

FY25 CMHB Funding Summary

At the beginning of its FY25 (April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025), the Community Mental Health Board of Oak Park Township (CMHB) awarded \$1.48M to 29 programs operated by 18 organizations to address gaps in programming and services for Oak Park residents. These programs provide mental health, substance use, intellectual/developmental disability, and primary prevention/intervention services for Oak Park residents. For more information about CMHB, visit www.oakparktownship.org/CMHB.

MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS & SERVICES		<i>pages 2-4</i>
Children’s Clinic		\$12,000
Housing Forward		\$27,000
NAMI Metro Suburban		\$140,000
Oak Park Township Senior Services		\$48,898
Thrive Counseling Center		\$218,600
	SUBTOTAL	\$446,498
SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER PROGRAMS & SERVICES		<i>page 4</i>
Way Back Inn		\$85,608
	SUBTOTAL	\$85,608
INTELLECTUAL/DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY PROGRAMS & SERVICES		<i>pages 5-7</i>
Community Support Services (CSS)		\$139,500
L’Arche Chicago		\$25,000
Opportunity Knocks, Inc.		\$85,000
PACTT Learning Center		\$22,000
UCP Seguin of Greater Chicago		\$100,490
West Suburban Special Recreation Association (WSSRA)		\$14,670
	SUBTOTAL	\$386,660
PREVENTION/EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS & SERVICES		<i>pages 7-10</i>
Ascension Illinois Behavioral Health		\$14,000
DePaul Family and Community Services		\$270,000
Hephzibah Children’s Association		\$30,000
Housing Forward		\$40,000
New Moms, Inc.		\$70,000
Sarah’s Inn		\$56,000
YEMBA, Inc.		\$85,000
	SUBTOTAL	\$565,000

GRAND TOTAL FY25 AWARDS \$1,483,766

MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS SERVICES

Children’s Clinic | 708.848.0528 | childrenscliniciws.org

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES FOR LOW-INCOME OAK PARK CHILDREN **\$12,000**

This program integrates behavioral health screenings into all well-child medical visits and preventative dental visits at the Infant Welfare Society’s Children’s Clinic. A social worker, intake coordinator, and/or clinical provider will apply a variety of standard assessment tools for the early identification and treatment of social-emotional problems, developmental delays, and social service needs. The social worker will provide brief social work interventions as a way of resolving issues that can be managed in a single session, as well as providing service referrals and linkages to therapy, inpatient care, child welfare, and to other organizations to address needs such as food insecurity, homelessness, and other social determinants of health as necessary. The social worker will continue working with the family and child to resolve as completely as possible the barriers identified.

Housing Forward | 708.338.1724 | housingforward.org

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES **\$27,000**

To address the more complex behavioral health issues presented by clients experiencing homelessness, this program supports activities provided by a Behavioral Health Specialist, who will work with clients across all agency program areas to assess their need for mental health and substance use services, develop care plans, and connect them to supports, including appropriate housing. Referrals will come from case managers who perceive client need for services and from clients who request services. The Specialist may offer short-term, solution-focused counseling to clients dealing with situational issues, or as a bridge to long-term counseling when a client is initially not ready for an extended therapeutic relationship or such treatment options are not immediately available. If an initial assessment indicates that a client may need long-term and/or specialized treatment, such as psychiatric assessment for medication, support for domestic violence situations, substance use treatment, or family counseling, the Specialist will work with community partners to find appropriate treatment and facilitate a referral, maintaining contact with the client until they are connected. The Specialist will also conduct monthly psychoeducational groups that can serve either as an introduction to mental health services for clients new to the experience or as support for clients who are experiencing some stress but are not in immediate need of behavioral services.

NAMI Metro Suburban | 708.524.2582 | namimetsub.org

DROP-IN CENTER **\$75,000**

The Drop-In Center (DIC) cultivates social skills, wellness, and job training to help individuals with a mental health condition thrive in the larger community. With no therapists or psychiatrists on staff, the program will utilize both Club House and peer-to-peer models. The DIC, supervised by Certified Recovery Support Specialists (CRSSs), will offer an array of services to participants, including mental health recovery skill and goal development groups, social groups with weekly activities, and employment programming, remaining a source of community and connection, reducing stigma, eliminating isolation, and fostering recovery for individuals living with mental illness. Partnerships with Dominican and Concordia universities will provide volunteer and internship opportunities to students interested in mental health, social work, and psychology. The NAMI CRSS Internship Hub will work alongside CRSS Success Programs at area colleges and universities to enroll CRSS interns and facilitate practicums at the DIC.

EDUCATION PROGRAMS**\$60,000**

NAMI hosts school-based, family, and community education programs. The prominent message across programs is that a person with a mental illness living well in recovery conveys a powerful message of hope. Through education efforts, the program will separate fact from fiction about mental illness, encourage early intervention, and provide to participants the confidence and possibility of living well in mental health recovery. The first 3 school-based classes below align with and enhance local school districts' social-emotional learning curricula, and will be taught at various local middle and high schools: (1) Ending the Silence, (2) Stress Less: Resilience for Success, and (3) Stress Less: Mental Health Fitness; (4) Tolerating Emotional Dysregulation (TED). (5) Mental health education workshops will be provided at the Community Recreation Center to afterschool program participants. Adult classes and recovery supports include: (6) Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) Class and (7) NAMI Connection. Family programs include: (8) Family support groups, (9) Family-to-Family, and (9) the Family Mental Health Resources Summit.

INDIVIDUALIZED PLACEMENT SERVICES**\$5,000**

An evidence-based program for individuals with mental illness, the Individual Placement & Support (IPS) Program is a standardized, peer-reviewed, and outcome-focused workforce development program housed within the Drop-In Center. IPS not only will work with adults to prepare for and gain employment, but also to support the retention of their job. Program specialists will meet individually and in small groups with individuals with mental illness in support of all phases of job readiness, placement, and retention. A weekly Jobs Club will run at the Drop-In Center, and outreach often will take place in the community. Program recruitment will take place through community events, job fairs, online, and by word of mouth referrals. IPS staff will attend weekly meetings with clinicians from other practices to consult on their clients' case management and service plans.

Oak Park Township Senior Services | 708.383.8060 | oakparktownship.org/senior-services

OLDER ADULT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROGRAM**\$48,898**

Oak Park Township Senior Services funds community-based case managers who specialize in the identification and treatment of older adults with mental health, substance use, or dementia-related diagnoses. State-certified case managers will help clients access essential services that allow them to maximize their level of functioning and remain independent in the community. Case managers conduct comprehensive care assessments that examine the clients' environmental, physical, cognitive, psychological and social well-being, and then work with clients to create and implement a comprehensive care plan to maximize functioning, enhance coping skills, and promote community integration. Case managers provide psychoeducation, offer care options, and use motivational interviewing to promote the client's stability within the community. They also work with clients to identify risk factors that negatively impact symptoms and to develop crisis management plans to follow in case of a psychiatric emergency, as well as conduct mental health screenings for older adults during Mental Health Awareness and Older Americans months.

Thrive Counseling Center | 708.383.7500 | thrivecc.org

COMMUNITY SUPPORT: OUTREACH, EDUCATION AND ACCESS**\$50,000**

Thrive regularly connects with and provides support to the community through a variety of outreach and education activities. This program helps support "Thrive Talks" community education workshops, bringing expert speakers in to share tips and tools on parenting, relationships, aging, effective communication, and more. Thrive also provides the Question, Persuade, and Refer (QPR) suicide prevention program to students at OPRF High School. Additionally, the program offers support for a dedicated community education and engagement coordinator to attend community events and connect with stakeholders on important mental health topics, promote service access, and forge partnerships, as well as for a dedicated bilingual access coordinator who facilitates client onboarding and ensures that roadblocks to mental health care at the agency are minimized/eliminated by helping navigate insurance, enroll in Medicaid, schedule appointments, understand the sliding scale, and connect to translation services.

SUNSTAINING PSYCHIATRIC SERVICES**\$81,600**

This program sustains Thrive’s psychiatric care capacity built through previous support for the addition of a psychiatric RN (registered nurse) and supervising MD. These positions support the stability and quality of its outpatient community-based psychiatric services, especially for medication access and management. The RN fosters coordination and collaboration between psychiatric prescribers, clinical therapists, and clients, and the supervising MD supports prescribing nurse practitioners in implementing a clinical philosophy that promotes whole health treatment and partners in addressing complex cases. The program also supports a Nurse Drop-In Group, which offers mental health education and information to help patients in their wellness journeys, and the addition of e-labs to its medical records system to facilitate delivery of laboratory data and insights directly into clients’ electronic health records in real-time, allowing more informed and efficient clinical decisions at the point of care.

ENSURING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR OAK PARK RESIDENTS**\$87,000**

This program supports the provision of comprehensive, coordinated counseling services to eligible adults, youth, couples, and families through an array of treatment approaches to address identified needs such as psychiatric illness, life span issues, situational stressors, and family/interpersonal issues. Individual psychiatric services will be available as well. Case management services are also provided, supporting clients through identifying and investigating available resources, explaining options, and linkage to available resources. Curriculum-based group counseling will be offered to youth to assist them in overcoming challenges together in a group setting, including *Coping Cat*, which provides a cognitive behavioral therapy approach to exploring anxiety management, and *Empowered for Greatness*, which uses a cognitive behavioral therapy approach to explore strengths and barriers with self-esteem, self-worth, and body image for adolescents. The program also supports Thrive’s Trauma Clinic, which will address neurophysiological responses to traumatic experiences with evidence-based, intensive trauma interventions by qualified staff. It offers a menu of evidence-based, time-limited trauma interventions by qualified staff over a 12-week treatment period.

SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER PROGRAMS & SERVICES**Way Back Inn | 708.345.8422 | waybackinn.org****WAY BACK INN****\$85,608**

The Way Back Inn provides long-term, extended 90-day residential substance use treatment for adult female clients at the Grateful House in Oak Park, where two beds are reserved for Oak Park residents. Clients are provided room and board, as well as substance use and/or gambling disorder interventions at therapeutic levels of care using an evidence-based assessment and American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) criteria. Clients participate in group and individual treatment, as well as a recovery-based program, attending community and in-house meetings. Residential clients also participate in the Stress Management Group, which offers stress management techniques, exercise, and relaxation; anger management, its effects on the body, and its consequences; and negative or ineffective coping strategies (alcohol, substance use, and gambling, or turning to anger and violence). The Way Back Inn also offers the Family Program, an outpatient group open to all Oak Park residents that provides an educational and process-oriented space where families of persons affected by substance use and gambling disorders can process their recovery and family structure. The group focuses on codependency, enabling, the disease concept of addiction, cross addiction, recovery, relapse prevention, difficulty surrounding holidays, homecoming, children-parent relationships post treatment, and the family’s use of alcohol or medications after a client returns home.

INTELLECTUAL/DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Community Support Services (CSS) | 708.354.4547 | cssservices.org

RESPITE

\$81,000

Community Support Services (CSS) offers respite services to provide families with a break from the demands of caring for a family member (minor or adult) with intellectual/developmental disabilities while providing the individual opportunities for socialization, support, and skill building. Providing respite services as a reprieve improves family functioning and care-giving skills. Each family, based on an assessment of family needs, is allocated a number of respite hour per year to use in ways that make sense for their family. Individual, group, and voucher respite services are available.

CASE MANAGEMENT

\$33,500

This program offers person- and family-centered support for individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities and their families. It consists of planning, facilitating, advocating, and ensuring access to wanted and needed services, benefits, and/or other resources. In addition to the need for direct supports such as respite and group programs, families often have a tremendous need for information about the available service delivery system for people with disabilities, as well as for support and advocacy in the school system. Case management supports the individual and family with planning, facilitating, advocating, and ensuring access to wanted and needed services, benefits, and/or other resources, making sure families are aware of and supported in accessing the resources available to them.

EMPLOYMENT

\$25,000

To improve employment opportunities for individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities, this program will provide high school transitional services and supported employment programming through both individual and group-based services, working with participants to identify the type of employment desired and what support, if any, is required. The program utilizes the "5 Steps to Success" method, which includes a comprehensive assessment, job readiness training/preparation, job development outreach and support to prospective employers, customized job coaching on- and off-site, and job retention support. It also offers support to young adults transitioning out of high school, including job exploration counseling, work-based learning experiences, counseling on post-secondary education, workplace readiness training, individual employment rights, and introduction to self-advocacy.

L'Arche Chicago | 708.660.1600 | larchechicago.org

OAK PARK HOME HOUSE COORDINATOR

\$25,000

This program supports a House Coordinator position for the agency's new residence in Oak Park, which is scheduled to open in summer/fall of 2024. The House Coordinator will work with 4-5 new core members (residents) and live-in assistants (adults without disabilities who are paid), overseeing the management and administrative responsibilities within the home, and coordinating community life to foster a healthy, respectful, and compassionate living environment. Key responsibilities of the position include: serving as an advocate and contact for core member parents or guardians for house-related needs (e.g. scheduling, day-to-day needs) and as a liaison to the Director of Care for other core member needs; ensuring that core members' annual plans are implemented appropriately and reviewed throughout the year to meet their specific needs; ensuring that the medical, financial, and spiritual needs of each core member are fully met, and that all documentation is completed and submitted in a timely manner; scheduling and facilitating weekly house meetings with core members to ensure everyone has opportunities to be meaningful members of their home; building a family atmosphere of welcoming and friendship; and supporting the spiritual needs of individuals in the home, whatever their religious preferences (including none at all).

OK PROGRAMS

\$85,000

Opportunity Knocks provides services for adults aged 22 or older with intellectual/developmental disabilities (“Warriors”), empowering and supporting them in all major facets of community life. Warriors stay with a small cohort throughout the programming block for each program period, a format that enables them and their families to select activities that meet individual needs, and allows for skill development and evaluation. Activities will be developed to support one or more mission goals – voice, interdependence, experience, wellness, and social – and enable participants to work with program staff to meet their own personal goals. Activities include: 1) *Life skills* – covers activities of daily living that focus on improving Warriors’ life skills and promoting independence, including kitchen skills, laundry and home skills, personal care, shopping, and budgeting; 2) *Health and wellness* – includes include nutrition workshops, farming, guided breathing and meditation, and exposure to a wide range of physical fitness activities, including at least 30 minutes of exercise and one wellness session daily; 3) *Community integration* – engages Warriors in volunteer efforts connecting them with nonprofits in the local community, providing an opportunity to learn responsibility by arriving on time, staying on task, and completing assigned jobs, translating into real-world vocational skills; and 4) *Job skills development* – provides vocational training activities and initiatives and meaningful employment opportunities, aiming to break down barriers limiting full community engagement.

INCREASING AND DIVERSIFYING COMMUNITY INCLUSION ACTIVITIES

\$22,000

The program will provide opportunities for community involvement and integration, enjoyable activities, and skill-building to Day Program participants with autism, with aims of increasing time spent in the community and diversifying the places they are able to go. The program will facilitate opportunities for individually tailored activities emerging from therapeutic decisions/interventions based on participants’ own interests and preferences, such as attending camp, taking swimming or skating lessons or an art class, going to the zoo or aquarium, shopping, going to the dry cleaner, or others as identified. These activities help participants find their place in the community, build skills that allow them to become more independent, be recognized for who they are (rather than being identified by their diagnoses), and provide opportunities to find additional places where they belong.

BUILDING BRIDGES TO THE FUTURE

\$15,000

Building Bridges to the Future supports the successful transition of high school students with intellectual/developmental disabilities ages 14-21 into adulthood, as well as students who have recently left high school (ages 22-25) and need access to adult services. The program works with parents, families, and students in at OPRF High School to provide coaching; linkages to financial, medical, and legal resources; and adult services training experiences. This program also provides counseling, training, and hands-on assistance to special education students with disabilities and their families. Transition outreach staff work with the school to identify individuals, participate in IEP meetings, assist families to apply for the state services waiting list, help families secure Social Security benefits and Medicaid eligibility for their student, and support families in obtaining any/all possible funding for adult services.

RESPIRE

\$15,450

This program provides supportive assistance, personal care, life-skills training, and social, recreational, and community activities for individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities so their parents and other family members can have some relief from providing such intensive care themselves. Staff provide daytime, nighttime, and weekend respite care that promotes the development of the participants’ domestic skills and expands their access to community resources, either in a family-like respite homes or within a participant’s home, as needed.

SOCIAL/RECREATIONAL PROGRAM

\$37,080

This program provides adults with intellectual/developmental disabilities opportunities to enhance their social/recreational exposure, skills, and enjoyment. It offers participants a wide array of opportunities for recreation and socialization socializing – joining clubs, sharing entertainment experiences, pursuing hobbies, developing artistic talents, attending performances or participating in sporting events, and opportunities to achieve improvements in strength, flexibility, balance, and coordination. Participants become “members” in the agency’s Social/Recreation Club, which facilitates group and one-on-one or small group activities through “buddy outings” for smaller, individualized, participant-led outings. Group activities voted on by members include crafting, game/movie nights, various outdoor outings, holiday activities, Social Fridays, karaoke, traveling, and Boccia (a precision ball sport), etc.

VOCATIONAL EXPLORATION/SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

\$32,960

This program offers adults with intellectual/developmental disabilities opportunities to explore vocational options and secure and maintain paid and volunteer jobs in the community. Services include but are not limited to job development, placement, coaching, retention, counseling, and on-site intervention and support services. Participants also receive instruction and guidance in communication skills, social skills, life skills (i.e., using public transportation, managing money, and gaining basic work preparedness tools such as reading and arithmetic), as well as specific, employer-defined job task skills.

West Suburban Special Recreation Association (WSSRA) | 847.455.2100 | wssra.net

HAPPY CAMPERS

\$14,670

This program supports a behavior specialist and occupational therapist at WSSRA’s summer day camp program for children with disabilities. Working together at day camp orientation and throughout the program’s 7-week season, these positions teach camp staff strategies for preventing and managing challenging behaviors among camp participants. The occupational therapist provides staff training during the 3-day day camp orientation, and then makes ongoing visits to each of WSSRA’s 6-8 camp sites during the summer camp season, providing support tailored to staff needs. The behavior specialist also visits each program site to work with camp staff on how to handle and respond to challenging behavior when it emerges, assisting them with the development of behavior management plans and teaching them how to use tools to deescalate and redirect problem behaviors. Additionally, the program supplies tool kits for each staff member to use to help manage behaviors, including items like cards with picture cues, visual timers, and small sensory toys (e.g., fidget toys, Thinking Putty, etc.).

PREVENTION/EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Ascension Illinois Behavioral Health | 708.410.0615
healthcare.ascension.org/locations/illinois/ilchi/melrose-park-ascension-illinois-center-for-mental-health-at-1414-main-st

OAK PARK PROJECT – STRENGTHENING FAMILIES PROGRAM

\$14,000

Ascension Illinois Behavioral Health offers the Strengthening Families Program (SFP), an evidence- and curriculum-based prevention program for families with children ages 7-17. Through psycho-education, skill building, and support, the program strives to prevent crises and the need for mental health and substance use treatment. It teaches families how to implement more effective ways of communicating, develop positive relationships, and use coping skills to deal with difficult life situations. Run twice per year and consisting of 11 group sessions that include a meal, informal family practice time, and group leader coaching, the program is proven to prevent drug use in youth and teens due to stronger family ties and connection, and youth become more capable of dealing with peer pressure and criticism.

MINDFULNESS MATTERS: STRENGTHENING YOUTH DEVELOPMENT THROUGH EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES

\$270,000

This program continues to address the mental health needs of middle school-aged students and families and to strengthen the caregiving system around them. It supports programming and services for students, families, and school staff from Oak Park's D97 middle schools, leveraging the evidenced-based Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) model that offers universal (Tier I), group (Tier II), and individualized (Tier III) interventions of increasing intensity. This ensures efficient use of limited resources, with the idea that many children can be served through universal approaches that teach them and their caregivers about emotional health, and that those who are at increasing risk or symptom severity will utilize more intensive, individualized service. Tier I includes workshops for school staff and parents/guardians designed to help develop skills needed to create responsive and supportive environments for youth who are struggling with mental health and executive functioning concerns. Tier II includes group services geared toward students demonstrating clinically significant symptoms of anxiety, depression, and/or inattention. Groups will offer the Mindfulness Matters Program, an adaptable, modular approach to teaching mindfulness to children and teens, and includes activities from the evidence-based Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for Children (MBCT-C) curriculum. Tier III is designed for students and families in need of a higher level of individualized care for mental health and/or inattention. Services will be offered based on appropriate referral and assessment, and treatment will draw upon evidence-based approaches such as CBT, mindfulness-based cognitive therapy, and parent-child therapies. Students may be referred for psychological/neuropsychological evaluations. In addition to MTSS services, the program also provides care coordination services so that families are connected to both school- and community-based supports, such as housing assistance, medical and mental health care, insurance and benefits applications, after-school programs, tutoring, and parent support/coaching programs.

Hephzibah Children's Association | 708.649.7100 | hephzibahhome.org

SOCIAL WORK SERVICES FOR DAY CARE PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

\$30,000

This program supports the provision of prevention and intervention social work services that attend to the needs of elementary school-aged children enrolled in Hephzibah's after-school and summer day care program. The agency's social worker works with participating children to address issues of physical and verbal aggression, develop self-control and manage impulses in large group settings, trust adults, and develop healthy relationships with peers. They also provide training for day care staff on the social and emotional needs of children, serve as the central link between the program and school social workers, and function as the contact for children's external therapists.

Housing Forward | 708.338.1724 | housingforward.org

STREET OUTREACH SERVICES

\$40,000

This program contributes support to a Street Outreach Specialist whose work focuses on connecting with people who may need housing assistance by creating a bridge to services. The program aims to reach the most at-risk, service-resistant individuals and families living on the streets or places not meant for human habitation (abandoned buildings and forest preserves) and link them to critical services, engage them in case management, and ultimately transition them into permanent housing, thereby reducing chronic homelessness. The program meets clients where they are, both emotionally and physically, in emergency shelters, on the streets, or on public transportation. Outreach begins with a contact routine – an offer of coffee, sack lunch, or personal care items on a regular basis over weeks or months until a trusting relationship has formed. The Specialist links them with resources, often with the agency's Wraparound Services Team, to begin addressing basic needs and individual barriers to sustained housing. Referrals from local municipal services (police departments, libraries, and township staff) enable the team to make contact.

NEW MOMS OAK PARK

\$70,000

New Moms provides home visiting, family-centered coaching, parent support groups, child developmental programming, and employment and education assistance to high-risk pregnant and parenting families. Participants include young mothers and expectant mothers aged 24 years and under, and mothers facing single parenthood and poverty. Each of these is a significant risk factor for mental health and child development issues and poor parenting efficacy. Services are delivered through a two-generation model, acknowledging that the well-being of mothers and children are inextricably linked, and supporting both generations simultaneously. An array of interventions tailored to the need of each family are offered. Depending on their individual needs, participants may receive multiple supports simultaneously, including home-based parenting education, family-centered housing coaching, weekly parent support groups, job training and academic coaching, and external linkages to additional services.

PREVENTION

\$18,000

This program works with adolescents ages 11-18 years when they are first experimenting with intimate relationships, both online and in person, through the Together Strong Project, which provides critical information for students on how to protect themselves against potential threats and how to seek help if they are a victim of violence or abuse, as well as how to advocate against violence as a bystander. By integrating programs into schools and making them part of mandatory curricula in health or PE courses, they will influence school-wide culture and have a community impact. Programs for 6th, 7th, and 8th grades are taught during one week of student Health classes at D97's Julian and Brooks schools. The program taught at D200's OPRF High School is taught through PE and/or health classes. Additionally, Sarah's Inn will conduct outreach activities during Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM), engaging the community by collaborating with key partners and stakeholders to create a unified voice and raise greater awareness of how everyone can take action towards ending domestic violence. DVAM activities may include hosting a community kick-off event in Oak Park, holding bystander intervention presentations for community members, and participating in events/activities hosted by partner agencies; developing marketing and educational materials for DVAM, including action posters and cards, and hanging purple ribbons around the community in honor of DVAM; and partnering with local media and social media stakeholders to promote DVAM to educate and build awareness of domestic violence and how to take action

INTERVENTION

\$38,000

The program seeks to meet the needs of victims of domestic violence, which includes improving the safety of victims and their children, increasing survivors' life stability and self-sufficiency, and ensuring that children and teen witnesses of domestic violence become less likely to repeat the cycle of violence as adults. Program activities include: emergency assistance through a 24-hour crisis line, safety planning, emergency shelter referrals, transportation and housing assistance; individual and group advocacy and counseling to help survivors rebuild their lives and heal; legal advocacy to help ensure protections under the law; and children and teen programming including art and play therapy, group services, and individual counseling. All services will be provided in English and Spanish.

**MENTORSHIP EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM (MEP)/
MENTORSHIP EMPOWERMENT TRAINING (MET)**

\$85,000

This program provides Oak Park middle-school students a two-pronged approach to mentoring through the Mentoring Empowerment Program (MEP) and Mentoring Empowerment Training (MET). MEP is a school-based group program utilizing a focused curriculum to teach middle school students valuable life skills that promote success, equity, and access. YEMBA, Inc. will provide students in grades 6-8 a foundation for social-emotional learning and character development, aiming to empower, educate, expose, and provide positive experiences that will offer mentees opportunities to exercise their own leadership skills as acquired through various workshops. Workshops will be offered for Percy Julian and Gwendolyn Brooks middle school students with a focus on leadership development, substance use education, and financial literacy. The program will also be offered as a multi-week summer session—the Summer Empowerment Program (SEP)—designed to help elementary school students transition to middle school and middle school students transition to high school. This session will include workshops on STEM, time and stress management as well as study skills and financial literacy, and also tours of the school as an introduction to the building and student services, clubs, and activities. MET is a training program and curriculum for high school students to help youth focus on college and workforce preparation, career exploration, and financial literacy while fostering leadership skills. MEP graduates will be encouraged to start new journeys as junior mentors by learning how to effectively empower others while incorporating social-emotional learning practices that support success in school and beyond. Youth mentors will be paid an hourly stipend to create a paid work experience, enhancing their dedication and promoting responsibility.