



Program-Wide

Little Village flagship site: Family Open House & Ribbon Cutting

We proudly **celebrated the completion of our newly renovated Little Village flagship site**—an exciting milestone in our 50th anniversary year. At the ribbon cutting ceremony, community leaders, partners, and supporters gathered to recognize the collaboration that made this transformation possible. We also **hosted a Family Open House** event, where children and families explored the new space and celebrated this new chapter. [\[Read more\]](#)





The Center Celebrates NAEYC's Week of the Young Child

The Carole Robertson Center celebrated the Week of the Young Child, April 11–17, an annual initiative led by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) that highlights the importance of early childhood education and celebrates the people and experiences that support children's growth. Throughout the week, our youngest learners enjoyed hands-on activities—from music and movement on Music Monday to food exploration on Tasty Tuesday and teamwork-focused projects on Work Together Wednesday. Children also expressed their creativity during Artsy Thursday and wrapped up the week with Family Friday, welcoming loved ones into the classroom for a joyful dance celebration. Families were encouraged to extend these special experiences at home.



TransformED Apprenticeship Welcomes New Cohort

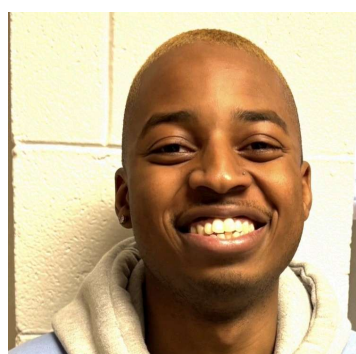
We're excited to welcome the newest cohort of the TransformED Apprenticeship, which officially relaunched at the start of the year. After vetting more than 25 candidates, nine apprentices began their professional journey with us on February 23. During their first two weeks, they visited our flagship sites, explored the foundations of play-based early childhood learning, and began developing skills in reflective practice. We look forward to seeing the impact this group makes in the classrooms and communities they serve!



Honors and Awards

Congratulations to **Kenny Riley**, Senior Director of Youth Development, for being named a **Community Champion** by the Illinois AfterSchool Network (IAN)! Since 2019, he has led the Center's Youth Development program, inspiring youth and advocating for expanded learning opportunities across Illinois. Nominated by Yolanda Luna-Mroz, Vice President of Youth Development, Kenny accepted the award at IAN's 40th Annual Statewide Conference on March 7.

We are thrilled to share that **Contessa Houston**, Board Member and Chair of the Center's Parent Policy Council, was named **Parent of the Year** by the Illinois Head Start Association (IHSA). This well-deserved recognition honors her dedication, leadership, and tireless advocacy on behalf of families and children.



The Center celebrated **Josh Mason**, who was named **UIC's Early Childhood Apprentice of the Month** in recognition of his dedication and hard work. Balancing work and school as he pursues his bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education at National Louis University, Josh applies what he learns through the UIC and Gateways apprenticeship program. With guidance from his mentors, he is making a meaningful impact in the classroom at our Albany Park flagship site.

Annual Report Highlights Pathways to Possibility

Learn more about how the Center creates pathways for children, youth, and families to realize their full potential in its Fiscal Year 2025 Annual Report, *Pathways to Possibilities*. This year's report reflects the many ways the Center comes together to support growth, opportunity, and achievement. As readers explore its pages, they will see the impact of staff contributions, shared accomplishments, and the mission brought to life through dedication and expertise. [\[See the full report\]](#)



Giving

50th Anniversary E3 Gala - May 7, 2026

We are days away from our **annual E3 Gala, our signature event that brings together more than 300 changemakers to support brighter futures for children and families.** This evening honors a 50-year legacy shaped by our community while investing in the impact still to come.

Without the partnership and support of many over our five decades, our work would not be possible. We are especially grateful to our presenting sponsor, Robert R. McCormick Foundation, and to our many event sponsors whose generosity reflects a shared belief in our mission to Educate, Enrich and Empower children and families.

As we prepare to gather, we invite you to be part of this impact—every gift, at any level, helps support the children, students, and families we serve.

50 YEARS 1976 2026
 CAROLE ROBERTSON CENTER
 for Learning

educate, enrich, empower

2026 E3 GALA



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From Insight to Impact Speaker Series



FROM INSIGHT TO IMPACT

A SPEAKER SERIES

#50YearsofSustainableGrowth

As part of its 50th anniversary celebration, the Center has launched *From Insight to Impact*, a speaker series designed to share the strategies, structures, and lessons that turn vision into lasting opportunity. Building on five decades of work alongside children, youth, families, and communities, the series offers practical insights into strengthening systems, expanding access, and driving meaningful change. The series kicked off earlier this month with "Data as a Compass: Navigating the Early Childhood Landscape," setting the stage for continued learning. The recording is available below.

From Insight to Impact continues on **September 23** with a session on nonprofit capital projects and campaigns. Please visit our website to learn more about the series and the Center. [[Learn more](#)]

DATA AS A COMPASS:

Navigating the Early Childhood Landscape

Wednesday, April 15, 2026 @ 12:00 P.M.

50
YEARS



CAROLE ROBERTSON CENTER
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FROM INSIGHT TO IMPACT

Welcome! Thank you for joining us!



Please use Zoom's Q&A feature to ask questions at any time. We will have dedicated time to answer your questions after the presentation.



#50YearsofSustainableGrowth

Empower Your Community - Join Our Team!



YOUR FUTURE IS CALLING.

Now hiring for early childhood education and youth development teachers and assistants. Become an educator today!

Join Our Alumni Network!



Alumni Community

Whether your connection with us began one year ago, 10 years ago, or 30 years ago – throughout the year, you'll be invited to celebrate with us and other alumni as our shared story evolves over the next 50 years.

Step into Leadership: Join Our Associate Board!



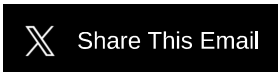
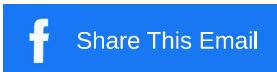
LEADERS DRIVING IMPACT

The Associate Board is more than volunteer engagement—it's a way for early- to mid-career professionals to support our mission.



An Honor & Responsibility

Since its inception, the Center has worked to honor the life and memory of Carole Robertson who, together with her friends Addie Mae Collins, Cynthia Wesley, and Denise McNair, was killed in the 1963 bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama.



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