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## **HABILITATIVE SYSTEMS, INC. CELEBRATES 48 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY**

CHICAGO — Habilitative Systems, Inc. (HSI), a Historically Black Community-Based Organization (HBCBO), commemorated its 48th anniversary with a powerful celebration honoring community leaders and reflecting on nearly five decades of providing behavioral health and human services throughout Chicago's West and South Sides.

The event, which brought together supporters, stakeholders, and residents for an afternoon of fellowship, recognition, and gratitude, was held at Clair Christian United Methodist Church—the organization's founding home, underscoring HSI's enduring foundation in faith and community.

HSI President and CEO Donald J. Dew highlighted the historical significance of the church, noting that during the Great Migration many African Americans who moved north settled on Chicago's South Side, where support programs emerged to help those in need. In contrast, those who settled on the West Side had far fewer resources and limited access to services.

Recognizing this gap, social workers and members from Clair Christian United Methodist Church took action, establishing Habilitative Systems, Inc. in 1978 to provide critical support to specific underserved populations on Chicago's West Side. HSI now operates more than 40 programs and has expanded to 18 sites on Chicago's West and South sides.

As part of the 48<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration, HSI recognized several individuals whose leadership and service have made a lasting impact:

- **Rev. Dale Kelley**, Former Senior Pastor of Clair Christian United Methodist Church and founder of The Learning Gym
- **Apostle Dr. Carolyn L. Vessel**, President and CEO of I AM ABLE Center for Family Development
- **Cmdr. Johnny E. Tate, Jr.**, Commander of the 011th District of the Chicago Police Department
- **Audrey Dunford**, Court Coordinator for the North Lawndale Restorative Justice Community Court
- **Nathaniel Gaither**, Director of the Restorative Justice Hub at Lawndale Christian Legal Center
- **Apriel Campbell**, Founder of The Ivy Group
- **Kanaan Deer**, Government and Community Relations Liaison at Superior Ambulance

“Over the past 48 years, HSI has remained steadfast in its mission to empower individuals and strengthen communities,” said Dew. “This year's honorees reflect the spirit of service, leadership, and faith that continues to guide our work and shape our future.”

The anniversary celebration highlighted HSI's ongoing commitment to addressing critical needs through behavioral health and human services, including support for individuals experiencing mental illness, substance use disorders, disabilities, and trauma, as well as services for children, families, and seniors. For more information, visit [www.habilitative.org](http://www.habilitative.org).

### **About Habilitative Systems, Inc. (HSI)**

For 48 years, Habilitative Systems, Inc., a Historically Black Community-Based Organization (HBCBO) rooted in the faith-based community, has provided high-quality behavioral health and human services to individuals and families across the Chicago metropolitan area. Serving communities through 18 underserved locations, HSI addresses critical needs including mental health, disabilities, substance use disorders, senior services, and trauma-informed care for children and families.