



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 24, 2019

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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT AND CHICAGO PUBLIC LIBRARY LAUNCH 2019 SUMMER  
LEARNING CHALLENGE**

*Free citywide Library programming returns today across 81 branch locations to keep students engaged in learning this summer*

CHICAGO—Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot today joined Chicago Public Library (CPL) and community leaders at the McKinley Park Branch Library for the launch of CPL's "Summer Learning Challenge" and "Teen Summer Challenge," and to celebrate the tenth anniversary of YOUmedia. Starting today through August 17, the City's libraries will offer hundreds of programming opportunities for children focused on education, engagement and safety for youth, families and the community at large for summer 2019.

CPL's Summer Learning Challenge is geared toward education, engagement and safety with programming tailored to youth of all ages to prevent the "summer slide," where children can lose up to three months of learning during the summer. This year's programs feature several new learning opportunities for youth, including the Coder in the Library program, created by Chicago Public Library in partnership with Chicago Public Schools, Northwestern's Center for Excellence in Computer Science Education and First Lady Amy Eshleman, where youth can drop-in at one of twelve locations for help learning to code.

"All of Chicago's young people are entitled to a safe, rewarding and fun summer season," said Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot. "Thanks to the Library's Summer Learning Challenge and other programs across Chicago, students in every one of our city's neighborhoods and communities will be able to continue learning and growing long after the school year ends."

"Chicago Public Library shares the Mayor's commitment to ensuring that Chicago's young people remain safe, engaged and supported this summer and we are thrilled to work with our partner organizations, the City of Chicago, and the Chicago Public Library Foundation to offer dynamic and engaging programming for kids and youth throughout the city this summer," said Chicago Public Library Commissioner Andrea



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Telli. “Our summer programs meet youth where they are and allow them to learn, explore and grow creatively all summer long.”

CPL’s Summer Learning Challenge has received national acclaim and now serves as a national model for summer learning in public libraries. In 2015, CPL became the first – and to this day the only – public library system in the nation to receive the National Summer Learning Association’s Founders Award for Excellence in summer learning. A recent analysis by Chapin Hall at University of Chicago showed that children participating in the Library’s Summer Learning Challenge demonstrated 15 percent greater reading gains and 20 percent greater math gains when compared to their peers who did not participate in the program.

CPL will also host the Teen Summer Challenge, “We Are Chicago: Your City, Your Summer, Your CPL,” providing youth ages 13-18 a chance to develop new skills, discover award-winning literature and refine their digital skills by working in the Library’s YOUmedia learning labs and teen areas. This year’s program celebrates the tenth anniversary of YOUmedia, a digital learning hub created to provide a safe and inclusive space for teens to make new friends and further cultivate their areas of interests. To celebrate its anniversary, teens will be offered a “We Are Chicago” interactive bingo card designed to get teens involved in library and city programming and offering a chance to win raffle prizes.

The YOUmedia concept, created at the Chicago Public Library in partnership with the Digital Youth Network and First Lady Eshleman, first originated with a digital media lab at the Harold Washington Library, and has since been acknowledged nationally as a proven model for college and career success, and replicated in over 30 museums, libraries, and after school centers. CPL will open its twenty-third YOUmedia location by the end of 2019.

“I am extremely proud of YOUmedia,” said First Lady Amy Eshleman. “Its success is proof that when we make dedicated, meaningful investments in our young people, they will not only meet our expectations, they will exceed them beyond our wildest imagination.”

The Summer Learning Challenge and Teen Summer Challenge build upon a series of coordinated efforts led by Mayor Lightfoot to ensure Chicago’s young people remain safe, engaged and supported this summer. These programs are a part of the YOUR CHI summer resources guide released last week. The guide contains additional resources on where students and their families can find summer sports programming, entertainment in the parks, health support services, and other summer learning activities. For more information, visit [chicago.gov/summer](http://chicago.gov/summer).



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