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**MAYOR EMANUEL AND SECRETARY OF THE NAVY RAY MABUS HIGHLIGHT SUCCESS  
OF STEM PROGRAM CRITICAL MASS IN CHICAGO**

*Five year, \$2 million program equipping students*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus today visited Michele Clark High School to observe the Critical MASS program. Critical MASS is a groundbreaking collaboration in STEM education for the students of Chicago centered on project-based learning, made possible by a \$2 million, five-year grant from the Department of the Navy's Office of Naval Research to the City of Chicago.

Through this grant, the Chicago Public Schools and City Colleges of Chicago will implement a STEM enrichment program, stretching from ninth grade through the sophomore year in college, aimed at better equipping Chicago's youth with the STEM skills necessary to pursue STEM degrees and high-wage careers after completing the program.

Each year, a new cohort of students will be selected from the seven schools that currently constitute the program, ultimately benefiting up to 1,000 students over the course of the five-year project. Each new cohort will stay together throughout high school and participate in summer enrichment programs, year-round mentoring, in-classroom enrichment, work study/internship programs and college-level, dual degree computer science/cyber-focused classes developed by Chicago City Colleges.

"The Critical MASS project is an exciting initiative that is bringing STEM education to many students and creating innovative opportunities for our promising young people," said Mayor Emanuel. "I'm thankful to the Navy and Secretary Mabus for seeing in Chicago an

opportunity to create a new model and I look forward to working to increase access to this program in Chicago.”

The United States and specifically the Department of the Navy under Ray Mabus’s leadership are intent on maintaining a world class STEM workforce. The Navy and Marine Corps have a rich history of cultivating their own STEM talent and have built a continuum of experiences beginning in grades K-12 through graduate school aimed at strengthening its STEM talent pool. The Critical MASS project will provide the first of its kind STEM education pilot in a City school district.

“This partnership with the City of Chicago will allow Chicago educators to work alongside Naval STEM experts to transform the way students will learn,” said Secretary Mabus. “A highly-trained STEM-capable workforce allows the Navy and Marine Corps to run our ships, fly our planes and design the next generation of war-fighting tools.”

The program will deliver Naval programs, such as SeaPerch and Technovation, alongside Naval-relevant classroom modules and internship opportunities, allowing students to move through a continuum of Naval relevant programs, exposing them to Naval careers, subject matter, and research opportunities. This unique pilot project will test the overall impact of implementing a continuous and integrated series of STEM education and enrichment activities in an urban setting and ultimately provide a STEM education model for the nation.

The STEM initiative is part of a larger drive to bring quality school options that equip students with 21st Century skills and prepare students for college and career. During Mayor Emanuel’s administration, he has launched 5 new Early College STEM schools and expanded STEM programs to 10 elementary welcoming schools. The Summer of Learning also brought STEM out-of-school programming to thousands of students.

The schools included in the program are:

Corliss HS (Verizon-sponsored STEM school)

CVCA HS – (Motorola)

Michele Clark HS– (Cisco)

Goode HS – (IBM)

Lakeview HS – (Microsoft)

Rickover Naval Academy

Marine Military Academy

One of the reasons that Chicago was chosen for this initial program is the fact that the City has the largest number of Military Academies in the country, with 6. These Academies serve nearly 2,800 students, with nearly 50% African American and 45% Hispanic students. 87% of Academy students are low-income and 50% are female.

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