



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 17, 2019

CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

**Legendary Broadcaster Bill Kurtis Interviews Mayor Rahm Emanuel on the Final Episode of
"Chicago Stories" Podcast**

On the final episode of "[Chicago Stories](#)" podcast, Mayor Emanuel swapped mics with legendary broadcaster Bill Kurtis for a look back on his own life and career, beginning with his first steps in politics as an intern, to the lessons he learned in the White House, his take on Chicago's larger-than-life political culture, and most of all what it was like serving the greatest people in the greatest city on Earth.

Mayor Emanuel's long political career began before he graduated from college and quickly saw him crisscrossing across multiple Illinois campaigns, working as a consumer advocate, starting his own research group, serving in the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, as well as fundraising for Mayor Richard M. Daley—all before turning 30.

As far as Mayor Emanuel is concerned, all the credit goes his mother, Marsha Emanuel, a passionate social activist who ran the North Side chapter of the Congress For Racial Equality and instilled in him a deep sense of social responsibility and public service.

"All social activism starts in our house with my mother," Mayor Emanuel said. "We went to demonstrations with her—integration of beaches and housing in Chicago."

Yet despite his high political consciousness, it wasn't until the summer before his senior year in college that Mayor Emanuel got the political "bug," upending his initial plans of pursuing a career in early childhood education. As Mayor Emanuel told Kurtis, he either found *it*, or *it* found him.

"Something happened growing up around social activism in a Jewish home that triggered my interest in public life," Mayor Emanuel said. "It was because of a campaign one summer as a driver, I got exposed to something and all of a sudden all of this other stuff in my background in my family came rushing forward, and it's been what's driven me from that summer job."

After working with Mayor Daley, Mayor Emanuel went on to serve in two White Houses and three terms in Congress, ultimately bringing him to the 5th Floor of City Hall and the greatest job of his life: leading the city we call home.

As Mayor Emanuel told Kurtis, for all the capital investments, job growth and other gains Chicago made over the last eight years, the greatest peaks and deepest valleys of being mayor revolved around Chicago's young people. It's also what the mayor considers to be the most important part of his tenure.

"I know the difference of graduating high school rather than dropping out, and I know the difference of thinking about college than thinking you're not worthy of it," Mayor Emanuel said, "and to me the biggest legacy is giving our youth back their possibility and their future."

That doesn't mean it was easy, as the mayor himself knows well.

"Made a lot of tough decisions, made some people angry, but you can't do big things making 100 percent of the people happy," Mayor Emanuel said. "That said, I do believe we figured out a way to make all that greatness of growth work for more and more people than just the people that work in it."

Be sure to listen to the full episode as Mayor Emanuel gives Bill Kurtis the political playbook from his days with President Clinton, shares his first impressions of President Obama, sums up Chicago's storied political culture, and much, much more.

Listen and subscribe to "Chicago Stories" podcast on [Apple Podcasts](#), [SoundCloud](#), [Spotify](#) and [YouTube](#).

###