



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 20, 2013

CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

**MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES PRIVATE SECTOR COALITION TO RAISE \$50 MILLION TO
EXPAND SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMS THAT SERVE AT-RISK YOUTH ACROSS CHICAGO**

*Massive Investment Will Significantly Increase Proven and Innovative Programs Across the City;
Issues Call to Chicago's Business Sector to Get Involved*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today announced an unprecedented coalition from Chicago's business and philanthropic communities has been mobilized as a committee to support successful community-based programs that serve at-risk youth. The effort, which is being spearheaded by Allstate Chief Executive Officer Tom Wilson and Loop Capital Chief Executive Officer Jim Reynolds, is another piece of the administration's efforts to combat neighborhood violence.

"There are proven and successful programs in our city that are creating a brighter future for some of our most vulnerable children. It is time for our city to come together and invest in them," said Mayor Emanuel. "The greatest thing we can do as a city is give our children the support they need to build a successful life, and I will work tirelessly to provide safe alternatives that reduce the risk of our kids getting involved with drugs, gangs, and violence."

The Action Committee will include several leading executives and philanthropists, as well as an advisory committee of community leaders, researchers and criminal justice practitioners who will ensure that input is received from residents in neighborhoods across the city.

Specifically, the business community challenge will support mentoring, intervention and conflict resolution programs, provide seed funding for new programs, and work to rebuild community supports in neighborhoods most impacted by violence. The committee's four responsibilities include:

- Identify proven and innovative programs and expand them;
- Support community-based efforts to sustain these and other programs;
- Monitor program performance and ability of groups to implement them effectively; and
- Engage residents in neighborhoods throughout Chicago to get involved as donors, volunteers and thought partners.

The committee will measure program success in terms of its impact on individual behavior and school achievement levels, as well as cost-effectiveness and reduction in violent crime across the city.

“As a life-long Chicagoan, born and raised on the south side, I know all too well the impact that violence has on our communities and how it limits our children’s future,” said Reynolds. “The Mayor has issued a strong call for all of us to come together in reducing violence in our neighborhoods and we expect the business community to play an important and active role in answering that call. I am honored to be spearheading this charge with Tom and we will work incessantly to provide a safe and bright future for our children.”

Wilson announced today that Allstate will provide \$5 million over five years to help launch a community wide effort to reduce violent crime in Chicago. “We need to all come together to take a stand and improve our neighborhoods,” Wilson said. “This is an opportunity for businesses, non-profits, foundations and individuals to make a difference and save lives. United together, we will make Chicago safer and more vibrant, so our children will prosper and build a brighter future for all of us.”

Today’s challenge comes one day after the Mayor announced an expansion of Windy City Hoops, an innovative year-round basketball league that starts in March. The City’s program is aimed at enhancing neighborhood safety, engaging at-risk young adults, and reducing illegal gang activity in targeted neighborhoods. Last summer, 3,000 kids registered in Park District teen basketball leagues. Over the past year, the Park district has received close to 15,000 total registrations in its basketball programs - including open gym, leagues, instructional programs, and camps.

It also comes a week after the City invested a total of \$4.5 million to ensure an additional 5,500 at-risk youth have access to critical programs like “Becoming A Man” (BAM), which is run by the Youth Guidance organization. This and other similar programs have demonstrated results such as reducing the number of failing grades and arrests, increasing graduation rates, and keeping youth from joining gangs. BAM participants saw a 10 percent increase in graduation rates, a reduction in failing grades by 37 percent and a decrease in violent crime arrests by 44 percent.

#