



2018 Annual Report

GIVING OLD BIKES
NEW HOMES

The logo for Working Bikes is a circular emblem with a scalloped border. Inside the circle, the words 'WORKING' and 'BIKES' are written in a curved path. In the center is a gear with a map of the African continent inside it.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT WORKING BIKES

A Message from Our Executive Director 3

About Working Bikes 4

2018 By the Numbers 5

Who We Are 6

Where Our Bikes Come From 8

GLOBAL IMPACT

International Donations 10

Postcards From Fiji 12

An Update from Bwindi 13

LOCAL DONATIONS

Local Donations 14

Cycle of Power & Cycle of Peace 16

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Youth Work & Community Events 18

VOLUNTEERS

Brandon's Bike Shop 20

Volunteer Stories 22

GET INVOLVED

Support our work 24

Volunteer with us 25

A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In our 19th year of operations, Working Bikes continued the astounding work that inspires over 12,000 bicycle donations annually. Our international impact grew as thousands more unused bicycles found new value as vital tools of mobility in Africa, Central America, and the South Pacific. Locally, thousands of our neighbors received sustainable two-wheeled transportation thanks to the wrenching of hundreds of Working Bikes volunteers and our dedicated staff. Numbers in the thousands are staggering, as the hundreds of astonished first-time [Open House Chicago](#) visitors reminded us, their jaws dropping while touring a warehouse of nearly 6,000 bikes on three floors and learning of our work beyond the warehouse walls.



But for me, looking past the big numbers gets at the real power of Working Bikes. What other organization could see a volunteer from 2014 [establish new international partnerships years later](#)? Where else could one be included in a WhatsApp group text with [women mechanics in Uganda](#) about needed tools and bike shop design? Where else could a mechanic provide no-cost repairs to a formerly incarcerated man who, after his wrongful conviction was overturned, received a [Cycle of Power bicycle](#) and put so many miles on it in two months that he needed a tune-up?

Working Bikes is a special place - a hub for thousands of profound connections and empowering experiences, all enabled by the value we recognize and potential we create in each donated bicycle. We hope this report gives a glimpse of our collective efforts over the last year. Thank you to everyone who contributed in 2018, we look forward to your support in making our 20th year the most impactful yet.

Trevor Clarke,
Executive Director

ABOUT WORKING BIKES

Working Bikes is a 501(c)(3) organization founded in 1999 by a group of like-minded folks dedicated to recycling bikes, fostering bike culture, and helping international and local bike projects. Since its inception, Working Bikes has recovered tens of thousands of bikes from Chicago and the Midwest. More than 70,000 bikes have been given new life across our region and the world, empowering tens of thousands of individuals to access resources in their communities.

Our Mission
Working Bikes gives donated bicycles new life by redistributing them as tools of empowerment in local & global communities



2018 BY THE NUMBERS

In 2018, Working Bikes reached new partners and donors, strengthened long-standing relationships with stakeholders and community members, and continued to empower folks by getting them on bikes! Some of our highlights from this year include:



12,632 BIKES COLLECTED



6,420 BIKES SHIPPED TO INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS



1,053 BIKES DONATED LOCALLY



326 INDIVIDUAL VOLUNTEERS & OVER 60 VOLUNTEER GROUPS



1,655 BIKES SOLD



COUNTLESS PIZZAS & TUBS OF HUMMUS

A portion of the bikes that we collect become “organ donors.” Volunteers remove parts from bicycles that we are unable to fully repair, making sure we recycle as much of the donation as we can. Once we have salvaged all usable parts & components, the damaged bikes are scrapped.

WHO WE ARE

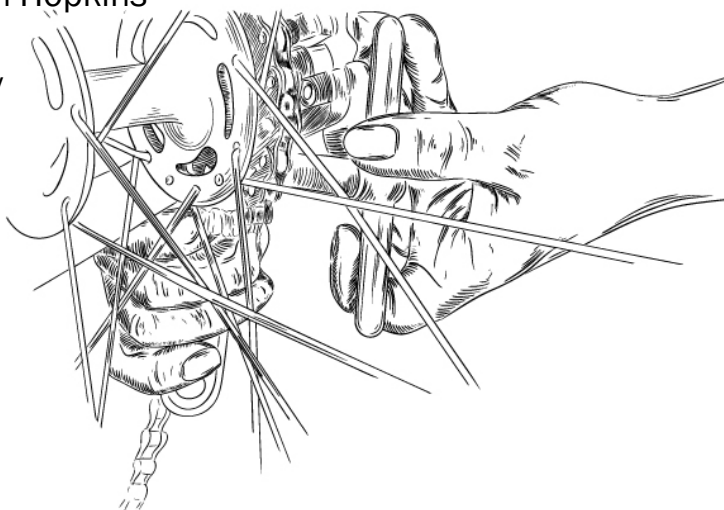
STAFF - END OF 2018

Aaron Brown, Senior Mechanic
Al Schorsch, Service & Retail Mechanic
Alan Lloyd, Production Mechanic
bk Elmore, Warehouse Wrangler
Brian Vargas, Service & Retail Mechanic
Devon Snyder, Community Engagement Manager
John Clark, Production Mechanic
Josh Korby, Bicycle Shop Manager
Mikey Young, Teaching Mechanic
Steve Irwin, Bookkeeper/Tube Doctor
Trevor Clarke, Executive Director



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Phil Kaplan, President
Amy Little, Vice President
Jim Lindsey, Treasurer
Dave Gorman, Secretary
Lee Ravenscroft, Founder & President Emeritus
Alderman Brian Hopkins
Jose Muñoz
Regina Murphy



ROLLING OUT

In 2018, five of Working Bikes' finest shifted gears to find new adventures. **Cesar Meza**, our former youth program stand-out who became our Service Department Manager headed to Mexico City for college, but only after attending a Festival of Cakes in his honor.



Andrew Bermudez and **Maja Perez**, Volunteer Coordinators and more, found new trails in Chicago and California. **Patrick Tivnan**, service mechanic and international wrencher, is now patrolling the streets of Milwaukee.



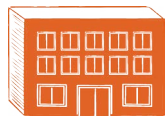
Finally, our long-time General Manager **Paul Fitzgerald**, pictured here with Andrew and Maja at his new home turf, will be cutting trails of his own as Executive Director of **Friends of Big Marsh**.

ROLLING IN

Hopping on the saddle on Team WB, we recruited **Devon Snyder** from the cycling haven of Portland, OR, to try out the streets of Chicago as WB's Community Engagement Manager. Former WB board member, general counsel, and volunteer mechanic **Trevor Clarke** is riding on as WB's first Executive Director. Volunteer of the early oughts, **Josh Korby**, returned to the team first as a mechanic and then as our Bicycle Shop Manager.

WHERE OUR BIKES COME FROM

We are so grateful to the countless individuals who support our mission through **bike donations**. We work with individuals, businesses, city and transit organizations, academic institutions, property managers, and other bike shops on collections. These donors help keep Working Bikes awash in bikes, parts, and accessories. Props also to our dedicated donation drop-off sites; they make it possible for folks throughout the region to donate a bike to us at a location that is convenient for them.



WB is contacted by an individual, organization, or business. Many of our bikes come from annual Earth Month recycling events that take place throughout the spring & summer.



Once the bikes reach our warehouse, they have 3 paths



Prepped for shipment to one of our international partners.



Refurbished by WB volunteers to be donated locally.



Refurbished by WB mechanics to be sold on our sales floor.



If bikes cannot be refurbished, volunteers salvage any parts that could be used to repair local donation bikes.

We are so fortunate to have Rich Carriel as a Working Bikes drop-off site. Rich has been collecting bikes in the Orlando Park area for almost 20 years. In 2018, Rich helped us collect 138 bikes!

- 7 Mile Cycles
- All Spoked Up
- B&G Cyclery
- Beverly Bike and Ski Bicycles Etc.
- Bike Connection
- Carol & Brian Boehm
- Christopher Smit
- Cycle Smithy
- Dave Gorman
- Debbie's Florist & Gift
- Dorian Breuer
- Eric Wood
- Gary VanDeVusse
- George Garner Cyclery
- Glenview Cycle
- GoodSpeed Cycles
- Green Bay Cycles
- J&R Cycle
- Kevin Cornett
- Kozy's Cyclery Southside
- Main Street Outfitter
- Mill Race Cyclery
- Performance Bicycle
- Phil Kaplan
- Plank Road Cyclery
- REI
- Real Life Weddings
- Rich Carriel
- RRB Cycles
- Spin Doctor Cyclewerks
- Trek Bicycle Store
- Village CycleSport
- Wheel & Sprocket
- The Wheel Thing Bike Shop
- Wheel Werks

THE PLACES YOU'LL GO!

In the summer of 2018, we partnered with the Glenview Farmers Market to hold several bike drives. Lauren heard about one of these drives through our website and decided it was time to donate some of her bikes. She had just completed a cross-country bike trip and wanted to see the beloved rides go to a good cause! Lee Ravenscroft loaded the three bikes in the container bound for our partners at the **Village Bike Project** in Ghana. There, they were donated to Mustafa, Yakuba, and Dauda.



The three students all live in the Sahkpalgu community, and have to travel between 7-15km (about 4-10 miles) to get to their respective schools. The boys all love science and math, but find it difficult to concentrate at school after walking several hours in the early morning. They used to miss classes because of their long commute! Thanks to Lauren and the efforts of WB volunteers and staff, Mustafa, Yakuba, and Dauda are now able to get to school quickly and safely. Over 5,000 miles away from their first "home," Lauren's bikes have found new homes in Ghana and will continue to create new opportunities for the three students and their families.



Mustafa, age 14



Yakuba, age 12



Dauda, age 17

GLOBAL IMPACT

In 2018, Working Bikes shipped 6,420 bikes to **international partners**. These partner organizations use bikes from WB as raw materials, investing labor to repair each bicycle before distributing to their communities. The bikes provide access to employment, education, markets, and other resources - not to mention recreation for the rider! By sending repairable bikes, our partners can focus on job training and community economic development.

This year, Working Bikes volunteers loaded **14 containers**. We also developed new partnerships, sending bikes to projects in Fiji & Honduras.



INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS

CESTA
EL SALVADOR

Ministry of Youth & Sports
FIJI

Bici-Tec
GUATEMALA

Village Bicycle Project
GHANA

Nuestros Hermanos Pequeños
HONDURAS

The Al Numeira Bike Shop
(Abercrombie & Kent Philanthropy)
JORDAN

Bikes for Lesotho
LESOTHO

Africycle
MALAWI

Mfuwe Women's Bike Society
(Abercrombie & Kent Philanthropy)
ZAMBIA

Chipego Bike Shop
(Abercrombie & Kent Philanthropy)
ZAMBIA



Abercrombie & Kent Philanthropy has helped launch a number of **international bike shop projects**, including the Al Numeira Bike Shop, Mfuwe Women's Bike Society, & Chipego Bike Shop. These shops are run by local women, trained in bike mechanics & small business practice. AKP is a longtime partner of ours, & has helped us coordinate countless shipments!

POSTCARD FROM FIJI

Last year, a WB volunteer helped coordinate our first shipment to the Pacific Islands! Ruth Rosas was in Fiji on assignment with the Peace Corps. An avid cyclist, Ruth wanted to learn more about the island's cycling community. She discovered **Burning Rock Triathlon and Cycling Club**. Founded in 2016, the Club sought to improve conditions for cyclists and triathletes. Starting with only four members, the Club quickly grew by reaching out to at-risk youth, girls, and women. By the end of 2017, there were 48 members of Burning Rock - all Fijians - making it the biggest cycling club in Fiji. The founders realized they needed more bikes to support their members, along with tools to teach basic bike mechanics. Unfortunately for the club, most Fijians lack access to affordable bikes or bike tools. That's when Ruth reached out to us! Thanks to Ruth's coordination and some financial support from the Fijian Government, WB was able to send a container of 438 bikes. All of this was made possible because a Working Bikes volunteer saw a need and knew we could fulfill that need!



POSTCARD FROM BWINDI

In the winter of 2017, WB mechanic Patrick Tivnan **visited the Bwindi Women Bicycle Enterprise** in southwest Uganda. The shop has been recently converted from a shipping container, one of several that was sent from the Working Bikes warehouse earlier that fall. **Patrick worked with a number of women**, many of whom had little prior mechanical experience. After 8 weeks, five "graduates" were selected to serve as the official staff members of the Bwindi Women Bicycle Enterprise. Beth, Bridgette, Penlope, Proscovia, and Scovia, would manage and operate the co-op, repairing bicycles and passing on their newfound skills.

Now, a year later, the shop has six female owners and operators. They still have over 600 bikes to repair and sell, and have saved about \$9,000, which will help pay the shipping cost for another container from WB! The women are true entrepreneurs, and have even started to develop a bike touring business!



The shop in Bwindi is the only other shop in the world that sports the Working Bikes logo!

LOCAL DONATIONS

In addition to shipping bicycles to our partners abroad, **Working Bikes coordinates with local organizations to get bicycles in the hands of those in our community who might not otherwise be able to afford them.** In 2018, we distributed 1,053 bikes through our Cycle of Peace (children and youth) and Cycle of Power (adults) local donation programs. Skilled volunteers repaired the majority of donated bikes. Many of the groups and service providers we work with become dedicated stakeholders. We partner with these stakeholders on bike rides, holiday bike giveaways, and community celebrations.



RECIPIENT ORGANIZATIONS

This past year, Working Bikes donated bikes to hundreds of social service organizations, like-minded bike projects, congregations, and community groups. Below are some highlights from our 2018 Cycle of Power and Cycle of Peace donation programs.

- Bikes N' Roses
- Blackstone Bicycle Works
- Broadway Youth Center
- Carter Temple
- Chicago Help Initiative
- Edward Hines, Jr. VA Hospital
- Esperanza Health Centers
- Free Bikes for Kidz Madison (FB4K)
- Girls in the Game
- Mercy Housing
- New Directions Sober Living
- North Lawndale Boxing League
- North Lawndale Employment Network
- Refugee & Immigrant Community Services
- Roots Redwood Organization
- World Relief Chicago

In February, WB Board members Phil Kaplan & Lee Ravenscroft drove 150 miles to Madison, WI. There, they delivered 210 kids' bikes to FB4K. The bikes went towards the organization's annual 1,000 bike giveaway.



CYCLE OF POWER HIGHLIGHT

In April 2018, Congregation Hakafa contacted Working Bikes with a Cycle of Power bike referral for Maekele Saleh. Maekele, a refugee from Eritrea, had moved to Chicago earlier in the year and was in need of a better way to get around the city. Working Bikes Board President, Phil Kaplan, did the honors of dropping off a bike for Maekele. At 5'9", Maekele was unfortunately too tall for the Schwinn Phil had



with him that day. But Maekele was so excited out the bike that he kept it until we could deliver something more suited for his height. For two weeks, he used the little Schwinn to commute from West Rogers Park to his job in Wrigleyville. He was able to cut his commute from a 40 minute bus and "L" ride to a brisk 20 minute bike ride! By the time Phil brought him a properly sized Trek, he was an avid bike commuter!

Through our Cycle of Power program, Maekele received a means of convenient, self-sufficient, and sustainable transportation. This is a critical part of the work we do at Working Bikes - helping people be more independent, empowered, and connected to their community. We can't wait to see where Maekele's Trek takes him next!

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM WORKING BIKES!

In December 2018, Working Bikes donated over 300 bikes to youth throughout Chicagoland. 78 of these bikes went to Carter Temple Church, located in Chatham. The kids received their bikes during an annual Breakfast with Santa Claus event. This was the second time we worked with the congregation, and our WB crew was happy to play the role of Santa's elves! Carter Temple also received helmets to go with the bikes.



Other 2018 holiday Cycle of Peace recipients include Apostolic Assembly Church, Maristella, Roots Redwood Organization, and 1st AME Church in Gary, Indiana. This year we were happy to make the holidays a little brighter for hundreds of kids and their families!



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

At Working Bikes, we know that a bicycle can be so much more than a way of getting around. Bikes are how we engage with our community. Whether it's students with After School Matters or Riot Fest concert goers, our crew loves being out and about, connecting with people through bikes! In 2018, Working Bikes staff and volunteers attended 87 tabling events, bike drives, and block parties. In the summer, we hosted ten After School Matters students in the second year of our [Bikes Youth Apprenticeship program](#). Over the course of the six-week program, students learned about basic bike mechanics and safe city riding techniques. In the fall, 15 students from Benito Juarez High School joined us in the workshop for a Mechanics Apprenticeship. Students dedicated 80 hours to bike mechanics. One student, Gloria Reza, returned as an intern to help manage the program after completing the apprenticeship last year. These community relationships help our impact grow!



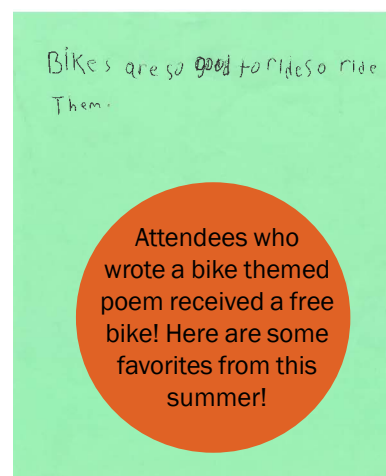
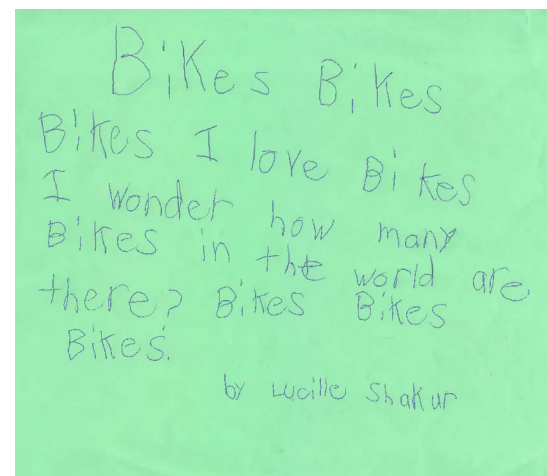
OUTREACH & EVENTS

Summer is festival season in Chicago, and chances are you can catch Working Bikes out celebrating! We love to table at neighborhood festivals, school block parties, music festivals, and Earth Day events, just to name a few.



These events are a great way for us to reach a broader network of people, and to support our community through engaging activities or with a donation of some bikes!

In July, Working Bikes joined community groups at the [Poetry Foundation Block Party](#) in the Austin neighborhood. Working Bikes volunteers fixed sixteen Cycle of Peace youth donation bicycles in advance of the event and sent a delegation to talk to the attendees out at the Austin Town Hall. While there, volunteers conducted the first ever VeloPoetics event, collecting bicycle-related poems from the young poets, who all received bicycles!





Brandon's Bike Shop is where members of our volunteer "Kitchen Crew" repair bikes for local donation and prep bikes for our

international shipments. The space stands as a dedication to Brandon Bernier, a former Working Bikes volunteer who passed away in 2013. Brandon's is where the magic happens: every year, hundreds of volunteers come through to lend a hand, donate a snack, or share a story. Our community of volunteers make it all possible!

In 2018, Working Bikes hosted drop-in sessions in Brandon's five times a week, including our Thursday night Women Trans Femme session. These walk-in sessions are open to everyone - no experience required! Volunteers work together on repairs, with more experienced mechanics passing on skills to those just getting started.

In 2018, the Volunteer Committee elected to change its name to the Working Bikes "Kitchen Crew, inspired by the tradition of referring to community bike shops as "kitchens." It also helps that many of our volunteers are excellent cooks, bakers, & brewers!



VOLUNTEER GROUPS

We host group volunteer sessions for corporations, schools, and community-based organizations. These groups come from all over the Midwest (and the world!). In 2018, Brandon's welcomed over 60 groups to repair, strip, and prep bikes. These groups also supported us outside the shop, by helping raise awareness of our work, collecting bikes, and donating funds. Want to learn about volunteer opportunities for your company or organization? Contact us at volunteer@workingbikes.org.



- Benito Juarez High School
- Bernard Zell Anshe Emet Day School
- Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association
- Bowen High School
- buildOn
- Chicago Cares
- Chicago Stamping Plant
- Church of Saint John
- DePaul University
- Eagle Scout
- Equipment Depot
- Evanston Township High School
- Finkl Elementary
- Fourth Presbyterian Church
- Gage Park High School
- Gems World Academy
- Google
- Groupon
- Illinois State University
- Indiana University Student Foundation
- Kellogg School of Management
- Latino Greek Council, UIC
- LinkedIn
- Mercy Home for Boys & Girls
- Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago
- Mount Carmel High School
- National Health Corps Chicago
- Nielsen
- Northwestern U.
- Old St. Mary's School
- Public Health Institute of Metropolitan Chicago
- Radio Flyer
- Scarce
- Solorio Bike Club (Solorio Academy High School)
- Speer Academy
- SRAM
- Tilden High School
- VML Chicago
- Walter Payton College Prep
- Watershed School
- Whitney Young Magnet High School
- Woodlands Academy of the Sacred Heart
- World Bicycle Relief
- WorldChicago
- Youth Crossroads, Inc
- Youth Guidance

VOLUNTEER SNAPSHOT: MICHAEL “MURPH” O’LEARY

Michael “Murphy” O’Leary first heard of WB during a Critical Mass ride. A collector of “junk bikes” and tinkerer by nature, Michael would stop by the shop when it was



located on Taylor to look through the selection of hidden gems. With two jobs and a family, Michael wasn’t able to find the time to volunteer with us until January, 2016. Not too long after his first visit, Michael got in a bicycle accident that resulted in him going on disability leave. After he gave himself time to heal, he dove right back into volunteering. He says the accident “pushed him in a new direction.” Murph has been a regular in Brandon’s ever since, and enjoys honing his skills. He still finds some things tricky - cantilever brakes are not his friend - but he knows that if he keeps coming he can continue to branch out and learn new things. He especially loves fixing up old Schwinn’s. Eventually, Michael would love to learn how to build his own custom frame to showoff at Critical Mass. He’s glad that he has more time now to volunteer and give back, knowing that the bikes he works on are not only being saved from a landfill, but also finding new owners. Now, Murph is passing on his skills to other volunteers.



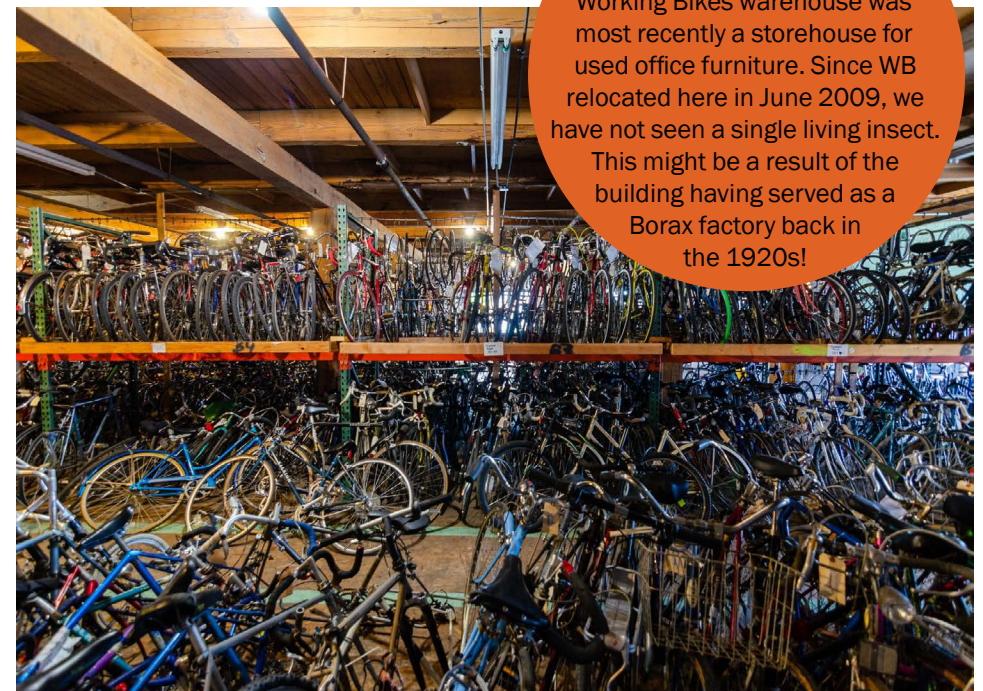
Inspired by Michael’s story? [Volunteer with us!](#) Visit www.workingbikes.org/get-involved to learn more.

OPEN HOUSE CHICAGO

On a weekend in October, Working Bikes participated in [Open House Chicago](#), an annual festival organized by the Chicago Architecture Center. All throughout the day, members of the public were welcomed to tour the WB warehouse and learn a little bit of history about the space. Dozens of Working Bikes volunteers acted as official docents, leading attendees through the maze of bikes. This was a great opportunity for volunteers to take center stage, sharing personal stories about their experience in Brandon’s, a time they helped out at a shipping party, and a fun time they tabled for Working Bikes during a community event.

Even though it was our first time participating in the festival, we still packed the house! **749** people came through the Working Bikes warehouse that weekend!

Originally two buildings built at the turn of the 20th century, the Working Bikes warehouse was most recently a storehouse for used office furniture. Since WB relocated here in June 2009, we have not seen a single living insect. This might be a result of the building having served as a Borax factory back in the 1920s!



SUPPORT OUR WORK!

DONATE BIKES



Each Year, Working Bikes is able to empower folks in our local and international communities because of the generosity of our bike donors. Bikes are essential to the work we do! You can help us grow our impact in 2019 by making a donation of an adult bike in repairable condition, a gently used kids' bike, or bike parts and accessories. [Visit our website for more information.](#)



DONATE MONEY



Although bicycles are the bread and butter of what we do, we greatly appreciate individuals and organizations that are able to support our work with a cash gift. [You can make a financial donation today by going to our website.](#)



GET INVOLVED!

DONATE TIME



We wouldn't exist without our community of volunteers. Whether wrenching in Brandon's Bike Shop, packing a shipping container, tabling at an outreach event, or coordinating a bike drive, volunteers help us fulfill our mission and expand our programs. We would love to have you join our Kitchen Crew!



We host weekly drop-in volunteer sessions, including an evening for women, trans, femme volunteers. We don't require any prior bike mechanic experience - just enthusiasm and a desire to learn! [To learn more about volunteer sessions and all the other ways you can get involved.](#)





From all over Chicagoland, to our warehouse in Little Village,
to dozens of shops around the world and
thousands of individuals locally.
From your to-do list, to their first ride.

**Working Bikes collects bicycles & accessories.
Donate a bike today to make an impact in your
local community and abroad!**

CONTACT US

2434 S. Western Avenue Chicago, IL 60608
www.workingbikes.org | info@workingbikes.org
773-847-5440



www.facebook.com/workingbikes



[@workingbikes](https://www.instagram.com/workingbikes)



[@WorkingBikes](https://twitter.com/WorkingBikes)