

AFTER SCHOOL matters®

TEENS BUILDING CHICAGO'S FUTURE

FISCAL YEAR 2025 ANNUAL REPORT



Teens Building Chicago's Future

For more than three decades, After School Matters (ASM) has been guided by one simple but powerful idea: when teens have access to opportunity, they transform their futures—and our city—in bright and inspiring ways.

Each year, we provide tens of thousands of young Chicagoans with paid, hands-on programs in the arts, communications and leadership, sports, and STEM. These experiences spark curiosity, build skills, and open doors to new possibilities for teens and their communities. All teens in ASM programs earn a stipend or wages for their participation.

ASM invests in teens to shape the next generation of creative, fierce, and passionate Chicago residents and leaders. We are committed to investing in state-of-the-art facilities that provide teens with safe spaces and opportunities to thrive.

Thanks to the unwavering support of our partners and donors, ASM is empowering our teens to build a stronger, more vibrant Chicago for all.

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After School Matters Reach in FY25

After School Matters reduces the opportunity gap by providing paid enrichment opportunities to **nearly 20,000 teens** through **more than 1,600 programs** across Chicago each year.

FY25 Program Locations Map

★ The Michael and Karyn Lutz Center
3435 N. Cicero Ave.

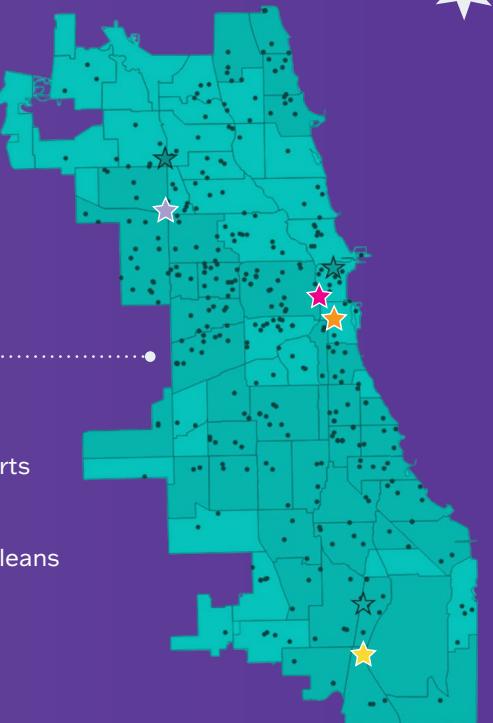
★ Gallery 37 Center for the Arts
66 E. Randolph St.

★ After School Matters at Gately Park
10201 S. Cottage Grove Ave.

★ After School Matters at Orleans
1065 N. Orleans St.

● Program Sites → **353**

Program Locations in FY25

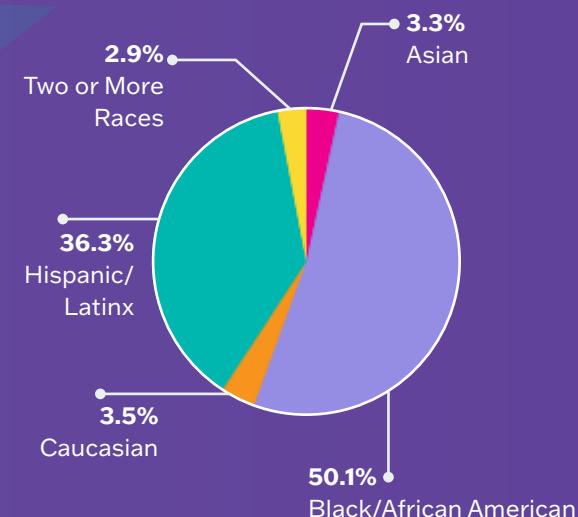


Community Areas

ASM teens live in every community area of Chicago, with the largest concentrations of young people residing on the South and West Sides of the city.

- Austin (5.7%)
- South Lawndale (3.7%)
- Belmont Cragin (3.2%)
- Roseland (3.1%)
- Chicago Lawn (3.0%)

Teen Race/Ethnicity Breakdown



Opportunities & Programs



ASM offers teens a **safe** and **supportive** community.

“ ASM prepared me for college by reminding me that **my dreams are attainable**. ASM will always be a large part of the person I am and the person I am becoming. ”

- ASM Alum



“ I get to meet with people who are drawn to the same things that I am. We **work together** on films, take pictures, **and have a lot of fun** throughout the program. ”

- ASM Teen



“ This program has opened many doors for me. **It has given me more hope for my future and a path I want to follow.** It makes me want to go to college and do something productive with my life. ”

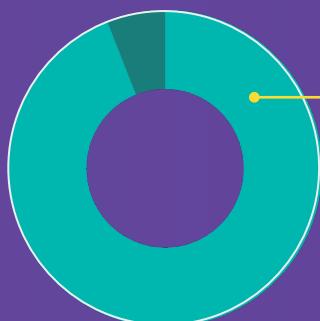
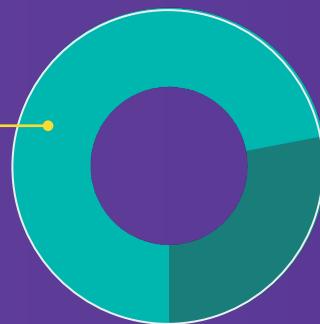
- ASM Teen





72%

of teens said their program showed them new college/career pathways.



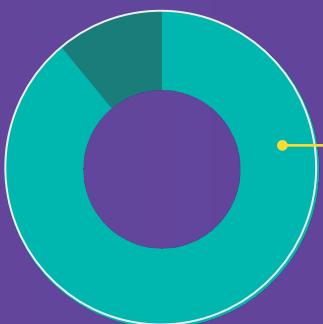
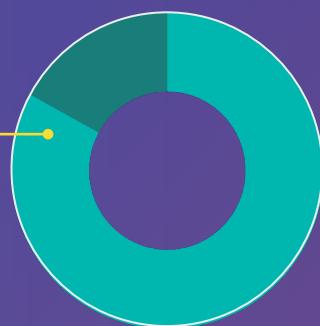
94%

of teens felt more hopeful about their future after participating.



83%

of teens felt safe in their program.



89%

of teens felt a sense of belonging.



To learn more about teen experiences and view ASM research,
visit: afterschoolmatters.org/our-impact-and-research

Highlights from an Impactful Year

Building the Future: A New Teen-Focused Space in Cabrini

In a major milestone for Chicago's young people, ASM officially broke ground on its newest teen-dedicated facility, **After School Matters at Orleans**, located at 1065 North Orleans Avenue in the Cabrini community, in October 2024. The 36,000-square-foot building will serve as a hub for creativity, learning, and opportunity for more than 1,500 teens each year. At the groundbreaking celebration, civic and community

leaders including **Mayor Brandon Johnson, Former Mayor Richard M. Daley, Illinois Senate President Don Harmon, Alderman Walter Burnett Jr., CEO Mary Ellen Caron, and ASM Board of Directors and Advisory Board members** joined ASM teens to mark the start of renovations.

“When we invest in our young people, we show them that they matter—and they reinvest in our city, creating a stronger, brighter Chicago for everyone. ”

– Mary Ellen Caron, CEO, After School Matters





ASM is grateful to the following investors for their support in the Teens Building Chicago's Future Campaign:

The ASM Orleans Teen Center features a **black box theater, culinary hub, skilled trades lab, flexible studio spaces, innovation lab, wellness room, and ASM's first-ever gymnasium**—along with collaborative and outdoor spaces.

Located near high schools, parks, libraries, and transit, the Center's design reflects ASM's deep understanding that teen-centric spaces work. Teen artwork from ASM's Digital Visionaries program already fills the building's Hill Street windows, symbolizing the creativity and promise that this new facility will nurture.

This building is being funded by the Teens Building Chicago's Future fundraising campaign, with a goal of raising \$27M to support both the new Teen Center and an **ASM Sustainability Fund**. Through the Sustainability Fund, ASM is ensuring that programming and stipends remain strong for the more than 26,000 program opportunities we provide annually, especially amid shifting economic and societal conditions.

ASM's new Teen Center is more than a building—it's a legacy of hope, a hub of innovation, and a testament to nearly 35 years of ASM's unwavering dedication to empowering teens to shape Chicago's future.

\$5M+

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Bob and Roberta Lee
Clare Muñana
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The Welch Family

\$1M+

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Mary Ellen Caron
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The Kwanza Jones & José E. Feliciano Initiative

As of December 15, 2025

Celebrating Chicago Teens: Two Unforgettable Fundraising Events

ASM supporters showed up in full force this year to invest in Chicago's young people through two signature events—the After School Matters Gala and the fifth annual Sneaker Ball. Together, these celebrations brought the community together in style and spirit, raising millions to support our mission of providing life-changing after-school and summer programs for Chicago teens.

In September 2024, ASM's annual Gala was held at 167 Events in Fulton Market and brought together more than 400 civic, corporate, and community leaders for an inspiring evening that **raised over \$2.6 million** for Chicago teens. The night featured teen-led performances in dance and vocal arts, as well as remarks from Board Chair Mellody Hobson and CEO Mary Ellen Caron, who highlighted ASM's growing impact and the forthcoming Teen Center in the Cabrini community. Guests also raised an additional \$118,000 on the spot for the Stipend Fund, underscoring the community's commitment to investing directly in young people's futures.

In April 2025, the ASM Associate Board hosted the high-energy Sneaker Ball at Punch Bowl Social, where guests laced up their sneakers for a night of music, fashion, and inspiration. Teens from Englewood STEM Drum Line kicked off the evening with a powerful performance, followed by DJ sets, dance numbers, and teen showcases in digital photography, tennis, skateboard design, and fashion. The event **raised more than \$175,000** for ASM's Teen Stipend Fund, ensuring teens continue to be paid for their creativity and hard work.

Both events showcased the incredible talent and creativity of ASM teens—from live performances to the sale of teen-made artwork and apparel through TEENMADE, ASM's reimagined gift shop that centers youth voice and entrepreneurship. Together, ASM's Gala and Sneaker Ball exemplified the power of community partnership, creativity, and civic pride in creating brighter futures for Chicago's youth—one teen at a time.



Sneaker Ball 2025



Gala 2024





Investing in Teen Talent Through Hands-On Experience

In summer 2024, ASM provided more than **650 paid internships** for Chicago teens to gain real-world experience, professional skills, and confidence for their futures. With support from Bank of America, the NBA Foundation, SC Johnson, Shedd Aquarium, PepsiCo, and other partners, teens explored fields from entrepreneurship and community engagement to research, marketing, and finance—earning money while they learned.

Whether assisting with emergency medical training, leading sports programs through Girls in the Game, conducting environmental research at the Shedd, or contributing to PepsiCo's communications and marketing team, ASM interns developed critical skills that will shape their career paths.

Chief Program Officer Tony Diaz shared, “*We are immensely grateful to our summer internship partners whose generous support makes these opportunities possible. Their commitment ensures our teens build a foundation for a successful future.*”

★ ASM Star Alumni ★



Elizabeth “Liz” Dairo graduated from Southern Illinois University-Carbondale (SIU) with a degree in Criminology and Criminal Justice, along with dual minors in Paralegal Studies and Psychology.



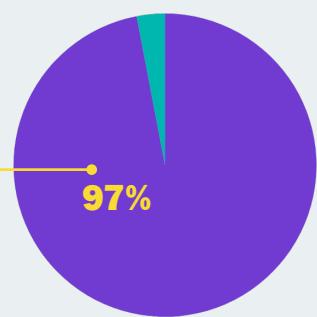
Leticia “Lety” Palma graduated from Elmhurst University with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science.

After School Matters provides nearly **20,000 Chicago youth** each year with paid program opportunities that support college/career readiness.

71% of **ASM teens** said participating made them more determined to graduate high school and more prepared for the future.



97% of ASM Seniors have plans after graduation and **88%** plan to attend college or vocational program.



7 in 10 teens have a better sense of what they want to do or not do with their life after participating in ASM programs.



Kaylie Perez graduated from Loyola University Chicago with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing.

Community Spotlight:

A Legacy in Motion: Mother–Daughter Duo Inspires Chicago Teens Through Dance



For more than two decades, Shakeena President-Beckford and her mother, Carol "Mama Ika" President, have been transforming the lives of Chicago teens through dance. This dynamic duo from St. Lucia leads an ASM program on the South Side that blends movement, storytelling, and cultural heritage—rooted in the rich rhythms of West African and Caribbean traditions. But beyond choreography, their work is about connection, confidence, and community.

Through their classes, Shakeena and Mama Ika teach teens that dance is more than performance—it's history, identity, and expression. Their teen participants explore traditional and contemporary styles while learning discipline, leadership, and collaboration.



“

It's important to teach the youth the culture of the motherland because it belongs to them. They have every right to feel connected to their past — this helps shape who they become.

— Shakeena President-Beckford, ASM Instructor

”

Between them, Shakeena and Mama Ika have performed across the Caribbean, the United States, and even for King Charles III, bringing their artistry to stages large and small. Yet their greatest legacy is the hundreds of teens they've mentored—many of whom return to assist with classes or pursue careers in dance and education.

For their students, the program is more than just a place to learn steps—it's a home. As one alum shared, **"Mama Ika and Mama Shakeena are like my second moms. They've taught me so much about dance—and about life."**

Through their dedication, Shakeena and Mama Ika continue to uplift Chicago's young artists, using dance to preserve culture, build community, and inspire the next generation to move boldly into the future.

80% of ASM teens report strengthening and developing new relationships

84% of ASM Alumni said they developed important relationships or friendships during the program



After School Matters Receives Bank of America Neighborhood Builders Award

ASM was honored to be named one of Bank of America's 2024 Neighborhood Builders® for our work supporting Chicago teens. As a Neighborhood Builder, ASM received a **\$200,000 grant** to expand teen opportunities, strengthen leadership, and connect with a national network of nonprofit peers. This recognition built on a decades-long partnership with Bank of America.

Rita Cook, President of Bank of America Chicago, shared, *"The flexible funding and comprehensive leadership training that are hallmarks of the*

Neighborhood Builders program will support After School Matters as they continue their vital work. We are proud to support their mission to promote economic advancement for Chicago teens."

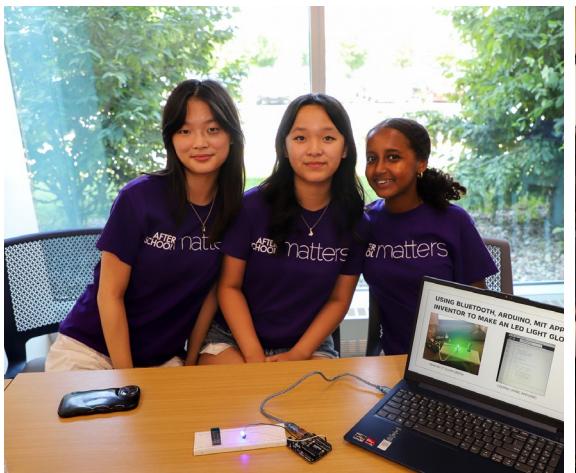
With this continued commitment, ASM deepened its impact, helping even more teens thrive, succeed, and build brighter futures.

Celebrating Wellness and Community at Instructor Forum

In April 2025, ASM hosted its signature professional development event on wellness, community, and the power of mentorship at our annual **Instructor Forum: Nurturing an Ecosystem of Wellness and Community**, held at Northeastern Illinois University. Hundreds of instructors from across Chicago came together to connect, learn, and reflect on how they support teen growth—both in skill and in spirit. The day featured performances, keynotes, and workshops centered on teen mental health, youth empowerment, and self-care, underscoring ASM's holistic approach to supporting those who nurture our teens.

The day concluded with recognition of ASM's Purple Star Award recipients—outstanding instructors who exemplify our mission. At its heart, the Forum reaffirmed that caring for our instructors' well-being strengthens the entire ecosystem that helps Chicago's young people thrive.







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Our Financial Statement



Consolidated statement of activities and changes in net assets

2025

Revenue and Support	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
Government grants and support	\$ 32,880,786	\$ -	\$ 32,880,786
In-kind donations	4,793,359	496,386	5,289,745
Contributions and foundation grants	1,464,275	10,765,166	12,229,441
Gallery 37 retail sales	18,509	-	18,509
Special event revenue	2,634,134	188,702	2,822,836
Interest income	651,888	-	651,888
Investment income - Net of investment expenses	-	286,572	286,572
Miscellaneous income	36,115	-	36,115
Total revenue and support	42,479,066	11,736,826	54,215,892
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	5,820,133	(5,820,133)	-
 Total revenue, support, and net assets released from restrictions	48,299,199	5,916,693	54,215,892
Expenses			
Program services	38,648,060	-	38,648,060
Support services:			
Management and general	6,166,858	-	6,166,858
Fundraising	2,979,052	-	2,979,052
Total expenses	47,793,970	-	47,793,970
 Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets -	505,229	5,916,693	6,421,922
Before nonoperating income			
Nonoperating Income (Loss)			
Gain on New Markets Tax Credit transaction	-	-	-
Loss on disposal of property and equipment	-	-	-
Total nonoperating income	-	-	-
 Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets	505,229	5,916,693	6,421,922
Net Assets - Beginning of year	43,162,197	20,104,534	63,266,731
Net Assets - End of year	\$ 43,667,426	\$ 26,021,227	\$ 69,688,653



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