

**Attention: Assignment desk, city desk, photo editors**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**SOLO SENIORS FIND A PLACE TO CELEBRATE THANKSGIVING**

November 26, 2015, CHICAGO. “Imagine spending most days with no place to go, no one to call, and nothing to look forward to. Now imagine being alone on Thanksgiving,” says Simone Mitchell-Peterson, CEO of Little Brothers – Friends of the Elderly. Isolated seniors who faced spending the holiday alone without the support of family or friends received special invitations to Little Brothers’ Thanksgiving Day celebrations on the city’s North, South, and West sides. “Our goal was to make sure seniors felt loved and cared for by fellow Chicagoans. You don’t have to be a relative to provide support and share a meal.”

Little Brothers hosted three parties on Thanksgiving Day, utilizing 100 volunteers to transport and accompany lonely and isolated seniors. Nearly 300 Chicago seniors attended the celebrations, with an additional 250 homebound elders, and those in nursing homes, receiving a meal and a volunteer visit. “As I get older, I can really understand why companionship is so important, especially for seniors,” says Robin Tillotson, Board Chair at Little Brothers and Regional Director for Chicago’s Department of Family Support Services – Senior Services. “It’s great that elders have a good meal, but what they really come out for is the chance to reconnect with the world.”

The Thanksgiving meals were held at St. Andrew’s Greek Orthodox Church on the North Side, De LaSalle Institute on the South Side, and at Little Brothers – Friends of the Elderly in the west loop.

“Everyone should have a place to go on Thanksgiving where they can share in the celebration. It’s uplifting to see how many people are willing to give up a significant part of their holiday to make Thanksgiving meaningful for our elders,” said Mitchell-Peterson.

Little Brothers – Friends of the Elderly provides friendship to seniors in Chicago who are 70 and older and aging without support from family or friends. All services and programs are free to seniors, regardless of income. The nonprofit organization has operated in Chicago since 1959, and serves nearly 1,200 seniors. ###