

PRC History

People's Resource Center is a grassroots organization in DuPage County, Illinois, founded in 1975 by community members looking to help neighbors who were struggling with hunger. Inspired by social justice heroes like Martin Luther King, Jr., Dorothy Day and Jane Addams, founders Dorothy McIntyre, Father Tom Peyton and a group of volunteers from the Religious Education Community sought to do more than start a local food pantry. They wanted to build an organization across DuPage County that would help people overcome the isolating experience of poverty in the suburbs and build community that crossed socioeconomic divisions. They rented a small house on a quiet street in Wheaton, Illinois, asked their friends to bring by sacks of groceries, and opened the doors. That first year they shared food with 125 local families.

Today, People's Resource Center (PRC) operates one of the largest food pantry programs in the western Chicago suburbs, providing nearly 32,000 low-income DuPage County residents with basic human services and relationship-based educational programs to create paths to self-sufficiency.

People's Resource Center has offered leadership for the community's response to emerging needs by supporting the development of innovative programs, including: Establishing a countywide food pantry in 1975 to respond to hunger in DuPage County, and developing the DuPage P.A.D.S. sheltering program (now an independent organization) in 1985 to address large-scale homelessness.

The People's Resource Center also established the DuPage Community Clinic (now operating independently) in 1988 to meet the health needs of uninsured residents, followed by a Dental Clinic in 1996 to meet the need for free dental services.

The computer access and training programming program was established in 1997 to address the "digital divide" and literacy classes were started in 1997 to teach basic reading skills, ESL, and offer assistance with GED and citizenship tests. PRC's Art Program was also established in 1997 to encourage artistic self-expression for low-income women.

The jobs program was created in 2006 to address the need for job assistance mentors to serve low-income, entry level workers.

A second location in Southeast DuPage was established to respond to the growing need and changing demographics in DuPage County following the recession in 2008.