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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 14, 2015

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MAYOR EMANUEL AND ILLINOIS MENTORING PARTNERSHIP LAUNCH MAYOR'S MENTORING CHALLENGE

Initiative Seeks 1,000 New Mentors for Chicago Youth over the Next Two Years; Corporate Partners Commit 250 Mentors as Down Payment on Goal

Mayor Emanuel and the Illinois Mentoring Partnership today announced the Mayor's Mentoring Challenge (MMC), a two-year initiative seeking 1,000 residents to serve as new mentors for Chicago's youth. This call to action will pair at-risk youth across the city with a mentor to provide enrichment and guidance opportunities that are critical to each and every child's development and success. Mayor Emanuel is urging Chicagoans to volunteer their time, values, knowledge, or a skill – to ensure all of our youth have the tools and support they need to succeed and reach their full potential.

"We as a city can only reach our full potential when every child in every neighborhood has an opportunity to reach theirs, and we all have a role to play," said Mayor Emanuel. "This is why I'm calling on 1,000 new mentors to step up to the plate for our youth, so that together we can make sure that all of our children are afforded the connections and opportunities that that each of us deserves."

This initiative is the next step in a series of efforts by Mayor Emanuel to encourage residents citywide to take an active role in serving at-risk youth across the city, following calls to action during his second inaugural address and the launch of the revamped [One Good Deed Chicago](#) website this summer. MMC builds on the success of existing mentoring programs across Chicago—like those in the network of the Illinois Mentoring Partnership (IMP)—which have for years provided youth opportunities in every neighborhood, but that are still seeking additional mentors to reach many more youth in need of these opportunities.

"IMP is excited to partner with Mayor Emanuel on the MMC initiative, which comes at very a critical time when Chicago's mentoring programs need qualified adult mentors, and when our kids and teens need our support more than ever," said Margie Morris, Executive Director at IMP. "Participating in the Mayor's Mentoring Challenge is a great way that Chicagoans can support our youth and create a stronger future for our city."

In support of MMC, the following corporate partners have committed approximately 250 employees to serve as new mentors beginning this fall - Accenture, CDW, Comcast/NBCUniversal, ComEd, Exelon, JPMorgan Chase, Manpower and Northern Trust. These mentors may serve

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independently through a nonprofit organization or host mentees onsite at the business location in collaboration with an existing mentoring program.

MMC will help partnering nonprofit organizations identify and match new mentors with elementary through high school-aged students, volunteering on a weekly or monthly basis. Programs and hours vary by site and organization, allowing mentors to choose a plan that will work with their schedules. Programs that are currently in need of a high number of mentors this fall include Big Brothers Big Sisters, Chicago Lights, SPARK, and iMentor, a national mentoring program launching in two CPS schools this fall. The full list of partnering organizations can be found [HERE](#) and [HERE](#), and interested mentors can also sign up to volunteer through these websites.

A 2014 national survey commissioned by MENTOR demonstrates that one in three young people report that they do not have even one trusted adult to whom they can turn for support and guidance. When a lack of guidance from a reliable adult is compounded by issues of poverty or a lack of community supports, the likelihood of young people engaging in risky behaviors intensifies. By connecting youth with caring adults, Mayor Emanuel hopes to turn the tide and allow the City's youth to reach their potential.

Since taking office, Mayor Emanuel has demonstrated the difference that mentoring can make in the lives of at-risk youth through investments in youth programs like Becoming a Man (B.A.M.), Match Tutoring and Working on Womanhood (W.O.W.). These programs have grown to serve 3,250 adolescents and made a difference in empowering the City's youth through a proven increase in graduation rates, reduction in failing grades and reduction in arrests. This year alone, Mayor Emanuel is providing 215,000 opportunities through the City of Chicago Summer of Learning and Earning and 24,000 jobs under One Summer Chicago—the largest youth job program in the city's history.

For more information or to sign up for the Mayor's Mentoring Challenge, please visit: www.ilmentoring.org or www.onegooddeedchicago.org.

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