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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 18, 2024

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ONE SUMMER CHICAGO EMPLOYS NEARLY 28,000 YOUTH IN SUMMER 2024

This summer's youth engagement marks a 39 percent increase in youth employment since Mayor Brandon Johnson took office.

CHICAGO – This week, Mayor Brandon Johnson announced that 27,793 young people were employed through the One Summer Chicago (OSC) program during the summer of 2024, representing a 12 percent increase from the previous year, and a 39 percent increase since May 2023. OSC is a youth employment program offered in partnership with local businesses, community organizations, and city agencies (departments, sister agencies, and alderman offices) to provide youth ages 14 to 24 with paid work experiences for six weeks during the summer.

The Chicago Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS) alone hired 17,554 young people that completed 2.93 million hours of work this summer and paid out \$41 million in wages.

“By employing nearly 28,000 young people and putting money directly into their pockets, we have laid a strong foundation for their success,” said **Mayor Brandon Johnson**. “This program is more than just a summer job—it is a cornerstone of our administration's vision for Chicago and a testament to what we can achieve together. As we move forward, we will continue our commitment to expanding these opportunities and forging stronger partnerships to open doors for our youth to achieve their dreams, while ensuring they have the tools and financial resources to thrive year-round.”

OSC offers opportunities across multiple entities:

- **Department of Family and Support Services** manages the overall program with direct support from the Mayor's Office of Education, Youth and Human Services and funds 50 community organizations across three program models:



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- **Chicago Youth Service Corps** employs youth ages 16-24 year-round through programming focused on leadership development and local/civic engagement.
- **Chicagobility** employs youth ages 14-15 through project-based learning and skill-building experiences.
- **Summer Youth Employment Program** employs youth ages 16-24 through job placement or training programs to provide work experiences and develop skills for career pathways.

Of the participants engaged in this summer's programs, OSC saw an increase of the following from 2023:

- 12% identified English as a Second Language
- 6% were experiencing homelessness
- 5% were in foster care
- 6% were justice-involved.

The top 10 communities with the highest hires include three Westside and six Southside areas, with Austin leading the way at 1,672 hires. The City of Chicago is proud to have employed 183 young people directly, 70 of whom through the Laborer's Trainees Program.

"Our youth are capable leaders today, and it is vital that we invest in their potential by recognizing the value of their time, effort, and well-being," said **Jen Johnson, Deputy Mayor of Education, Youth, and Human Services (EDYHS)**. "This significant increase in employment through One Summer Chicago underscores our commitment to creating opportunities that empower young people, promote skill development, and acknowledge their valuable contributions. Together, we are laying the groundwork for a brighter future for our city."

In partnership with World Business Chicago (WBC), OSC expanded its impact with 70 participants ages 16-18. They enjoyed two days of workplace tours where they could engage with employers in the manufacturing, creative, and hospitality industries while receiving a stipend. WBC and the team at EDYHS launched an advisory council to increase business engagement and attract more companies to participate in the Youth Employment Initiative. Members include city entities, workforce organizations and businesses.



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Youth Employment Initiative:

A multifaceted citywide movement that aims to provide Chicagoans ages 14-24 with pathways to careers through a continuum of paid opportunities that offer career awareness, exploration, preparation and development experiences.

The My CHI. My Future. (MCMF) Safe Spaces for Youth program includes both community events—called “Kickbacks”—and year-round youth employment. Kickback events strengthen healthy community ecosystems for young people (ages 13-19) and their families across the city by providing enriching, community-based out-of-school time activities.

The youth employment component provides youth (ages 16-24) an opportunity to gain work experience and increase self-efficacy while planning and implementing community events throughout the year. During the Summer of 2024, the Safe Spaces Program employed 190 youth through MCMF and hosted over 100 Kickback events this summer, which were attended by over 9,500 community members.

Mayor's Youth Commission:

The Johnson Administration continued its work with the Mayor’s Youth Commission (ages 14-19), welcoming its 6th expanded 40-member cohort for 2024-2025. The 5th cohort concluded its work this summer, hosting the Youth Leader Activation Summit after a two-year hiatus. The first monthly meeting of the expanded Youth Commission took place on September 21, 2024, at City Hall.

The 2024-2025 Mayor's Youth Commission has four Working Groups — Community Safety, Education, Neighborhood Development, and Public Health — to examine specific issues youth face in their efforts to prosper. Through their learning and research, each of these Working Groups will present four innovative New Ideas to address specific youth needs in the City of Chicago.

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