



CITY ON A HILL

A look back **through history**



MILESTONES

- **1863** A brick farmhouse was purchased by Christians and converted into a hospital to care for the poor.
- **2000** Convoy of Hope and dozens of local churches held an outreach event that brought together 1,200 volunteers and over 8,000 neighborhood residents. This was a catalyst to the creation of City on a Hill.
- **2000** On December 29, 321,000 square feet of property was given to a network of churches called the Assemblies of God to incorporate a new nonprofit agency. Now called City on a Hill, this new agency returned the property to its original mission.
- **2001** Two local nurses launched a monthly health outreach to serve people's medical needs.
- **2003** Diane De La Santos left her role as Vice President of Public Affairs at Aurora Healthcare to become Executive Director of City on a Hill.
- **2003** Our first tenants moved into City on a Hill to create a community space.
- **2004** The development of 99 units of affordable housing was facilitated for families on our campus
- **2005** Our first experiential missions trip was created and offered to schools and churches.
- **2006** Our Removing Racial Residue training (now known as R3) was developed to foster unity and became incorporated into mission trips.
- **2009** Our innovative Passport to Compassion event was created for churches.
- **2010** Our after-school center for children and youth in the neighborhood was developed and launched.
- **2011** We co-developed 51 units of affordable housing for senior citizens on-site.
- **2015** With the help of Bader Philanthropies, City on a Hill launched a summer employment program that teaches youth employment soft skills.
- **2016** City on a Hill was awarded a grant from Aurora Better Together to renovate space for a Free Clinic.
- **2017** City on a Hill was selected as a finalist in the MANDIs (Milwaukee Area Neighborhood Development & Innovation) for the BMO Harris Cornerstone Award.
- **2017** We joined UNCOM, a collaborative network of eight neighborhood centers working to reduce poverty and help families thrive.
- **2017** We successfully piloted a Medical Homes program to help people navigate the health care system and relieve burdens on Emergency Rooms.
- **2018** We launched a prevention project, funded by the Office of Violence Prevention, to reduce effects of trauma in individuals, families, and the community.
- **2020** City on a Hill planted our first church, using the Dinner Church Model.
- **2021** Art Serna Jr. became CEO, bringing 20+ years of experience in community development and education.
- **2023** City on a Hill undergoes a modern brand refresh to better reflect their transformative mission

ORGANIZATION HISTORY

In 1863, a brick farmhouse on this hilltop property was purchased by Christians and converted into a hospital to care for the sick and the poor. Thus, beginning a long history of faith-based solutions emanating from this location. In the mid-1990s, a huge hospital on the near west side of Milwaukee was closed, adding to the blights in an area already marked by poverty, unemployment, addiction, and crime.

Then in August 2000, Convoy of Hope, a national relief organization, brought in semi-truck loads of food for a community outreach event co-sponsored by dozens of churches and the Urban Ministry Center of the Assemblies of God – the forerunner of City on a Hill. In one day they provided 8,000 residents with a meal, groceries, a job fair, health services, children's games, haircuts, music, and the gospel.

Impressed by the event and concerned about the neighborhood's decline, the hospital's owners began a dialog with the local coordinating agency. Four months later Aurora Health Care donated six large buildings to this neighborhood making room for what became City on a Hill. A faith-based collaborative model of service that restores hope, reduces poverty, strengthens neighborhoods, and works for social justice.

Beginning in 2001, City on a Hill used demographic analysis, interviews with community leaders, and a neighborhood outreach strategy called Adopt-a-Block to identify the unmet needs of families in the surrounding neighborhoods.

Since then, we have built relationships with residents, developed a wide range of programs to meet their needs, leased space to other nonprofits to supplement our services, and facilitated the development of 150 units of affordable housing for families and senior citizens on our campus to help revitalize this neighborhood.

Today, our staff and more than 1,300 volunteers annually impact the lives of thousands of children, teens, and adults. We use a unique holistic, comprehensive approach that addresses the root causes of poverty including, spiritual, mental, financial, educational, relational, and health needs.