



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS TO PRESENT YOUTH-FOCUSED COMMUNITY PLANS AT
MY CHI. MY FUTURE. CITYWIDE PARTNER MEETING**

CHICAGO — Today, Mayor Brandon Johnson and the City of Chicago Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS) invited Chicago leaders, youth-serving stakeholders and young people to the Harold Washington Library Center Winter Garden for the December My CHI. My Future. (MCMF) citywide partners meeting. This meeting provides an opportunity to hear from the MCMF Community Anchor Organizations about their efforts to convene stakeholder networks and develop community plans focused on meeting the needs of youth in their communities. Organizations representing 15 regions across the city are presenting data identified through a community needs assessment and outline strategies to address opportunity gaps for young people.

“My CHI. My Future. is more than just a program—it’s a promise to our city’s young people,” said **Mayor Brandon Johnson**. “By bringing together community leaders, stakeholders and youth from across 15 regions, we are continuing our commitment to create meaningful opportunities for every child. This collaborative effort represents our belief that when we invest in our youth, we invest in the future of our entire city.”

Mayor Johnson invested \$14.2 million across the MCMF initiative through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) as part of Mayor Johnson’s [Road to Recovery Plan](#). Since 2023, the Community Anchor Organizations program has funded 15 delegate agencies to serve as Community Anchors, bringing together community stakeholders dedicated to youth development. The goal of the program is to create strategies that connect young people of all ages to engaging and meaningful out-of-school time programs in each of the 15 MCMF Community Strategy Regions. These community areas have been disproportionately impacted by pandemic-related harms and ranked high on the Chicago Community Vulnerability Index (CCVI) and/or the UIC Chicago Community Area Economic Hardship Index.

“Today’s meeting represents the culmination of nearly two years of work creating collaborative, data-driven strategies for addressing the needs of youth in 15 communities



across Chicago,” said **Brandie Knazze, Department of Family and Support Services Commissioner.** “DFSS is proud to support the Community Anchor Organizations in fulfilling the MCMF mission of connecting every young person in Chicago to a variety of rich, engaging, safe and youth-centered out-of-school time experiences.”

The following table highlights the 15 Community Anchor Organizations and the MCMF Community Strategy Regions they represent:

Community Anchor Organization	Community Strategy Region
Greater Auburn Gresham Development Corp.	Auburn Gresham
Project Exploration	Austin
Holy Cross Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish	Back of the Yards / New City
Northwest Side Housing Center	Belmont-Cragin
Brighton Park Neighborhood Council	Brighton Park
Inner-City Muslim Action Network	Chicago Lawn
CircEsteem	Gage Park
Youth Guidance	Garfield Park (East and West Garfield Park)
Think Outside Da Block	Greater Englewood Area (Englewood and West Englewood)
Gary Comer Youth Center	Greater Grand Crossing
Phalanx Family Services	Greater Roseland Area (Roseland, Pullman, West Pullman)
The Puerto Rican Cultural Center	Humboldt Park
Beyond the Ball	Little Village / South Lawndale
UCAN	North Lawndale
Lost Boyz Inc.	South Shore

The Community Anchor Organizations’ work included hosting monthly convenings of local youth-serving partners; the creation of a community plan designed to enact solutions to gaps in youth programming as identified through data collected by the anchor organizations; and hosting events, such as opportunity fairs, to connect youth and families with programming within their local community.

“The MCMF Anchor Organizations initiative gave us the opportunity to bring together the many great organizations who serve young people in Little Village,” shared **Jackie Covarrubias, Project Manager for Beyond the Ball.** “We have been able to create a network that not only provides professional development and training opportunities to



direct service youth workers, but more importantly, we've created a support system for youth workers to share thoughts, insights, questions, challenges, solutions, and more. This has led to partnerships, referrals, collaborations and sharing of resources, which ultimately helps to ensure that the programs and services offered to the youth of Little Village are high quality and genuinely community driven."

"Working with youth and community stakeholders to develop the Greater Roseland My CHI. My Future. plan has been a powerful experience. Their voices shaped every aspect of the initiative, from addressing homeless and mental health topics and creating spaces for connection and support., we've witnessed young leaders step up, driving a plan that reflects the true needs and aspirations of the Roseland community," said **Pauline Sylvain-Lewis, MCMF Liaison for Phalanx Family Services.**

The final MCMF citywide meeting of the year is on December 17, 2024, from 4-6pm at the Harold Washington Library Center Winter Garden. While registration is now closed to the public, members of the press are invited to attend.

About the Chicago Department of Family and Support Services

Working with community partners, the Department of Family and Support Services connects Chicago residents and families to resources that build stability, support their well-being, and empower them to thrive. For more information about services and opportunities offered through DFSS, please visit: www.cityofchicago.org/fss.

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