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MAYOR EMANUEL LAUNCHES CHICAGO CITY OF LEARNING MONTH OF CODE CHALLENGE
Challenge Encourages Youth to Explore STEAM Opportunities and Earn Digital Badges

Mayor Rahm Emanuel launched the Chicago City of Learning (CCOL) Month of Code Challenge to all Cities of Learning today to encourage young people to explore the science, technology, engineering, arts, and math (STEAM) fields. Through CCOL, youth have the opportunity to earn digital badges by building video games, interactive stories, and mobile apps between July 9 and August 8, 2014.

"The Chicago City of Learning Month of Code Challenge will allow young people to discover their full potential through additional opportunities in the fields of science, technology, engineering, arts, and math," said Mayor Emanuel. "The Month of Code Challenge gives students a chance to explore the immense fun and tremendous value of coding, while having a safe, productive summer."

Youth who participate in the Month of Code challenge will learn how to design and develop video games, interactive stories, and mobile apps. As youth earn digital badges each week, they are entered to win various prizes including movie tickets, video games, DVDs, gift cards, a Chromebook or and iPad Air.

Young Chicagoans of all ages can explore the Month of Code alone or visit CCOL Youth Hubs located in five different areas of the city. They can gain access to computers, work with others who are taking part in Month of Code, or receive assistance from a mentor. Chicago City of Learning has also launched Weekly Online Challenges, which features a Month of Code activity this week, offering additional prizes.

CCOL is a citywide, year-round program that sees all of Chicago as a classroom – with endless opportunities to learn new skills, discover passions and build pathways to further education and careers. Digital badges offered through CCOL recognize learning across programs in the initiative – whether at a park, museum, library, or on-line course – giving learners a digital portfolio that communicates the skills they have developed.

Chicago was the first city to launch the world's first citywide digital badging system through the City of Learning program, which recognizes out-of-school student learning. Last year, Chicago students earned approximately 100,000 badges. Los Angeles, Pittsburgh, and Dallas have since followed Chicago's lead, joining the national Cities of Learning movement in partnership with the

John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Digital Youth Network, and the Badge Alliance. Washington, D.C. and Columbus are schedule launch this fall.

To register for the Month of Code Challenge, please visit: www.chicagocityoflearning.org/month-of-code-battle.

Find learning opportunities today at chicagocityoflearning.org. CPS students and families can claim their accounts at chicagocityoflearning.org/CPS.

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