

CARS OF HOPE

ANNUAL REPORT 2025



cars of hope

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--------------------------------|----|
| LETTER FROM THE FOUNDER | 3 |
| OUR COMMITMENT | 4 |
| 2025 HIGHLIGHTS | 5 |
| CLIENT SPOTLIGHT | 6 |
| VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT | 7 |
| PROGRAM CAR DONATIONS | 8 |
| FUNDRAISING FUN | 9 |
| CELEBRATING 15 YEARS | 10 |
| SPONSORS & PARTNERS | 11 |
| BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND TEAM | 12 |
| CONTACT US | 13 |

LETTER FROM THE FOUNDER

As I look back on 2025, I am filled with gratitude and hope. Cars of Hope was founded with a simple but powerful mission — to restore independence and dignity to families in need through reliable transportation. This year, we celebrate 15 years of seeing that mission come to life in extraordinary ways!

Thanks to the generosity of each of you -- our donors, sponsors, partners, and volunteers --we achieved record growth with more cars donated, more families served, and more lives transformed.

Each gifted vehicle is more than transportation; it is a bridge to opportunity—to employment, education, and stability.

62%

Increase in # of received cars

140%

Increase in formal community
engagement

53%

Expansion of our
fundraising base



**ROMAS
POVILONIS**

Founder, Exective Director

Our Vision 2030 goal of donating 30+ cars annually is well within reach, and we are committed to stewarding every resource wisely to maximize impact.

To every person who has prayed, volunteered, donated, or spread the word — thank you. Your compassion fuels this mission. Together, we are driving hope forward, one car and one family at a time.

With heartfelt appreciation,

Romas Povilonis
Founder & Executive Director
Cars of Hope

OUR COMMITMENT

MISSION

Our mission is to dramatically reduce poverty in our communities by providing reliable automobiles to under-resourced, deserving families,



VISION

Our Vision 2030: To donate 30+ cars annually in the Chicagoland area by 2030

VALUES

- Do what is right at all times
- Always be learning and improving
- Lead with service and humility
- Treat everyone with dignity and respect

2025 HIGHLIGHTS

- Cars of Hope entered their 15 years of operation.
- We received ninety-four donated cars.
- To meet safety, reliability and affordability standards, we repaired and gifted five of those cars to Chicagoland area families in need at an average of \$7,600 each.
- We set our 2026 goal to gift twelve or more cars to needy families.
- We expanded our community outreach through email/phone to donors, sponsors, partners, and volunteers
- Endurance joined us as a corporate sponsor
- We gained 12 new partners to join us in our mission.



- We initiated an email marketing program for ongoing communication
- We participated in two successful fundraisers--The Big Raise Rally 2025 (June) and a Murder Mystery (November)
- We planned and executed a community celebration of our 15 years



Number of donated cars received

94



Number of gifted program cars

5



Average Program Car Repair Cost

\$7,600

CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

Imagine if your car broke down and you didn't have the money to fix it. You need money to fix it, but now you don't have transportation to work to earn what you need to fix it. Now imagine you are also a single mother in the middle of caring for ill loved ones living across town.

That's the dilemma Angel Rosa faced in 2025, when her church, Zion Covenant International, connected her with Cars of Hope. It was obvious that not only was Angel in need, but a having a car would actually change her life.

Cars of Hope gifted Angel with one of our program cars, a 2010 Toyota Camry. At our 15-year celebration, Angel addressed the crowd and introduced her son. In tears, Angel thanked Cars of Hope for their generosity and care.

"I had prayed for help, and the blessing from Cars of Hope came right on time," she said.

Receiving the car made her a more prompt employee, gave her back precious time to spend in service to others, and enabled her to be a more confident provider for her family.



She also praised the Cars of Hope team for how they took care of the donation.

"From the very beginning of meeting them, not only did they reach out but they checked on you. They check on your car, they check on you as a person. I can tell you it changed my life," she said.

Angel is just one of the five special stories that ended with Cars of Hope's valuable donation of one of our program cars in 2025.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Bruce Bohrer has volunteered with Cars of Hope for four years. He is a retired higher education administrator and spent the last 30 years of his professional career at Harper College in Palatine Illinois, serving as a counselor and Director of Admissions. At Cars of Hope, Bruce outlines the process of obtaining a car to those in need of transportation and collects information about donated vehicles. He also coordinates the car retrieval process, arranging our towing partner's pick-ups and drop-offs at our Naperville location.

Upon retiring, Bruce worked a few “fun” jobs and ushered at Wrigley Field for nine seasons. He wrote about his experiences in a book called *Best Seat in the House*.

“We all are aware that accessible transportation in the Chicago metro area is a major obstacle for many who are struggling to get by,” says Bruce. “What I don’t think we realize, though, is the extent and severity of this problem. There are so many who need reliable transportation to survive. The opportunity to help some of them is such a rewarding experience!”



BRUCE BOHRER

Program Administrator
& Board Member



BRUCE JONES

SEO Consultant

Bruce Jones has been a Cars of Hope volunteer for the past four years. He began working with us when he lived in Naperville and met Romas in a Naperville Area Chamber of Commerce mastermind group.

Bruce is the Founder of several Search Engine Optimization (SEO) companies and has 18+ years of experience helping companies optimize their online presence.

He is now retired and living near the beaches in the Philippines but still finds time to help Cars of Hope in weekly Zoom meetings. Bruce currently coaches the Cars of Hope team on how to improve our keyword ranking, our website content, and backlinks to optimize our engagement and make our website easier to find for people searching to donate cars. This contribution has been instrumental in improving all our website metrics, leading to improvements in car and cash donations.

Bruce has done a wonderful job and is integral to the success of our mission online.

PROGRAM CAR DONATIONS

● = ●
cars of hope



Zion Covenant International



Safe Families For Children



Safe Families For Children



Safe Families For Children



Mutual Ground

FUNDRAISING FUN

The Big Raise Rally Fundraiser

2025 saw Cars of Hope participate in two fundraisers with the help of our new partner, The Big Raise. The first took place in June and was a Road Rally where we were represented by two teams that raised money for Cars of Hope for each mile driven.



“Who Killed the Fundraiser” Murder Mystery



In November, our corporate sponsors and supporters gathered at the Danada House in Wheaton to identify “Who Killed the Fundraiser.” The hilarious, interactive, murder mystery show included a delicious dinner and a silent auction. Everyone was a suspect and used clues to identify the murderer.

And the victim? It was the fundraiser himself, our good friend, Jon Anderson of The Big Raise. Thanks to Jon and his team for a terrific event and a wonderful fundraiser!

[VIEW THE WRAPUP VIDEO](#)



CELEBRATING 15 YEARS

OCTOBER 2, 2025

Dignitaries, friends, and partners of Cars of Hope celebrated the 15th anniversary of Cars of Hope with a festive ribbon-cutting and party. The event took place in the parking lot of the Yellow Box Community Christian Church in Naperville on October 2. We're grateful to Endurance, our sponsor for the event.



Representatives from the Naperville Chamber of Commerce were on hand for the official ribbon-cutting, as was Naperville Mayor Scott Wehrli. Romas spoke of the organization's founding, and one of our clients, a single mother, shared her story and the difference we had made in her life.

Our wonderful partners exhibited and many even donated door prizes! The event was a beautiful way to kick off our next 15 years. Cheers to everyone who showed up to make this event a big success!

SEE THE WRAPUP VIDEO!



THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS AND PARTNERS!

Sponsors

ENDURANCE 

CATERPILLAR®   **Republic Bank**



EATON

Partners

The Big Raise
Ride Assist Naperville
National Auto Body Council/
Recycled Rides
Bruce Jones SEO Consultant

Repair Partners

Chevrolet of Naperville
Christian Brothers Automotive
DJs Truck & Auto, Inc.
Discount Tires
Doc Motor Works
59 Auto Repair
JJD Garage
Gerald Subaru of Naperville
Owl Creation
Wayside Cross Ministries
Willow Creek Care Center

Transport Partners

Green Machine Towing

Social Service Agency Partners

- BFEE (Batavia Foundation for Education Excellence)
- Beds Plus
- Caring Network
- Community Christian Church
- Evangelical Child & Family Agency
- Fellowship Housing
- Grace Church of DuPage
- Hesed House
- Joliet Disability Resource Ctr.
- Kan Win
- Kendall County Health Dept.
- Lazarus House
- Lutheran Church Charities
- Mutual Ground
- Nativity House
- Sarah's Inn
- Safe Families for Children
- Viator House
- Village Church of Barrington
- West Suburban Food Pantry
- Will County Ctr. for Community Concerns
- World Relief
- Zion Covenant Church

THANKS TO OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS & TEAM MEMBERS

Our Board of Directors and Team Members met quarterly in 2025 to discuss the direction of Cars of Hope. We are grateful to our volunteer leadership for their insight and support on how to continue making our organization as strong as possible. Not Pictured Below: Jay Amick (Board Member), Girija Bhapkar, Richard Han, Anju Susan James, Dimple Shah, Shari Wenzel (Team Members).



CONTACT US



We invite you to join us on our mission!

- Donate a car
- Donate in-kind or cash
- Volunteer with us to help manage car donations, repair and refurbish cars, or with the administration of the organization

Contact us today!

Phone

224-216-CARS (2277)

Email

info@carsofhope.org

Website

carsofhope.org

Address

1635 Emerson Lane
Naperville, IL 60540

