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**MAYOR EMANUEL CONGRATULATES OVER 31,000 YOUTH ON SUCCESSFULLY  
COMPLETING THE ONE SUMMER CHICAGO PROGRAM**

*Closing Breakfast Pays Tribute to Youth, Mentors and Employers*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today congratulated more than 31,000 youth for successfully completing the One Summer Chicago job program. The 12 week program provided youth ages 14-24 with job training, mentoring opportunities, continuing education programming and more.

"One Summer Chicago provides more than a job. It's a first paycheck, a first line on a resume, a first mentor, and helps develop the life skills our young people will carry long after the summer has ended," Mayor Rahm Emanuel said at the closing breakfast at Malcolm X College. "This past summer was a huge success and proves once again that when we raise the bar of expectations for our kids, they don't just meet them, they exceed them."

This summer youth collectively worked more than 3 million hours in neighborhoods throughout Chicago. Opportunities ranged from infrastructure jobs and camp counselors; to urban agriculture and outdoor forestry projects; to office work and private sector experience.

At the breakfast, youth, mentors and business partners were presented with the annual Game Changer Awards and Banking Challenge Scholarship. The Game Changer Awards recognize exceptional leadership from youth, mentors and employers participating in One Summer Chicago. The Banking Challenge Scholarship is award is for a youth who has excelled in financial literacy from savings to engaging in on-line financial literacy training.

"Today is a moment to recognize that youth are the future of our city, and to recognize a tremendous accomplishment," said Department of Family and Support Services Commissioner Lisa Morrison Butler. "Growing a program by 114% is something to celebrate, but so are the many stories of successes that we heard today."

In addition, Citi Foundation, who has supported the program for the last four years, presented a check for roughly \$1 million to One Summer Chicago.

"We are proud to continue our collaboration with Mayor Emanuel for a fourth year, along with the Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund, to connect more Chicago youth with summer job opportunities and the early money management skills that help build a strong financial future," said Brandee McHale, President of the Citi Foundation. "These first-job experiences can serve as a teachable moment for young people and help start them on a path to career success."

In 2017, the City of Chicago Infrastructure Team provided opportunities for 1,200 youth, doubling its workforce over last year. Youth worked with City crews to complete the following beautification projects:

- painted over 200 viaducts
- mulched nearly 2,500 trees
- used more than 260 Cubic yards of mulch
- collected over 600 bags of debris
- cleaned nearly 225 City blocks, parkways and lots
- assembled and maintained over 615 bikes
- created and supported nearly 145 community gardens

Youth also gained training and employment in the private sector that is expanding beyond the summer. Potbelly's has already hired 24 youth for full time employment. In addition, the Hilton trained 18 youth on a 30-hour hospitality curriculum that included job shadowing and at least five were hired.

Earlier this summer, the University of Chicago Urban Labs study found by providing a summer job, through the One Summer Chicago Plus (OSC+) program, and reduced the number of violent-crime arrests for participants by 33 percent over the subsequent year. Launched in 2012, OSC+ connects youth who are at a higher risk for violence involvement with a 25-hour per week summer job, a mentor, cognitive behavioral therapy and social skill building.

"Many times for children and young adults, the difference between leading a positive, productive life and taking a more destructive path can be the guidance of a responsible adult," said CPD First Deputy Superintendent Kevin Navarro. "One Summer Chicago provides them an opportunity to learn the rewards of hard work and how invaluable mentorship can be. It also plays a big role in public safety by allowing those same young people to spend their summer in an encouraging safe environment, preparing for their future."

Since 2011, Mayor Emanuel has significantly expanded the summer program, more than doubling opportunities while diversifying work opportunities for youths around the city. Each year, the Mayor hosts various round table discussions with the youth to hear about their experiences, gather feedback on the programming and learn more about how to improve the summer jobs program.

For more information on One Summer Chicago visit [www.onesummerchicago.org](http://www.onesummerchicago.org).

#### GAME CHANGER YOUTH RECIPIENTS

**Dai-Milan Coleman, 19**, is a returning student to ElevArte's We Are Hip Hop Youth festival management team, a festival completely run by youth. She used her outstanding communication skills to mentor her team in public speaking and led a fundraising effort for the festival in the community. She brought a positive, motivating let's get it done attitude every day. Dai is a resident of Bronzeville and a second year student at Robert Morris University.

**Joshua Thomas, 17**, proved himself to be a strong team leader for his peers at Kingdom Community Inc. As a young person with special needs, Joshua learned how to travel on his own to work to building relationships with his peers at their Friday workshops. His employer at Circuit Court Clerk of Cook County described him as a hard worker who always volunteered first to complete a task, showed up on time without missing a day, and commended his great attitude. His employer was so impressed by his work ethic that they want him to return next summer. Joshua is a Near West Side resident and an excited incoming senior at Lincoln Park High School.

**Joseph Gutierrez, 17**, worked with the Olive-Harvey College/City Incite construction program through Phalanx Family Services. From start to finish, Joseph was described as a strong performer who was consistently on time and a great communicator. He provided a helping hand to his co-workers with attentive detail and strength. His employer and agency described him as a model employee with One Summer Chicago. Joseph is a resident of the South East Side and a junior at Olive-Harvey Middle College High School.

#### GAME CHANGER MENTOR RECIPIENTS

**Jennifer Perez** has been an indispensable mentor with Heartland Alliance's Refugee and Immigrant Community Services overseeing the DACA program for the past three summers. She holds high expectations of her youth to learn and grow within and outside of the program. The teens described Jennifer as their "big sister Jenny." Jen has taken it upon herself to be a leader within Heartland's involvement with OSC, and she has turned it into a thriving, organized, vital part of our organization. Jen is already talking about next year and making big plans for "her teens."

**Nate Binns** has been an exceptional addition to UCANs' One Summer Chicago Plus team. Nate has dedicated his time and services to impacting the lives of youth in Chicago during the summer and year-round. Nate's passion and dedication for what he does was unmatched — whether staying late with youth to ensure they fully understood the Magnetar curriculum or making sure all youth were properly dressed, Nate has truly been an advocate and role model. Nate has left an amazing impact on One Summer Chicago and UCAN is proud to work together with him to change young peoples' lives in our communities.

#### GAME CHANGER EMPLOYER RECIPIENT

Potbelly Sandwich Shop not only donated \$40,000 to One Summer Chicago, but they agreed to be a worksite for 76 OSC youth. They didn't stop there; they went on to offer 26 youth employment after the conclusion of the summer. Since 2014, Potbelly has partnered with One Summer Chicago through Chicago Public Schools' Career and Technical Education (CTE) program to place 10-20 students in Potbelly shops for the summer program.

### **BANKING CHALLENGE SCHOLARSHIP WINNER**

**Jennifer Baeza** is a sophomore at St. Xavier University majoring in business. She is the daughter of Mexican immigrants and is a first generation college student. Jennifer is also a 2-year Department of Family & Support Services OSC participant. One of Jennifer's savings goals over the summer was to purchase tickets for her parents to return to their hometown in Mexico. She says they've sacrificed so much for her and family already that purchasing the tickets was the least she could do. Her main financial tip she learned over the summer: to save between 20 to 30% of your paycheck because that is money that can be used in the future for any emergency or a rainy day.

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