

## Meet Countryside's Service Partners



The mission of [Partners for Our Community](#) (POC) -- formerly known as Palatine Opportunity Center -- is to connect underserved residents in the Palatine area to services and resources to build a community of empowered people, healthy families and vibrant neighbors.

POC works collectively with providers housed in the center along with outside agencies to provide programs ranging from a **Family Learning Lab** (Parenting classes, computer and financial literacy, leadership development, employment assistance and childcare) to the **ICompete Youth Program** (Summer camp, mentoring, sport and art clinics) as well as **Community Health and Wellness** and the **Edgebrook Community Center**, which offers after school homework assistance, youth clubs and children's activities.

### **Health and Wellness Studio**

In 2017, funds raised by Countryside were used to help create and furnish a health and wellness studio at the POC facility on Rand Road in Palatine. The studio is also supported by Northwest Community Hospital. Yoga classes, meditation classes, as well as other health and wellness programming is offered daily in the new studio.



**The ROOTS Community Garden** is a vegetable and flower garden run by women leaders from POC. Their goal is to provide POC clients and families in need with healthy foods and in the process, build a stronger, connected community. At the height of the growing season, nearly 70 adult portions of vegetables were picked daily!

The **ROLE (Reaching Out, Lifting to Excellence) program** helps Spanish speakers transition into active participation in the community through Women's Leadership Classes. The classes range from public policy to self-esteem. Students build a personal or community-centered action plan that helps build programming for POC.



See more at [POC.org](#) and follow POC on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)

*For more information, contact Countryside's liaison to POC: Matt Myren, [mmyren@enesco.com](mailto:mmyren@enesco.com)*



**Faith in Place** empowers Illinois people of all faiths to be leaders in caring for the Earth, providing resources to educate, connect, and advocate for healthier communities. Since 1999, Faith in Place has worked with more than 1,000 houses of worship throughout Illinois to protect our common land, water, and air. With outreach staff working across the state and office located in Chicago, the North & West Suburbs, Lake County, and Central Illinois, Faith in Place inspires faithful people to care for the Earth through four program areas: Energy & Climate Change, Sustainable Food & Land Use, Water Preservation, and Advocacy. Faith in Place is the Illinois Affiliate of Interfaith Power and Light.

### **North & West Roots**

With outreach staff working across the state and offices located in Chicago, Lake County, and Central Illinois, in 2017 Faith in Place added a fourth office location in Palatine on Vermont Street to put down long term roots in the North & West Suburbs. This will help us solidify our relationship with our current N&W faith partners and create new relationships as we work to build healthier communities together.



**Winter Farmer's Markets** Each winter, from November through March, Faith in Place partners with faith communities to host a series of indoor farmer's markets on Saturdays and Sundays. The farmer's markets provide an additional source of income for local vendors during the off-season, promote sustainable farming methods and economic justice for regional farm families, encourage healthy, wholesome eating, and support the building of relationships between producers and consumers. Illinois

Link Cards/SNAP Benefits are accepted at all of our markets; this increases the affordability and accessibility of locally produced food for economically disadvantaged Illinoisans.

### **Smart Energy Program**

The Smart Energy program works to educate houses of worship and their members about energy efficiency and clean energy options. This program has helped many houses of worship in the North & West suburbs -- including Countryside -- and across the state of Illinois to lower their utilities bills, reduce pollution, and install clean energy.



### **Youth Eco-Ambassador**



Faith in Place provides environmental education during the summer for our beloved youth. Ages range from 14-18, and applications are accepted at the beginning of every summer from our faith partners to send a youth representative from their house of worship to join Faith in Place staff to put their faith into action. Staff work with youth to learn more about environmental issues, leadership development, and outreach methods. Field trips to see environmental education in action is a key part of the program.

By the end of the six-week long program the Eco-Ambassadors are empowered to work and provide leadership with existing Green Teams at their faith communities. Training includes education, connection, and advocacy in all of Faith in Place's program areas. In 2017 we expanded the program to the N&W and two youth participated by joining the Chicago for the, "Climate and Energy" week.

See more at [FaithInPlace.org](http://FaithInPlace.org) and follow them on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram @faithinplace

*For more information, contact Countryside's liaison to Faith in Place:  
Dan Huntsha, [dan@faithinplace.org](mailto:dan@faithinplace.org)*



[Interfaith Community for Detained Immigrants](#) (ICDI) is a non-profit, faith-based organization of staff and volunteers called to respond to the suffering of adults and children affected by our broken and inhumane immigration system and advocate for change.

## **Advocacy**

Being handcuffed and put in jail is the last thing a person who has survived violence and is suffering from PTSD should experience and it is not the global norm. ICDI works as part of a national coalition to end immigrant detention and for-profit incarceration and create funding for community- and faith-based support.

## **Service and Monitoring**

### *Jail Visitation*

ICDI does weekly visits to four area detention centers: McHenry (IL), Kankakee (IL), Kenosha (WI), and Dodge (WI) and puts \$10 into the commissary account of anyone with a balance under \$10 so that they can make phone calls and purchase necessities. This is 120-160 people each week. In one jail, coffee costs \$4, creamer and sugar are each \$1 extra. People in detention can work in the kitchen for \$1/day.



### *Unaccompanied Children's Interfaith Ministry*

ICDI visits immigrant children who have come to the US alone in the hopes of reuniting with a parent or other family member. Some of them are victims of human trafficking. The children live in group homes run by a social service agency. ICDI visits include uplifting music, art, play, and interfaith spiritual activities.

### *Deportation Ministry and Vigil*

ICDI provides weekly pastoral care to people who being deported and their families as they say goodbye and are torn apart, as well as information about what to expect in the receiving country and how to find safe houses and help. A public prayer vigil is held, and they pray on the buses before they depart.

### *Court Watch*

ICDI attends immigration court every day of the week, morning and afternoon. This puts a human body in the court room to remind judges and lawyers of the human consequences of their decisions. People in detention appear most of the time by videoconference. ICDI documents proceedings and decisions to note irregularities or concerns and share them with legal advocacy partners.

### *Post Detention Accompaniment*

ICDI responds to hotline calls from people who are released from detention and need clothing, food, transportation, and other help to get home.



## **Community-based Support Initiatives**

### *Marie Joseph Houses of Hospitality*

ICDI has two residences for people who are released from detention and do not have family or friends in the U.S. Participants receive case management, legal referrals, room and board, and education and job search assistance so they begin to put their lives back together while waiting for their immigration case to be resolved.

*For more information, contact Countryside's liaison to ICDI (and ICDI Executive Director) Melanie Schikore, [icdi.mschikore@outlook.com](mailto:icdi.mschikore@outlook.com) (708) 297-4065*