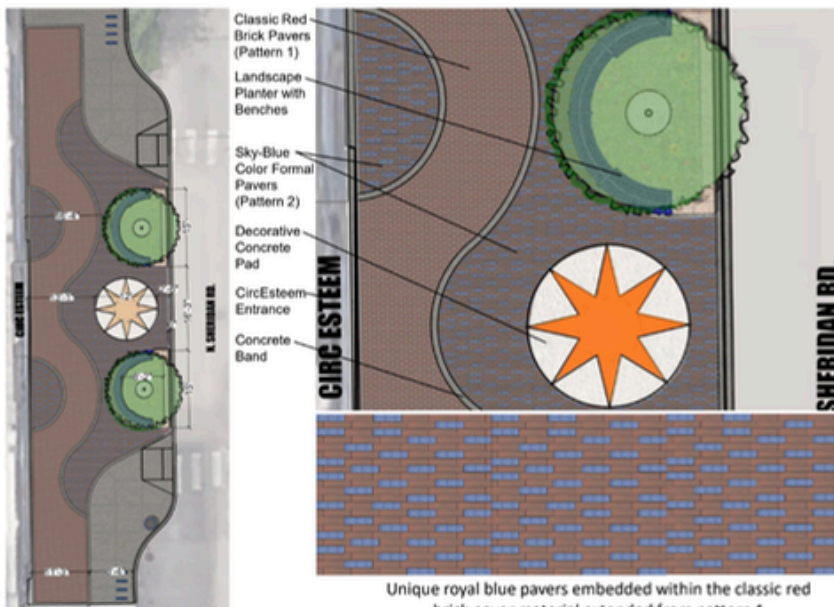


YOUTH VOICE IN ACTION:

CircEsteem's Uptown home continued to be a vibrant, welcoming space where youth could learn, create, and grow together while practicing shared responsibility and care for their environment. This year, that commitment extended beyond our walls through a streetscape improvement project in partnership with the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT). As CircEsteem transforms its more than 100-year-old building to expand studio space and community resources, youth participants helped shape the future of the outdoor space by reviewing design concepts, voting on preferred options, and sharing feedback with the design team. The proposed improvements include expanded pedestrian space, landscaping, seating areas, bike racks, and a central gathering space designed to encourage connection and creativity.



Students reviewed designs, voted on preferred options, and shared feedback.



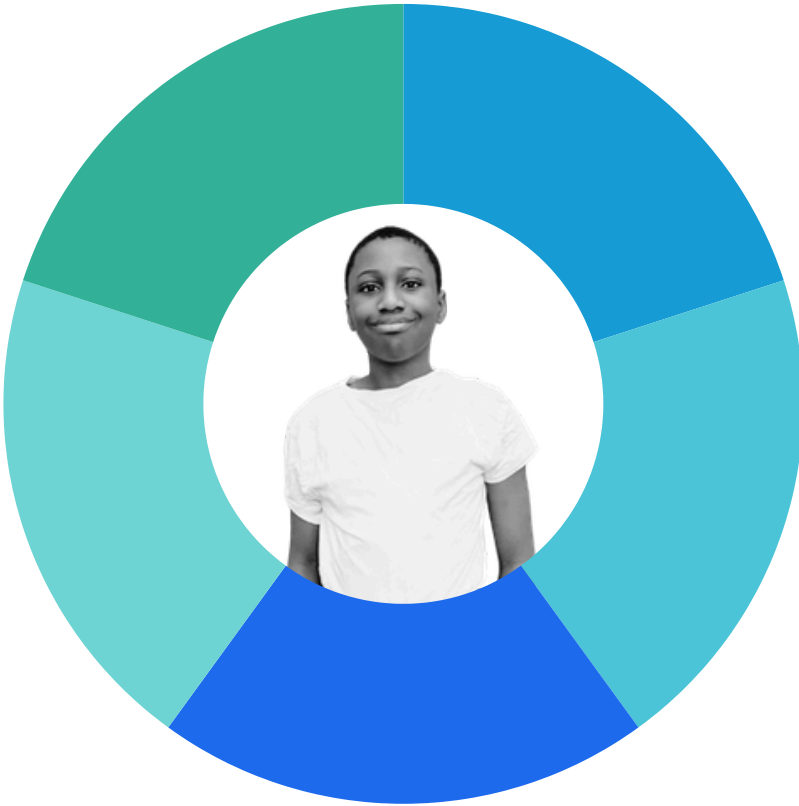
Conceptual view - facing northeast out to Sheridan  
A formal, linear arrangement of alternating colors that carry on the tones from the building while introducing a new royal blue visual anchored by the benches.

**Planned Outdoor Improvements:** Expanded pedestrian space, new landscaping and seating, bike racks, and a community gathering area designed for connection and creativity.

# RESPECT THE MAGIC SIGN

● Connecting ● Supporting

● Celebrating ● Reflecting ● Growing



## CIRCLE TIME

We begin and end each program day with Circle, a restorative practice that centers youth voice, relationship building, shared accountability, and community care. Through daily check-ins, reflection, and celebration, youth and staff create space for every voice to be heard while building trust, emotional safety, and belonging. Circles empower young people to support one another and actively shape the community around them.





# CULTIVATE TEAM AWESOME

## RED NOSE FOUNDATION

In the summer of 2025, CircEsteem expanded on its mission of uniting youth across backgrounds and identities, by hosting a youth social circus from Indonesia, the Red Nose Foundation. Youth were hosted by CircEsteem families allowing for a true cultural exchange. Red Nose and CircEsteem students came together to perform all across Chicago through our Nights Out in the Park summer tour.



*Red Nose Foundation*



# KEEP THE PEACE

## MCMF

Through MCMF Anchor Org – Gage Park, we hosted 7 events with more than 1,100 attendees throughout the year. This program was designed to bring community events and highlight community partnerships in Gage Park, where we have been providing programming for more than 8 years.

The events held included: Skills and Leadership development workshop for high school students preparing for their futures, Back to School Fair, Dia De Los Muertos Celebration, Community Meetings to discuss relevant and topical issues related (ICE activity, arts programs, etc), and school based celebrations at Sawyer Elementary, our main CircEsteem program in Gage Park.



OVER  
300

BACKPACKS

PASSED OUT

AT THE MCMF

BACK TO SCHOOL FAIR





# PROMOTE POSITIVITY

## SAWYER ELEMENTARY

CircEsteem's long-standing partnership with Sawyer Elementary and the Gage Park community is a strong example of what it means to Cultivate Team Awesome. Through trusted relationships and community collaboration, local partners came together to support the program's end-of-year celebration, providing space, food, and resources to help families celebrate student accomplishments together. The event reflected the power of collective investment and the importance of building authentic, reciprocal partnerships that strengthen and sustain youth-centered community spaces.

Since January 2025, we have worked with more than 70 students at Gage Park in grades 4th through 8th. In this most recent cohort, in the pre-survey 72.73% of participants identified with the statement "After I spend time with CircEsteem, I feel good about myself." At the end of programming, 81.25% identified with the same statement.

**"AFTER I SPEND TIME WITH CIRCESTEEM, I FEEL  
GOOD ABOUT MYSELF."**

Sawyer Elementary Spring Show





# TRY EVERYTHING!

## TRY EVERYTHING

Curiosity and courage are at the heart of CircEsteem's Social Circus approach. For more than 25 years, youth have been encouraged to step outside their comfort zones, explore new skills, and discover that growth happens through persistence and shared experiences.

## "ONE MORE TIME."

AT CIRCESTEEM, THESE THREE WORDS ARE MORE THAN A PHRASE. THEY'RE A PROMISE THAT MISTAKES ARE MET WITH ENCOURAGEMENT, NOT JUDGMENT, AND EVERY PERSON IS SUPPORTED TO TRY AGAIN.

Learning at CircEsteem is collaborative. Whether a volunteer is learning to juggle alongside a child or an experienced member of the Chicago Youth Circus and Performance Troupe is mentoring a younger participant, every interaction is an opportunity to teach, learn, and grow together. By trying new things and supporting one another, our community builds confidence, leadership, and lasting connections.

## SOCIAL CIRCUS

CREATIVE  
EXPRESSION

PHYSICAL  
CHALLENGE

SOCIAL  
EMOTIONAL  
GROWTH





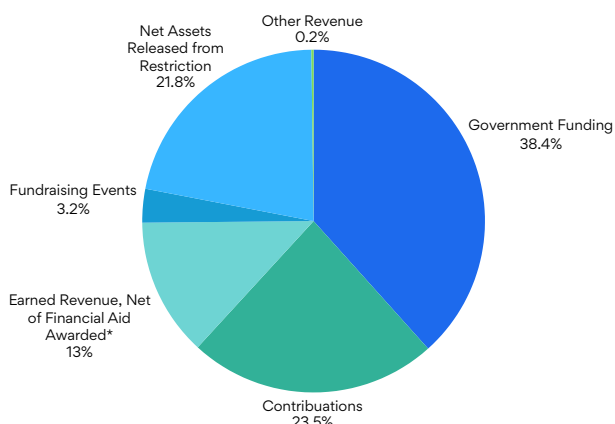
**HAVE FUN!**



AT CIRCESTEEM, JOY IS  
ESSENTIAL. IN 2025,  
LAUGHTER, CREATIVITY,  
AND PLAY REMAINED  
CENTRAL TO EVERY  
CLASS, CAMP, AND  
PERFORMANCE. FUN IS  
NOT JUST A  
BYPRODUCT—IT'S PART  
OF HOW LEARNING AND  
TRANSFORMATION  
HAPPEN.



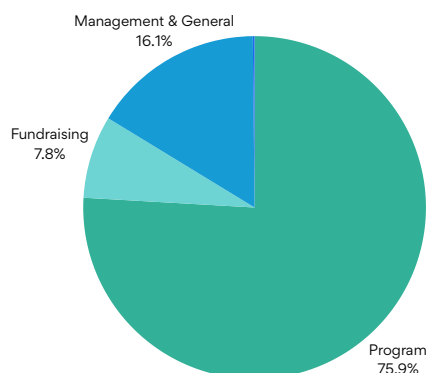
# FINANCIAL INFORMATION



## OPERATING REVENUE 2025

- GOVERNMENT FUNDING \$997,371
- CONTRIBUTIONS \$610,133
- EARNED REVENUE, NET OF FINANCIAL AID AWARDED\* \$338,855
- FUNDRAISING EVENTS \$82,577
- NET ASSETS RELEASED FROM RESTRICTION \$566,002
- OTHER REVENUE \$5,394

**TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE \$2,600,332**



## OPERATING EXPENSES 2025 BY FUNCTION

- PROGRAM \$2,427,580
- FUNDRAISING \$249,610
- MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL \$515,390

**TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES \$3,192,580**

## OPERATING EXPENSES 2025 BY USE

- PERSONNEL \$ 1,837,638
- PROFESSIONAL FEES AND CONTRACT SERVICES \$ 203,860
- MARKETING \$ 13,960
- TRAVEL & MEETINGS \$ 33,307
- FUNDRAISING EVENTS \$ 76,897
- FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT \$ 143,828
- OFFICE EXPENSES \$ 68,710
- PROGRAM SUPPLIES \$ 37,996
- INSURANCE \$ 81,006
- DEPRECIATION & AMORTIZATION EXP \$ 461,650
- INTEREST EXPENSE \$ 215,703
- MISC EXPENSES \$ 18,025

**TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES \$3,192,580**

**NET OPERATING INCOME\*\* \$ (592,248)**

*\*FINANCIAL AID OF \$177,850 AWARDED IN 2025*

*\*\*excludes activity of CircEsteem's investments and of its fiscal sponsee Bipoc Circus Alliance Midwest (BCAM)*





# SPONSORS & PARTNERS



CIRCESTEEM ACKNOWLEDGES  
SUPPORT FROM:

Illinois  
**ARTS**  
Council



- Baskin Family Foundation
- Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH)
- W.P & H.B White Foundation
- Col. Stanley R McNeil Foundation, Bank of America, N.A., Trustee
- LLH/LHM Foundation, Margaret Baird Trustee
- The Maurice R. and Meta G. Gross Foundation,
- Bank of America, N.A., Trustee



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### ABOUT CIRCESTEEM

For more than 25 years, CircEsteem has united youth across all backgrounds and identities by fostering self-esteem and mutual respect through the practice and performance of circus arts.

Through our Social Circus methodology, young people build confidence, resilience, and meaningful relationships in a safe, inclusive community. Every day, the CircEsteem Agreements come to life as youth learn to try everything, respect the space, cultivate team awesome, and support one another.

We believe every child deserves the opportunity to experience the transformative power of circus. Through scholarships and financial aid, we help ensure our programs remain accessible to all families, creating a place where every young person can belong, grow, and thrive.



**DONATE**

