In October 2018, Chancellor Bennett – also known as recording artist Chance the Rapper – announced that his next philanthropic endeavor would tackle the stigma of seeking mental health services. His foundation, SocialWorks, put the word out that six agencies providing mental health services in Chicago would be awarded $100,000 each through the My State of Mind (MSOM) initiative.

Justin Cunningham, SocialWorks’ founding Executive Director, says that three years ago, MSOM arose out of Chance’s engagement with the community—West and South Side neighborhoods battling the “Chiraq” stigma. “We love Chicago and Chicagoans and we saw what we’ve seen growing up in Chicago, people with a lot of promise being overlooked, and we took action. Many of us have been touched by a friend or loved one suffering from mental illness, and many of us have experienced our own mental health concerns. We believe it’s time to rethink access for consumers and support for our practitioners and make honesty admirable.”

My State of Mind aims to unify the mental health community, increase the access and visibility of service providers, and make it admirable to be honest with yourself and others. My State of Mind will launch a new platform—an online, go-to resource for Chicagoans to learn about and access mental health services near them.
In December 2019 at their celebrated fundraiser, A Night at the Museum, Chance revealed the six lucky MSOM grant winners, including Sinai Health System's Under the Rainbow (UTR) program—an outpatient therapy program for youth, adolescents and their families. The agency has invested in Sinai's children and teens for the next three years. Their unrestricted dollars will ensure that services for youth, like therapeutic and safe summer camps, will remain available. Nearly 85% of youth in the Under the Rainbow program suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, while 100% have experienced community violence.

Nick Heineman, MSOM Project Manager, explains how Sinai was chosen, “When selecting our grant winners, it was important to seek out behavioral health organizations that had connected with diverse communities and offered meaningful care that was both clinically and non-clinically motivated. Selecting those who offered a broad range of access points into their programming—for both consumers and practitioners—was something we strongly considered. Our intent was to provide grants to organizations that unify the broader mental health community. The final grant winners were then personally selected by SocialWorks’ Founder Chance the Rapper. We can’t wait to see the immense impact Sinai’s behavioral health programs will continue to make in Chicago.”

Dr. Greg Staszko, manager of Under the Rainbow outpatient behavioral health programs, says that the admiration is mutual, “We are very excited about this partnership with SocialWorks. They’re creative and innovative about addressing the mental health needs of youth in Chicago. This funding will allow us to continue to provide experiences for our community “outside of the box” of traditional therapy, like creating safe spaces for families to connect and heal together, free from the stigmas that are often attached to traditional mental health services.”

“We hope that the My State of Mind Guidebook provides not only Chicago, but the entire country, with a platform where access to Mental Health services is a comfortable and empowering experience.”
Nick Heineman, Project Manager, My State of Mind
In just four months, donors responded to a challenge grant made by an anonymous donor who gifted the first $1 million. This was the quickest mini-campaign in Sinai’s recent history, and Sinai Health System is so grateful to all of those who helped make the vision a reality.

Celebration is in order, because this generosity will improve the experience of Mount Sinai Hospital’s inpatients, 75% of whom come through the Emergency Department doors. With the project completed, Sinai planned a dedication ceremony for the newly remodeled and upgraded ambulance bay and emergency department entrance at Mount Sinai Hospital for March. Unfortunately, the situation with the COVID-19 pandemic became too threatening to proceed, as the city of Chicago went on lockdown.

The incredible news is that the Emergency Department renovations could not have been more well-timed. The completed ambulance bay was used for Rapid Mobile Assessment trailers as an extension to the Emergency Department. Though not COVID-19 testing sites, the RMA units provided segregated medical areas for screening, evaluation, triage and education of potential COVID-19 patients.

It is only thanks to incredible partners and supporters, that Sinai was able to complete this renovation in advance of the serious onset of COVID-19, and had greater capacity to provide emergency care and services when they were most needed.

In June 2020, the bay opened to ambulance and emergency vehicle business. The SHS board members, leadership and caregivers are enthusiastic about thanking the fantastic supporters of this project in a safe and celebratory way soon.
A fleet of new wheelchairs and Infant Panda Warmers were just a small part of Sinai’s Campaign for 100 – a campaign in celebration of Sinai Health System’s 100th birthday, which culminated at the end of 2019. This effort raised $1.3M for 100 critical equipment and programmatic needs throughout the system.

“We are so grateful for the generous donations that helped fund new wheelchairs for Schwab,” says Amy Dhanani, Schwab Rehabilitation Hospital Director of Patient Therapy. “Our in-house wheelchair fleet at Schwab has not been replenished in a number of years. Chairs were in disrepair and many chairs were so old that manufacturers have discontinued them. Many were in such poor condition that patients and caregivers could hardly propel them.”

Gifts of all sizes have made an immense impact on our patients’ lives—from scanners to baby warmers; EKG machines to new parent kits; motorized hospital beds and more – the campaign was a huge success and means the world to our caregivers. Dhanani notes that, “The news of this donation was a delight for all to hear – wheelchairs are an amazing gift that will benefit patients and caregivers for years to come. Thank you to our donors.”
DONOR SPOTLIGHT: ADAM TEITELBAUM

We caught up with the president of Friends of Sinai Children (FOSC), Adam Teitelbaum, who is an ADP Major Accounts, District Manager. If his name sounds familiar, it’s because he is the son of Sinai President and CEO Karen Teitelbaum. He provided Sinai Connections with a brief Q & A about his motivations to become involved in the auxiliary board.

What inspired you to get involved in philanthropy at such a young age?

Growing up, philanthropy was always a big part of my life. From volunteering at nursing homes to coaching youth soccer, I always felt motivated to help those around me.

What motivates you to encourage other young people to get involved?

I strongly believe that anyone can have an impact on our communities. Especially as young professionals get older, this gives them a completely different perspective to not only help out but apply the experience to their daily lives. It’s important for our generation to understand that we need to create more outreach to the people around us who might not have as many resources as us. Whether that be health care or schooling, everyone deserves an equal opportunity.

What are you most proud of regarding the FOSC Board as a whole?

While I am always proud of the equipment and donations we provide to Sinai, I am most appreciative of our tenure. We have multiple board members who have been serving for over 5 years. That speaks volumes to our culture and dedication by a group of selfless individuals who share the same values. They make hosting events and meetings exciting!

FOSC Signature Event

Each year, FOSC hosts Sweet Home Chicago, a popular fundraiser amongst young professionals whose tickets sell out every time. Since its founding, Friends of Sinai Children has raised more than $500,000, resulting in the purchase of critical equipment for Sinai.
The Office of Development  
Sinai Health System  
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It’s not over. Sinai Health System is at the frontline of the COVID-19 pandemic. At Mount Sinai and Holy Cross Hospitals our staffed ICU beds are at 100% capacity.

We are a critical safety net for Chicago’s poorest communities experiencing this crisis.

During the COVID-19 crisis, Sinai carries between $8 and $12M in revenue loss each and every month.

For a safety net health care system, where 90% of our patients are covered by Medicaid, Medicare, or are uninsured, this is no small number. A gift to the Sinai COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund is truly and fundamentally a life-saving gift.

Your generosity will help ensure that our caregivers, patients, and their families are safe. We couldn’t do it without you.

Thank you.

sinaio.org/content/sinai-online-donation-form