

30 Years Strong, Forward Stronger

Luncheon
Thursday • June 6, 2024
Union League Club of Chicago



The Boulevard



Dear Supporters,

Welcome to The Boulevard's 2024 Luncheon fundraiser. During this event, we'll celebrate The Boulevard's 30th Anniversary - over 30 years of life-changing work that continues at The Boulevard every day as we help our clients work toward rebuilding their lives.

We're thrilled to have Chicago legendary media personality Robin Robinson back this year as MC of our Luncheon. With her unique journalistic style as a long-time Chicago reporter and news anchor, Robin will be our guide throughout the program. Joining Robin will be our Luncheon chair, Rosalind Dixon. Rosalind is a member of The Boulevard's Development Committee and Associate Board, and she has been a driving force since she started volunteering with us in 2020.

A highlight of the Luncheon will be The Boulevard's Enhancing Lives Award, which will be presented by Congresswoman Delia C. Ramirez, who currently serves as the U.S. representative for Illinois's 3rd congressional district. She will present the award to honoree Debbie Reznick, former Senior Program Officer at the Polk Bros. Foundation. Debbie is receiving this award for her tireless efforts toward ending homelessness in Chicago.

We're also excited to give out a new award, the Nancy Hanson Outstanding Service Award. Nancy Hanson is a founder of The Boulevard and has been a visionary for the organization since the very beginning. Veronica Buckley, The Boulevard's Board Membership Committee Chair, will be presented with this new award. Veronica has been volunteering at The Boulevard for over 25 years.

Finally, during our Luncheon you will be hearing from our keynote speaker, Freddie Stevenson, a former Chicago Bear, who has traveled from Florida to share his experiences with homelessness. We look forward to his speech.

Our Paddle Raise will be an opportunity to support our essential programs and services that are significant to helping our residents gain the stability they need to move forward in their lives. With the generous commitment from our event sponsors and donors, The Boulevard of Chicago will continue offering opportunities for men and women to receive the care, compassion and critical support they need to move from homelessness to permanent housing.

Enjoy the Luncheon!

Richard Ducatenzeiler
Chief Executive Officer

Christy Weimer
President, Board of Directors

Agenda

Welcome

Rosalind Dixon and Robin Robinson
Chair and MC

Acknowledgements

Christy Weimer
President, Board of Directors

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Richard Ducatenzeiler
Chief Executive Officer

Enhancing Lives Award Presentation

Congresswoman Delia C. Ramirez

Honoree

Debbie Reznick

Nancy Hanson Service Award Presentation

Christy Weimer and Nancy Hanson
President, Board of Directors and Boulevard Founder

Award Recipient

Veronica Buckley

Keynote Speaker

Freddie Stevenson
Former Chicago Bear

Paddle Raise

Conclusion

Robin Robinson



30 Years Strong, Forward Stronger



Rosalind Dixon

Luncheon Chair

Rosalind Dixon joined The Boulevard's Associate Board (AB) in 2020 after participating in a Share-A-Meal volunteer event in 2019. After joining the AB, Rosalind knew she wanted to make a difference at The Boulevard in every possible way. Since then, she has helped organize the wardrobe closet, gardened at the facility, and participated in fundraising activities. She has also joined The Boulevard's Development Committee, assisting in raising funds at a higher level.

Over the past four years, Rosalind has truly enjoyed sharing the mission of The Boulevard with all who will listen. When the opportunity arose to be The Boulevard's Luncheon Chair for their 30th Anniversary fundraiser, Rosalind was thrilled to accept.

Rosalind works as a National Account Executive with Meet Minneapolis and is based in downtown Chicago. She earned a Bachelor of Business Administration degree from Northwood University and holds an MBA from Louisiana State University.

To those whom my life may touch in slight measure, may I give graciously of what is mine.
– Delta Zeta



Robin Robinson

Luncheon MC

Robin Robinson, award-winning journalist, is returning for her fourth year as host of The Boulevard's annual fundraiser. As a long-time reporter and anchor of Chicago's WBBM-TV and WFLD-TV, Ms. Robinson is a respected thought leader whose three decades of reporting are marked by in-depth coverage of social justice issues, politics, significant people and events. Her passion is connecting people to their collective power to create change.

As a facilitator, moderator, interviewer and convener, Ms. Robinson believes relationship is everything and that every relationship begins with a conversation. From sharing the stories of individuals to reveal common goals, to amplifying the purpose that drives an organization, Ms. Robinson works to harvest collective wisdom and produce action.

"The difficult topics that we are most afraid to address are often the things that matter most. Creating a safe space for divergent voices to be heard and honored is not only possible, but necessary."

Ms. Robinson is the recipient of numerous honors, including six EMMYs from the Midwest Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, the Excellence in Reporting award from the National Association of Black Journalists and the Women's Media Center.

Founders

Thirty years ago, our founders witnessed thousands of people with medical injuries entering shelters across Chicago with nowhere else to go. To break the cycle of homelessness, these individuals needed a place to recover and the opportunity to move on to stable housing. The Boulevard was founded in 1994 to answer this critical need.

The Boulevard of Chicago, originally known as Interfaith House, opened its doors in July of 1994, and held a celebratory Grand Opening on October 19, 1994. At the Grand Opening, Blessings were delivered by: Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, Archbishop of Chicago; Rabbi Peter Knobel, President of the Chicago Board of Rabbis; and Bishop Sherman Hicks of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. At our founding, we became only the third medical respite center in the country, behind Christ House in Washington DC, and Barbara McInnis House in Boston.

Today, we look to our past, in celebration of 30 years of life-changing work, and 12,000 lives changed. We also look to the future, as we continue helping our clients gain the stability they need to restore their health and rebuild their lives.



Enhancing Lives Award Honoree

The Enhancing Lives Award has been established to recognize those who are making significant contributions to enhancing the lives of individuals living in underserved communities. This award has been created to acknowledge those who are making exceptional efforts to increase opportunities and eliminate disparities in the areas of health, education, employment and housing.

Debbie Reznick



Debbie Reznick stepped down from her role as the Polk Bros. Foundation Senior Program Officer in May 2024 after over 30 years of philanthropic and nonprofit leadership committed to social justice and economic opportunity. Debbie first

joined the Foundation in 2000. During her time there, Debbie designed strategic, innovative grantmaking in the Foundation's Strong Communities and Enhanced Capacity program areas, where she oversaw ongoing grantmaking to nearly 100 organizations each year.

One of the organizations she oversaw was The Boulevard of Chicago. A few years after joining the Polk Bros. Foundation, Debbie was introduced to what was then known as Interfaith House by conducting a site visit of our Medical Respite Program. It was during this initial visit when she met Michael Cook, one of The Boulevard's prior Executive Directors and Jennifer Nelson-Seals, who served as the Associate Executive Director at the time. Since 2003, Debbie has served as The Boulevard's Grant Officer and to this day, remains a champion for recuperative care and low-barrier housing for the city's most vulnerable individuals.

As the co-chair of the Illinois' Community Advisory Council on Homelessness, Debbie played a key role in the creation of the 2022-2024 Illinois Plan to Prevent & End Homelessness, which includes the expansion of the medical respite model as one of its

key initiatives. Richard Ducatenzeiler, The Boulevard's current CEO, worked closely with Debbie back in 2002 to draft the City's original Plan to End Homelessness. The two have served together over the years on the Board of Directors for the Chicago Continuum of Care (CoC).

Debbie has served as a founding board member of numerous other organizations and helped launch programs that filled gaps in supports or services, including: Funders Together to End Homelessness, Chicago Funders Together to End Homelessness (CFTEH), Mission Sustainability Initiative at Forefront, and AMPT.

Driven to change systems that perpetuate racial inequity, Debbie has worked to collaborate with other funders and across issues, both locally and nationally, especially on housing, legal services and organizational and sector capacity building.

Debbie also worked in collaboration with Chicago Bar Foundation to help grow support for legal aid for people facing eviction, including advocating for a full-scale evaluation of the costs and benefits of implementing a Right to Counsel program in Chicago for people facing eviction. Evaluation results will provide data that could help ensure legal aid for anyone in Chicago who is facing eviction and living on a low income. Debbie's leadership also helped establish the LYTE Collective in Greater Grand Crossing, which serves young adults who are impacted by poverty and homelessness. In 2021, Debbie was appointed by Governor Pritzker to co-chair Illinois' Community Advisory Council on Homelessness.

Because of all this and more, The Boulevard of Chicago is honored to present this year's Enhancing Lives Award to Debbie Reznick.

Nancy Hanson Service Award

The success of The Boulevard of Chicago over the past 30 years relies on the generous time and talents freely given by our many volunteers. Nancy Hanson, one of our founders and a lifelong Board member, advocate, mentor, thought leader, and chief gardener, is our organization's gold standard of support. In recognition of her many hours of service, we want to acknowledge those who, like Nancy, have given significant time to further our mission of hope and healing.

With The Boulevard of Chicago's 30th Anniversary in mind, we have named this award the Nancy Hanson Outstanding Service Award (NHOSA). This award recognizes those who demonstrate the highest caliber of volunteer service engagement, who have been a role model through selflessly giving time and talent, and who have become ambassadors for the organization's vision.

The award recipient, like Nancy, places the highest of values on the rights of all human beings and is a champion for fairness and equality.

The recipient recognizes and appreciates feedback and guidance from others and, in many ways, continues to mentor those new to the organization. Additionally, they engage with other volunteers and exemplify discretion, patience, and professionalism.

Finally, and above all, the recipient of the NHOSA demonstrates kindness, tolerance, and compassion for those with whom they meet and realizes that everyone has a story about their life's journey, told or untold.

Nancy Hanson



More than 30 years ago, **Nancy Hanson** was asked to join a small committee of The Interfaith Council for The Homeless, who were planning the first medical respite center in Chicago. There were only two other medical respite centers in the country at the

time. Nancy brought her social work skills to the group, and they opened Interfaith House (now known as The Boulevard of Chicago) in 1994. The mission was to provide a safe and caring place for ill and injured homeless men and women to continue their healing when they left the hospital with nowhere to go. This was the third Medical Respite Program in the country and the first in Illinois.

Nancy has been on the board for over 25 years, serving as Board Chair and on various Committees. In the summer, you'll find her working with the residents in the vegetable garden where they grow healthy vegetables that go from garden to table for resident meals.

Nancy also helped to establish The Respite Care Provider's Network (RCPN) 24 years ago. In 2000, 14 Medical Respite Programs from across the country met in Chicago to learn from each other as they developed their programs. Four years later, RCPN became a standing committee of the National Health Care for the Homeless Council and now has over 160 member programs from coast to coast. Nancy served as the first chairperson of the Steering Committee and continues to be active with RCPN.

It is an honor to have The Boulevard's Outstanding Service Award named after her.

Service Award Recipient

Veronica Buckley



Veronica Buckley has volunteered at The Boulevard of Chicago for over 25 years. Coming from an administrative and human resources background, Veronica began as a volunteer on the Interfaith House (now known as The Boulevard) Human Resources Committee in 1998. A year later, she became chair of the HR Committee and joined the Board of Directors. Since then, Veronica has completed two terms as Board President, two terms as Board Vice President, and several years on the Executive, HR, Board Membership and Development Committees. She has also been the chair of two past annual fundraisers for The Boulevard. She currently chairs the Board Membership Committee, where she continues to foster The Boulevard's present and future Board of Directors.

Veronica currently serves as a Core Faculty Member at DePaul University School of New Learning. She is also Board Vice President of The GhostLight Theatre, a nonprofit in Southwest Michigan.

In honor of her dedication and service to The Boulevard of Chicago's mission, Veronica Buckley will be presented with the very first Nancy Hanson Outstanding Service Award during this year's Luncheon program.



Veronica Buckley, John Mahoney,
Nancy Hanson. 2004



Dr. Paul Luning, Veronica Buckley,
Jennifer Nelson-Seals, Bob Urso. 2018

Keynote Speaker

Freddie Stevenson

Former Chicago Bear



Freddie Stevenson, former Chicago Bear, is a bestselling author, motivational speaker, film producer, and former football fullback. From 2013 to 2016, Freddie made his name playing football at Florida State University, where he also won a National Championship. After college, Freddie signed with the Chicago Bears in 2017. After his career was cut short, he transitioned to life as an entrepreneur. Freddie has since launched a clothing line, written a bestselling book titled *Trials to Triumph* (2021), and recently released a documentary film, also titled *Trials to Triumph* (2023).

Freddie's documentary follows his journey from being homeless to making it to the NFL, before having to reinvent himself after his playing career came to an abrupt end. Freddie now shares his powerful message of overcoming adversity across the country to inspire others to chase their dreams, and he helps give them the tools they need to be successful in life.

Purchase Freddie Stevenson's book *Trials to Triumph* [here!](#)

Paddle Raise

The Boulevard is Making an Impact

The men and women we serve at The Boulevard have experienced significant trauma in their lives. It takes extreme courage for them to address the overwhelming challenges they face each day. The Boulevard is here to provide holistic care and support to our residents so they can gain the stability and confidence they need to rebuild their lives.

You can make a meaningful impact in the lives of some of Chicago's most vulnerable residents.

Paddle Raise Levels

\$5,000

Moving On to Permanent Housing. A donation of \$5,000 will cover the costs associated with setting up a new home for one person moving into permanent housing. This donation will help to provide household essentials such as furniture, kitchenware and appliances, bedding and linens, utility assistance, and security deposit.



\$2,500

Medical Respite Care. With a commitment of \$2,500, The Boulevard can provide one month of medical respite care for a resident.



\$1,000

Group Counseling for Residents. A donation of \$1,000 will help cover the cost of six months of group counseling for residents.



\$500

Meals for Residents. A donation of \$500 will help pay for one meal for The Boulevard's residents. The Boulevard provides the residents with three nutritious meals a day while they recover and rebuild their health.



\$250

Support for a New Job Opportunity. A donation of \$250 pays for work clothes, shoes and transportation to a client's job interview or new job opportunity.



\$100

Basic Need Items for Clients. A donation of \$100 provides essential items for clients' basic needs, such as personal hygiene items and clothing.



\$50

Critical Documents to Gain Stability. A donation of \$50 covers the costs of an ID, Social Security card, birth certificate and other necessary documents for a client to secure public benefits and housing.



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A horizontal bar composed of several small squares in various colors: red, brown, green, yellow, blue, purple, and orange.

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The Boulevard

***May The Boulevard
continue to succeed in its
mission to support
Chicago's homeless
through hope, health and
healing.***

**Christy and Randy
Weimer**

**Platinum Sponsor of
The Boulevard's
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*The Boulevard of Chicago
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The Boulevard



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At Northwestern Medicine, better isn't contained to a building. We are committed to helping everyone in Chicagoland live better, but we can't do that alone. Instead, we partner with local organizations that know their community best. They want better health and well-being for their neighbors, and we offer the support they need to achieve their goals for long-lasting change.

It's one way we're making communities better, one neighborhood at a time.

BETTER



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Judy T. Lindsey

**for her support of our mission and of our
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The Boulevard

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30 Years Strong, Forward Stronger

Thank You for Making a Meaningful Difference!

Proceeds of The Boulevard's 2024 Luncheon fundraiser will go to support the vital programs and services we provide to homeless adults who are ill and injured. The people we serve depend on us now more than ever to receive high quality medical care and holistic support to restore their health and rebuild their lives.

For more information, go to: <https://blvd.org/event/2024-luncheon-fundraiser>

Our Mission

The Boulevard of Chicago provides high quality, cost-effective medical respite care, holistic support, and transitional housing services to help ill and injured homeless adults break the cycle of homelessness, restore their health, and rebuild their lives.

Our Vision

The Boulevard of Chicago will serve more homeless individuals and improve their lives by minimizing the impact of illness and injury and affirming the link between healthcare continuity and stable housing.



The Boulevard

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The Boulevard