BEHIND THE SCENES OF 2017
Thank you for picking up a copy of this edition of StreetWise as we reflect on 2017 and all that we have accomplished.

The year 2017 marked the 25th anniversary of StreetWise. We celebrated 25 years of giving a hand up to more than 12,000 Chicagoans who took their first steps on journeys of economic mobility.

StreetWise was born out of a concern for the limited number of options for the increasing number of people living on the streets. The sale of street papers was an opportunity to earn immediate cash to meet basic needs for food, housing, transportation, and other personal needs.

Not only are vendors given the opportunity to earn an income, they are learning transferable skills as they hone customer-service, sales, and money management skills. As they establish and grow their street paper business, they save at least 90 cents on each sale in order to reinvest in the next week’s issue.

Over the past year, we have told the stories of our vendors inside the magazine, in our monthly newsletter, on YouTube and now in the pages of this report. While the individual stories are unique, there are common themes of unexpected life events, bad choices and hard luck. But, regardless of circumstances that bring someone to StreetWise, each individual is welcomed as part of a supportive community and given an equal chance to change their lives and circumstances.

While the core of the StreetWise mission hasn’t changed over the past 25 years, we will continue to evolve, grow and stretch to ensure we continue to be the go-to resource for people who need to earn money immediately.

As we look toward 2018 and beyond we will expand our sales training for vendors. We will continue to identify, train, and implement electronic and mobile payment options for vendors, as well as enhance our financial literacy training. We will seek out additional employment partners to provide more supportive jobs as our S.T.E.P. program participants seek to reenter the traditional wage market.

The hope that is created and the lives that are changed each day at StreetWise are possible because of you, our customers, donors, supporters, and volunteers who believe in second chances and believe that people matter and deserve the opportunity to change their path. Thank you!
It’s hard to believe that 25 years ago, on August 24, 1992, the first edition of StreetWise hit the streets of Chicago. Our founder, Judd Lofchie, found a practical solution to the crisis of homelessness in Chicago. The idea was simple: give homeless men and women a chance to gain economic self-sufficiency, personal dignity, and to help themselves by selling a newspaper to earn an income rather than beg. More than 350 homeless men and women purchased and sold more than 60,000 issues of StreetWise within the first five weeks!

Over the past 25 years, more than 12,000 men and women have taken a hand up – not a hand out! Collectively they have sold more than 19 million copies of StreetWise. Selling StreetWise is a job. Our vendors are self-employed entrepreneurs.

Our success is due to the commitment, dedication, and persistence of our StreetWise magazine vendors. They go out each day to greet you – their loyal customers. It is because of your support that our vendors can pay rent, utilities, purchase food and clothing, and even save some money.

We had such a great time celebrating the founding and growth of StreetWise over the past 25 years. We hosted a VIP reception with our 25 Most Significant People in the History of StreetWise: honorees who are vital to the growth, sustainability, and future of StreetWise. Our vendors had a party at StreetWise headquarters, and some of us hit the streets to celebrate our birthday by selling the magazine and raising awareness on August 24. All of this capped off with our annual gala on August 28 as we celebrated with more than 425 guests and raised over $200,000. See the pictures and images below over our last 25 years and our anniversary celebrations.

These celebrations have been a reminder of the community of support that has kept us going for 25 years. THANK YOU!

And HERE’S TO THE NEXT 25 YEARS.
SNAPSHOT OF PARTICIPANTS

62 INDIVIDUALS DAILY
Visit Streetwise to get a meal, use phones, use computers, and build community

HOUSING
60% HOMELESS/UNSTABLE HOUSING
25% RENTING/SHARED OCCUPATION
7% VETERANS

54% DISABLED

 INDIVIDUALS PERSONAL STABILITY, EMPLOYMENT

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES
Supportive Services provide additional support and break down barriers to personal stability and employment. Supportive Services provide access to hot meals on-site each day through StreetWise Café, access to a phone, emergency clothing, and hygiene kits. Supportive Services also provide direct support and linkages to an array of social service programs, including housing and shelter placement, public benefits assistance, medical referral, legal assistance, and financial literacy.

15,000+ MEALS WERE SERVED IN THE STREETWISE CAFÉ

4,000 VISITS TO SOCIAL WORKERS

SUPPORTIVE SERVICE VISITS
42% MAGAZINE VENDOR SUPPORT
21% HOUSING/SHELTER ASSISTANCE
15% STATE ID/DOCUMENTS
14% HEALTH/MENTAL HEALTH/OTHER REFERRALS
8% OTHER SUPPORT

STREETWISE CAFÉ
The StreetWise Café provides open access for all individuals to have hot meals each day, as well as access to a phone, emergency clothing, and hygiene kits. It also provides a computer resource center for job searching, email, communications access, computer training, and research. Over 15,000 meals were served at the StreetWise Café in 2017 alone.

1,700+ INDIVIDUALS ACCESSED THE STREETWISE COMPUTER RESOURCE CENTER

42% MAGAZINE VENDOR SUPPORT
21% HOUSING/SHELTER ASSISTANCE
15% STATE ID/DOCUMENTS
14% HEALTH/MENTAL HEALTH/OTHER REFERRALS
8% OTHER SUPPORT
Gwendolyn

StreetWise vendor Gwen has lived in Chicago her whole life. Before coming to StreetWise she relied on panhandling as her main source of income. It wasn’t until the police stopped her on the corner of Roosevelt and Wabash and told her about StreetWise, where she could make money selling papers, that she decided to make a change and join the StreetWise community. Gwen started selling StreetWise a short time after the magazine launched in 1992 and remains a part of the team today. She has since moved locations, “I came up on Broadway and Roscoe... but now I’m in Andersonville, on Catalpa and Berwyn.” She’s been selling there for the past three years.

Over the years Gwen has gained a lot of experience that has helped her learn new techniques when it comes to selling. She tries to remain positive and friendly, “I like to communicate with people, I talk to people, I go out there every morning faithfully.” Her go-to slogan when selling the magazine has always been, “Good morning, StreetWise today.” But the communication doesn’t end there. Gwen likes to build personal relationships with her customers and says she feels a growing amount of support and love from the community. “I’d like to thank Andersonville for their love and support through the tragedy I went through losing my fiancé. I want to thank them for their support in everything.” Gwen smiled as she reflected on the relationships she has built throughout the years.

If it weren’t for StreetWise Gwen mentioned that she would probably still be panhandling for money. Selling StreetWise has given her communication skills, love and support that panhandling never did. “I got to know a lot of people in the neighborhood... I love the kids and they love me. I watch the dogs for a customer while he goes and gets his coffee,” said Gwen. These relationships keep her positive and continue to give her a reason to wake up every morning and sell the magazine.

Although Gwen has found success and happiness selling StreetWise, things haven’t always been easy for her. She has been clean for years now since her past drug addiction, “I overcame it because I was tired of being sick and tired. I joined a church: the Apostolic Church of God, and I got saved three years ago, I’m positive about myself today, when I wasn’t before. I thank God today that I’m positive and that God is leading me through life today.”

Spending time with her family, playing dominos with her grandkids and getting her alone time are all things she does to stay positive and focused. Gwen says she wants to continue to attend her church and help others to keep herself on this successful journey.
I found StreetWise, or better yet, StreetWise found me, at a time when my primary focus was getting back to work and school. My experience with the job transition program (STEP) has been overwhelmingly positive. For me, the STEP program is more than just finding a job. In addition to helping me with my resume and assisting me in locating employment opportunities, the program has been great with helping me research and find resources for my health care needs so I can get back on my feet, pursue my passions, and be successful.

Computers are my first love. I attended college for computer technology and multi-media web design. I’m passionate about anything tech-related, so exploring opportunities where I could expand my knowledge on the topic is what brought me to MicroTrain computer training school. I chose MicroTrain so I could learn at my own pace and develop my computer skills. With this education, I hope to bring these skills with me to the workforce. Coupled with the STEP program, the certifications I get through MicroTrain get me that much closer to my goal of landing a steady job in which I can share my skills with other people.

To those who don’t know me, I am just your average everyday dude who likes the simpler things in life. I try to avoid unnecessary complication at all costs. If I had the opportunity, I would teach simple computer skills in a way that the average person could understand. I can break down the complex into its simplest forms to help people grasp the concepts so they have the tools to succeed as well. Ultimately, knowledge and spreading education is my passion these days. I want to know as much as I can about as many different possible subjects so I can share the truth with others. I refuse to be ignorant.

I like to engage in conversation and talk about the issues that affect society. The STEP program is equipping me with resources so I can secure employment and continue to enlighten my community in a meaningful way. Sharing knowledge with other people who may not have access to the resources to stay informed is essential in order to strengthen our communities.

StreetWise’s Transitional Employment Program is aimed at assisting hard-to-employ job seekers in gaining sustainable employment in the formal labor market. This program emphasizes communication, problem-solving, workplace behavior and other life skills aimed at eliminating personal barriers to employment. Employment Specialists assist with resume development, interview skills, job search techniques, and job placement. All participants have access to ongoing support from a job coach to maintain employment with our partners in the hospitality, home healthcare, event security and light manufacturing sectors.
StreetWise is proud to be part of the International Network of Street Papers (INSP)

INSP provides support, advice, and resources to 100+ street papers in 34 countries, bringing content to 5.5 million readers and supporting 9,300 vendors worldwide.

STREETWISE MAGAZINE

2017 COVER STORY

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EAMONN FORDE
STEFANO LAMPERTICO
DAVE HAMILTON
SUZANNE HANNEN
ALEXANDRIA JOHNSON
LAURA KELLY
JENNA MARCEL
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MARK SCHIRO
MARK WAINIS
TIN SCHUMERSTEIGER AND DAVID MALLER

MAGAZINE WITH A VAILABLE INCOME OPPORTUNITY.

POOR, WHILE PROVIDING EACH PERSON A PERSONALIZED FACE OF CHICAGO’S HOMELESS PROBLEM.

THE EDITORIAL STAFF WORKS HARD TO ENGAGE THE READER’S DAILY LIFE. BY ENTERTAINING AND INFORMING, STREETWISE IS ABLE TO ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY AND ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN CHICAGO.

THE JOURNALISTS WORK HARD TO TELL THE STORIES OF THOSE WHO ARE HOMELESS IN CHICAGO. THEIR STORIES RANGE FROM THE ADVERSITY OF HOMELESSNESS TO THE RESILIENCE OF THOSE WHO ARE STRUGGLING TO SURVIVE.

THE STREETPAPERS PARTNER WITH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS TO PROVIDE VENDEURS WITH A Viable INCOME OPPORTUNITY.

THE GREAT MILLENIUM CHARITABLE TRUST AND THE SCOTTISH CHARITABLE TRUST PROVIDE SUPPORT TO STREETPAPERS ACROSS NORTH AMERICA.

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**MERCHANT GIVING PROJECT CREATES POSITIVE SOCIAL CHANGE**

Merchant Giving Project is a social enterprise helping businesses make a positive impact through charitable giving. Jeff Campion, founder of Merchant Giving Project, set out to build the ideal merchant giving solution. By creating a portfolio of 3000+ processing businesses, he thought it was time to put my knowledge to good use," Campion said. He began an electronic payments company that offers clients lower processing fees and a convenient way to support nonprofits.

By setting up charities as beneficiaries for businesses, Merchant Giving Project creates a win-win situation for its clients and nonprofits. Nonprofits enjoy a new revenue stream and businesses enjoy lower cost electronic payment fees while providing a positive social impact to their local community.

In fact, the first charitable organization affiliated with Merchant Giving Project was Streetwise. Former Associate Board member Matt O’Denn introduced Campion to Streetwise. Since then, Merchant Giving Project has provided over $3,000 to Streetwise. Streetwise is extremely grateful to Merchant Giving Project and the businesses that direct a portion of their electronic payment fees to Streetwise.

Working with business owners and charities alike, Campion prides himself on the community business he has created. He continues to develop Merchant Giving Project as a social enterprise that offers more than merchant services.

To learn more about how your business could support Streetwise by processing electronic payments with Merchant Giving Project, visit, [http://www.merchantgivingproject.org/services](http://www.merchantgivingproject.org/services).
Scott Marvel, president of Daily Planet (a full-service Chicago video production company) and founder of Teesby (a T-shirt and poster design company) was looking for a way to bring his resources and network together to make a difference in Chicago. In a chance encounter, Tony, a homeless man, happened to ask Scott for help to get clothing for a job interview. Scott did one better. He created a custom design, hand screened the T-shirts and gave them to Tony to sell. An idea was born.

Now in its third year, Giveashit has grown in size and scope but has remained true to the core vision — to harness the creative power of local artists who create custom designs that are hand screened onto T-shirts that are sold by and with StreetWise vendors to make a powerful impact on the community. This year, 20 local artists, including Jeff Tweedy with StreetWise vendors to make a powerful impact on the community. This year, 20 local artists, including Jeff Tweedy...