



2019-2020 Impact Report

July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020

▶▶▶ A Letter From Our Leaders

Dear CASL Friends,

Prior to 2020, CASL was a rapidly evolving social service agency that was constantly improving the way we fulfill our community's ever-changing needs. And by the time the COVID-19 pandemic ensued and much of the world shut down, we were already strategizing and executing a sustainable future that ensured more growth and opportunity for our clients, our staff, and our community.

Thanks to the relentless generosity of supporters, CASL is the very definition of pivoting and a role model for countless other organizations throughout the Chicago area aspiring to be as data-informed and data-driven. Thanks to you, our community members are persevering despite countless hardships.

Qiaolin was struggling with language barriers and schoolwork even before the COVID-19 pandemic. She and her family moved to the United States from China in 2017. Qiaolin's parents sought out CASL for multiple programs and services to help establish themselves in their new homeland and assimilate into American culture. Nevertheless, she struggled to keep up with the pace of English language spoken at school, and her grades—as well as her confidence—suffered. When the pandemic closed school doors, Qiaolin's struggles increased exponentially.

Sitting in front of a computer for ten hours per school day became a challenge complicated by Qiaolin's difficulty understanding the English language spoken through devices. She turned to CASL's Youth Development Program for high school students to receive the help she desperately needed, remotely as well as safely in person. CASL tutors helped her navigate AP Calculus and Physics, improve her SAT score, secure an apprenticeship and internship with After School Matters, prepare for college placement tests, and apply for financial aid and college entry. Qiaolin is set for a successful transition from high school to college—and during a time of immense global adversity.

It goes without saying that CASL's Fiscal Year 2019-2020 was very different from previous years. Yet, because of supporters like you, community members like Qiaolin and her family are able to succeed despite all the challenges they face. Please enjoy the following Impact Report and visit CASL's channel at [YouTube.com/mediaCASL](https://www.youtube.com/mediaCASL) to see the many ways CASL has persevered: honoring our supporters, leading our community, engaging our seniors, educating our children, uplifting those in need, and much more.

Yours In Service,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James Mark Jr." in a cursive style.

James Mark Jr.
CASL Board of Directors Chair



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Luu" in a cursive style.

Paul Luu
CASL Chief Executive Officer

▶▶▶ CASL Leadership

as of April 1, 2021

Staff Leadership

Paul Luu, Chief Executive Officer

Jered Pruitt, Chief Operating Officer

Jamie Ewing, Director of Program Services

John Gerba, Director of Accounting & Finance

Krystan Cannon, Manager, Human Resources

Winnie Lam, Manager, Senior Wellness & Independence

Kim Leung, Managing Attorney, Legal Services

Kathleen Pesek, Manager, Children & Youth Development

Amy Wong, Manager, Community & Family Well-being

Jenny Wong, Manager, Accounting

Pingjing Zou, Manager, Center for Social Impact

Board of Directors

James Mark Jr., Chair

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John Czyzycki, Treasurer

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Associate Board

Richard Leung, Chair

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Darren Chung

Nicole Mark

Tony Peng

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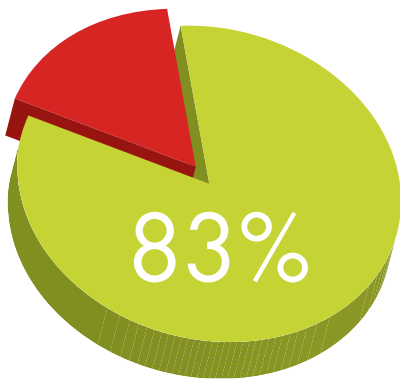
▶▶▶ Children and Youth Development

CASL's early childhood and youth programs support the social, emotional, and academic development of children from birth through high school. Programs lay the foundation for academic success and support families to help them assimilate and thrive.

- **Ages 0-3:** Developmentally-appropriate group activities for babies, toddlers, and their caregivers.
- **Home Visiting:** Developmentally-appropriate activities and guidance for families.
- **Early Childhood Education:** Three full-day classrooms accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and awarded the Gold Standard of Quality by state-sponsored ExceleRate.
- **After-School K-12:** Tutoring, mentoring, community engagement, creative expression, social/emotional development and wellness.

100%

of graduating high-schoolers entered colleges and universities thanks to CASL investing in their success.



of middle school students showed an increase in positive peer relations through pre/post testing.



of K-5th grade students completed their homework every day thanks to the vigilance of CASL teachers.

Program	Children Served
Babies and Toddlers ages 0 to 3	62
Early Childhood ages 3 to 5	40
After-School K to 5th Grade	57
After-School 6th to 8th Grade	34
After-School 9th to 12th Grade	48

Sheng's Success Story...

Three-year-old Sheng avoided eye contact with other people and only repeated what others said during his first enrollment appointment at CASL. This immediately caught the attention of our Family Support Specialist. Likewise, Sheng's teachers at school had noticed that he was not able to follow instructions. His language ability was limited to repeating the exact words said by others.

Sheng was diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Frightened and confused, Sheng's parents turned to CASL and our Family Support Specialist for culturally sensitive assistance. The Family Support Specialist, who worked with the family throughout their journey, accompanied Sheng and his parents to Sheng's new school to communicate with his new teachers. Sheng's parents are very grateful to CASL for helping navigate services for children with autism. Now, Sheng's parents have confidence in nurturing their son and Sheng is engaged in learning environments tailored to his needs.



Photos without masks were taken in 2019.

Senior Wellness and Independence

CASL's senior programs support the mental and physical health of aging adults in the community—encouraging them to live healthy, happy, independent, and engaged lives.

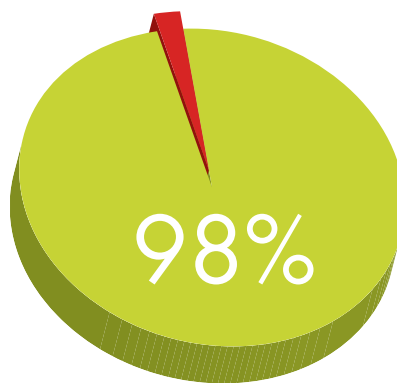
- **Adult Day Service (ADS):** Seniors participate in enrichment activities at a full-day community center to enhance their physical, mental, and social well-being.
- **In-Home Service (INH):** Trained staff help seniors live independently in their own homes—cooking, cleaning, and providing companionship.
- **Pine Tree Senior Council:** Also known as *Songnian Zhongxin*, Pine Tree Senior Council is a self-driven social and civic engagement group that empowers seniors to remain active and engaged in the community through group activities, hobbies, and advocacy.

100%

of seniors had no symptoms of depression after evidence-based program intervention—thanks to CASL's Adult Day Service and In-Home Service staff.



of **Adult Day Service** clients had **NO falls** thanks to the attentiveness of CASL's caring staff.



of **In-Home Service** clients had **NO falls** thanks to constant support from CASL's homecare aides.

Program	Seniors Served
Adult Day Service	128
In-Home Service	744
Pine Tree Senior Council	470
Senior Building Case Management	110

Mrs. Cheung's Success Story...

Mrs. Cheung's husband, who has Alzheimer's, had a stroke. While she was caring for him, their son passed away in China. Mrs. Cheung was so overcome with grief and stress that she stopped attending CASL's Adult Day Service program. Depressed, she avoided any kind of socialization in the community and focused on her mourning.

CASL staff intervened with regular counseling phone calls to Mrs. Cheung. After receiving much encouragement over the course of a month, Mrs. Cheung returned to CASL's Adult Day Service program and her many friends there. Once reengaged with her circle of friends and all her favorite cultural activities, Mrs. Cheung felt immensely comforted by the social and emotional support system that CASL and the community provided her. She so deeply appreciated the support for her and her husband that she sponsored a party for all of Adult Day Service to show her gratitude.



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▶▶▶ Community and Family Well-Being

CASL's well-being programs support individual and family wellness through a variety of critical social services and advocacy projects.

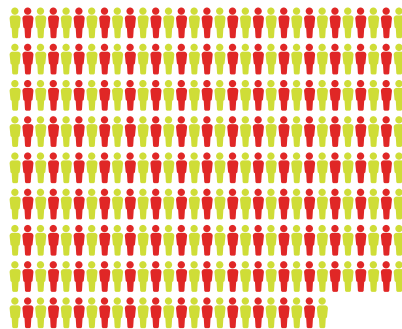
- **Wellness and Social Services:** Healthcare coordination and navigation connects clients with culturally sensitive physicians. CASL's Community Resource Center at Mercy Hospital and Medical Center supports newly discharged patients who need further services.
- **Basic and Civic Benefits:** Programs such as Medicaid, WIC, SNAP, and LIHEAP ensure that members of our community have their basic needs met. Community members have guidance with Social Security and other civic benefits to which they have a right.
- **Adult Education:** Classes improve students' reading, writing, listening and speaking skills in English and encourage community engagement. Vocational English Language (VEL) training focuses on placement into high-growth industries.
- **Citizenship and Immigration:** Assistance through education, application and naturalization support, and English Language (EL) classes.

80%

of clients who took the U.S. naturalization test passed and are now citizens thanks to CASL's support and education throughout their journey.



119 clients received empowering legal assistance, with 13 clients being legally represented.



273 clients in need of healthcare providers were connected with culturally-sensitive physicians.

Program	Clients Served
Wellness and Social Services	1,200
Citizenship and Immigration	420
Legal Services	190

Mr. Yang's Success Story...

Mr. Yang lost his job and was seeking the aid of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). His caseworker contacted CASL for help because Mr. Yang had a disability and did not communicate well with other people. CASL staff patiently assisted Mr. Yang through the caseworker in order to secure his SNAP benefits.

A CASL counselor worked tirelessly with Mr. Yang's caseworker for nearly a month to collect the necessary documentation and complete the SNAP application. In addition, the CASL counselor helped Mr. Yang apply for aid from the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Mr. Yang also needed help with finding a new job. The CASL counselor connected him with the Midwest Asian Health Association because they could best assist individuals with disabilities who are seeking employment. It was a challenge and then an accomplishment for CASL staff to remotely serve all of Mr. Yang's needs during the pandemic.



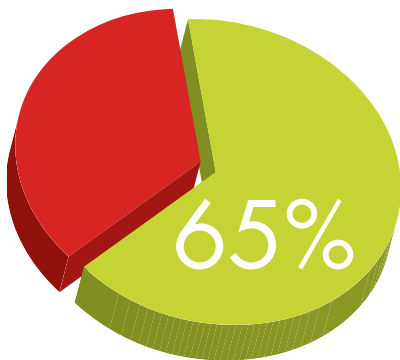
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▶▶▶ Employment and Financial Empowerment

CASL's employment and financial programs strengthen our entire community by enhancing the economic power and financial stability of its residents through job training and placement, housing counseling, and financial education.

- **Adult Employment:** Counseling for low-income adults with multiple barriers.
- **Senior Employment:** Securing part-time jobs for unemployed seniors with limited prospects.
- **Culinary Training:** Western cooking classes with vocational English Language tutoring provides skills for entry-level positions with major hotels, institutions, and restaurants.
- **Housing and Financial Education:** Financial stability through education on budgeting, banking, credit, identity theft, loans, financial planning, preliminary and post-purchase home-buying, foreclosure prevention and intervention, rental counseling, more.

71% of Culinary Training Program graduates were placed in full-time jobs with living wages and benefits.



of jobseekers who enrolled in CASL's Adult Employment Program were placed in jobs.



59 families successfully purchased homes through CASL's HUD-certified housing counseling program.

Program	Clients Served
Adult Employment	345
Culinary Training Program	34
Senior Employment	51
Housing & Financial Education	1,143

Ms. Zhao's Success Story...

Ms. Zhao was a struggling single parent. She had a delinquency on her mortgage and was facing foreclosure. A language barrier combined with a high mortgage rate, medical bills, and a recent divorce had led to financial hardship, bad credit, and debts in collection status.

Ms. Zhao came to CASL seeking assistance with credit management and foreclosure prevention. Knowledgeable Chinese-speaking staff were able to help her divide debts with her ex-spouse, negotiate her payments with collectors, apply for forbearance on her mortgage, and set up a savings plan. Staff also referred Ms. Zhao to another CASL department to help her renew her Medicaid Card and properly cover medical expenses. After about 6 months, Ms. Zhao was financially capable of paying off her debts in collection and paying her mortgage on time.



▶▶▶ Center for Social Impact

CASL's Center for Social Impact (CSI) promotes social impact in our communities by advancing data-driven solutions and equitable policy initiatives aimed at engaging and supporting CASL's departments and programs. We use cutting-edge technologies to collect and review data at the micro- and macro-levels of social service. Powered by Salesforce, our agency-wide case management system offer us the ability to be at the forefront of best practices in assessment and evaluation methods. The result is a daily dose of real-time information that defines the needs of our community, shows us how to improve our work, helps our staff make informed decisions, demonstrates program impact through dashboards, and ultimately shapes social policy.

CASL's Center for Social Impact implements Social Determinants of Health assessments to better understand our clients' everyday needs, identify barriers to health equity, and define solutions to eliminate these barriers. CSI also implements World Health Organization Quality of Life assessments to better understand both the extent and frequency at which clients are affected by their cultural, social, and environmental contexts.

▶▶▶ Legal Services

Legal Services is now a separate department! CASL partners with Chicago Volunteer Legal Services (CVLS) and volunteer attorneys, law students, translators, and interpreters to provide legal assistance to clients on a range of issues. Volunteering attorneys are welcome at any stage of their career and can participate at varying levels of commitment. Volunteering law students have the opportunity to work under the supervision and mentorship of an attorney. Chinese-speaking translators and interpreters have the opportunity to work with the Chinese immigrant community.

Eligibility for legal services is based on income and residency. CASL's Legal Services can help on a variety of matters, including:

- Consumer Debt
- Discrimination
- Family
- Foreclosure
- Guardianship
- Immigration
- Landlord/Tenant
- Title and Property Claims
- Wills and Advance Directives

▶▶▶ Financial Statements and Acknowledgments

VISIT US ONLINE!

- **CASL's 2019-2020 Financial Audit:** <http://bit.ly/CASL-FY20-audit>
- **Individual and Organization Acknowledgments:** CASLservice.org/Acknowledgments



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