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MAYOR LIGHTFOOT ANNOUNCES YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES “REDISCOVER SUMMER”

Rediscover Summer will provide Chicago youth with thousands of programming and employment opportunities throughout the summer from the City and its partners

CHICAGO – Today, Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot alongside City leadership and partners announced, “Rediscover Summer,” a campaign from My CHI. My Future. that showcases the wide range of opportunities for youth available now until the end of the summer.

Last year, the Mayor and First Lady Amy Eshleman launched “My CHI. My Future.” (MCMF), a multi-year, youth-focused initiative designed to connect youth across Chicago to meaningful out-of-school experiences. MCMF works with more than 200 organizations and is focused on organizing and connecting the opportunity ecosystem in Chicago and galvanizing caring adults all over the city to ensure that every young person has a plan for the summer.

Sunday, May 23rd, marks the first anniversary of the launch of MCMF and the City’s commitment to ensuring that every young person connects to experiences that allow them to explore their interests and connect to passions and possibilities.

"For our young people, whose very development centers around enriching, in-person opportunities to connect with others, the transition to a new normal throughout the pandemic has been especially difficult," said Mayor Lightfoot. "Now, armed with vaccines and more than 200,000 summer opportunities, we will be able to give them the nurturing, out-of-school environments they deserve and need in order to develop their talents and reach their highest potential. I want to thank all of our city, community and business partners for investing in the wellbeing of our city's youth and am excited to see how each and every one of our young people 'Rediscover Summer' in the coming weeks."

The city and its partners have come together to provide over 200,000 opportunities for children and youth this summer including One Summer Chicago, Parks Summer Camp, and the GreenCorps Youth Program.



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Moreover, young people and their families can find opportunities through the revamped MCMF website, MyCHIMyFuture.org, which includes an interactive map to help young people and their families find opportunities, summer programs and events in their community.

“The opportunities offered through My CHI. My Future. will help address the academic and social and emotional needs created by the pandemic and ensure thousands of CPS students have a strong foundation of support when returning to the classroom next fall,” said CPS CEO Dr. Janice K. Jackson. “I thank all of our partner agencies throughout the city for partnering with CPS to give our kids a safe and productive summer.”

Below is information on some of the various opportunities available throughout the summer:

One Summer Chicago

“With so many employment opportunities and programs available to our youth this summer, we are excited to have reached another year for OSC despite the challenges present by the pandemic. That is truly a testament to how beneficial and important these opportunities are to young people,” said Deputy Commissioner for Department of Family Support and Services Rebecca Estrada. “With ‘Rediscover Summer,’ there is something for our Chicago youth across all sectors, so everyone’s interest are represented and there are numerous opportunities for real life skills growth.”

Additionally, the city recently announced the return of One Summer Chicago, which will run from July 5 to August 13 and includes remote and socially distanced in-person job and life-skills training for youth ages 14 to 24. Led by the Department of Family Support and Services, there are over 23,000 paid summer opportunities for Chicago's youth. The application deadline is Friday, June 11, and applicants can apply at OneSummerChicago.org. Returning this year under the OSC portfolio are the Chicago Youth Service Corps (CYSC), Everyone Can Code, Photography for All programs, and more.

Parks Summer Day Camps and Programming

Beginning June 28, Chicago Park District will offer in-person programs, including Summer Day Camp. This year, the Chicago Park District’s camp theme ‘Summer of Possibilities’ will enhance the summer day camp experience by engaging campers in activities that encourage them to think creatively and set and reach goals through play. Summer Day Camps are tailored by age group and designed to teach participants that anything is possible. The 6-weeks of Summer Day Camp fun will



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include sports, arts, fitness, and outdoor camp play activities that will focus on civic engagement, environmental awareness, inclusion, collaboration, and reflection.

“It’s a surreal feeling to be welcoming Chicago’s youth back to camps in parks this summer, but also to have so many activities children of all ages can participate in.” said Chicago Park District General Superintendent & CEO Michael Kelly. “We’ve ensured this year that anyone looking to participate will have a fair chance to register and have the option for financial support if necessary. The range of activities we are offering really speak to our theme of ‘Summer of Possibilities’ and we are excited to have campers back in the parks.”

Summer day camps for children, ages 6 to 12 years old, are available from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. or 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Play Camps for ages 3 to 5 years old and Teen Camps for ages 13 to 17 years old are available for younger and older audiences. You can learn more about COVID and safety guidelines, financial assistance, and registration at ChicagoParkDistrict.com.

This year, Chicago Park District organized a teen engagement strategy for safe spaces for teens this summer called the Summer Kickback Series. These teen-focused celebrations will take place Friday evenings, July 9th through August 27th at parks and partnering community-based organizations in fifteen communities with the highest violence rates. These outdoor events will allow teens to gather safely to enjoy music, food, e-sports, and other teen-focused activities.

Chicago Park District will be partnering with community-based organizations to hire teens from each community to help plan, promote, and staff events, as well as promote vaccinations. RFP for lead organizations open now at bit.ly/SummerKickbackSeries. The RFP will close on May 23 at 11:59pm.

Last week, Mayor Lightfoot announced “Race to Gately,” a series of events centered around track and field to find Chicago’s fastest. Competitions will be available for boys and girls in first grade through high school (6-18 years old). Several locations across the city will offer “Track and Field Experiences” or a 60 meter “Fastest Kids” race competition. Qualifying times per grade, location and gender will advance to race 60 meters at the new Track and Field Center at Gately Park on July 10. The first race will take place on Saturday, May 22. More information on all the competitions can be found at chicagoparkdistrict.com/fastest-kids.

Chicago Public Library Summer Learning Challenge

Starting today, CPL will welcome more patrons back into their library spaces as they increase access by resuming pre-COVID hours and operate at an increased capacity.



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After being closed for all of the last year, YOUmedia centers will be re-opening to teens.

“As summer approaches, it is critical that our libraries increase access to the knowledge, technology and inspiring spaces that Chicagoans need and deserve, including YOUmedia spaces for young people to explore their interests and passions,” said Chicago Public Library Commissioner Chris Brown. “We all recognize, libraries, like parks and schools, are community hubs and heartbeats of our neighborhoods, and we’re looking forward to working with our My CHI. My Future partners this summer as we deliver the world-class programs that Chicagoans have come to expect at the library.”

The City’s libraries will provide a wide range of free art-themed programming options focused on education, engagement, and safety for youth, families, and the community at large, beginning June 28.

This year’s Summer Learning Challenge for children and families, Teen Summer Challenge, and summer programs for adults will all focus on art and art making. These programs are made possible by philanthropic support through the CPL Foundation, with Amazon as the lead funder for the Summer Learning Challenge and Allstate for the Teen Summer Challenge, thanks to their continued lead sponsorship of YOUmedia.

CPL’s Summer Learning Challenge programming is tailored to young people of all ages to prevent the “summer slide,” where children can lose up to three months of learning during the summer. This summer, children will have opportunities to create and participate in art-in-action activities inspired by art around Chicago. Participating young people will receive a free family pass to The Art Institute of Chicago, as well as copy of the picture book *Parker Looks Up*, which tells the story of a young child’s visit to see the Obama portraits, now on display at The Art Institute of Chicago, thanks to a donation from the Obama Foundation.

Teens will be empowered through opportunities with art, their environment, and social justice - through digital media production, artmaking, mural projects, and neighborhood greenification - supporting them to positively and proactively shape their worlds. Adults will also explore art this summer in various ways, highlighted by virtual tours of public art that has helped shape our city. Additionally, Chicago Public Library is partnering with the Chicago Greater Food Depository and will offer free meals to families at select CPL branches.

To further support Chicago’s youth, library staff throughout the City will be trained as My CHI. My Future navigators, and available to help families rediscover summer



through the MCMF platform. CPL will employ over 200 summer youth interns, and 50 of these youths will also serve as My CHI. My Future Ambassadors, helping their peers navigate and locate summer opportunities. More details on CPL partnerships and opportunities will be available through chipublic.org.

Learning Recovery Efforts

Chicago Public Schools announced over 93,000 in-person summer programs to support the learning and social-emotional needs of students. This summer in order to address pandemic-related academic and social-emotional impacts, Chicago Public Schools is greatly expanding access to existing summer programs as well as introducing new programs, including:

- **Preview to Preschool and Kickoff to Kindergarten:** To help students get schooling off on the right foot, around ten thousand of our youngest learners will be able to attend a Preview to Preschool or Kickoff to Kindergarten program. Specifically for kindergarten, CPS, DFSS, City Sister Agencies, and GOEC will also embark upon a robust enrollment and recruitment campaign, aligning with hyper-local efforts to leverage resources.
- **Programs for incoming Freshmen and Sophomores:** All of CPS high schools will have the option to host month long preparation sessions for their sophomores and incoming freshmen.
- **Expanded Capacity for Diverse Learners & English Learners:** The number of diverse learners eligible for CPS' Extended School Year program will double and be expanded by two weeks, and capacity for programs that support English Learners will double.
- **Out of School time funds:** All schools have received out of school time funds so they can design and offer summer and after school programs that match their students' interests.

These summer learning programs are part of a larger framework that will address the significant academic and social and emotional needs created by the pandemic.

City of Chicago Colleges Summer Start and Post-Secondary Navigators

City Colleges of Chicago is engaged in two initiatives to reduce the number of college-admitted high school graduates over the summer who do not ultimately enroll:

Summer Start, which is designed to accelerate CPS graduates' progress toward college-level English and math by providing students English classes and transitional math supports during the summer term, along with up to \$1000/student of financial stipends and a last-dollar scholarship. 100 students are expected to be served in this pilot year.



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Post-Secondary Navigators, which consists of nine City Colleges staff, provide personalized guidance to CPS students from across the city to accelerate their entrance into CCC this fall.

GreenCorps Chicago Youth Program

The Chicago Department of Transportation announced the GreenCorps Youth Program (GCYP), a summer youth employment program that exposes youth ages 15-19 to careers and service projects in sustainability fields, including bicycling and horticulture. GCYP is based on the successful model of the GreenCorps Chicago's adult training and jobs program that empowers residents from Chicago's underserved neighborhoods to create change in their lives and communities through training, service, and career opportunities in environmental fields.

“We are excited to build on the success of Greencorps Chicago and expand it to include young people,” said CDOT Commissioner Gia Biagi. “Greencorps Chicago Youth will teach young people about building, riding, and maintaining bikes as well as helping them gain valuable job skills in horticulture and ecological restoration.”

The initial portion of the program will be focused on teaching the participants how to assemble a bicycle, basic bicycle maintenance, and how to ride safely on city streets. After the group is comfortable riding bicycles, they will use the bicycles to travel to their offsite locations for field trips and projects. Instructors will coordinate and provide lessons, activities, field trips, and community projects over the seven weeks introducing participants to topics in horticulture, ecological restoration, tree care, sustainability, and bicycling.

The GreenCorps Chicago Youth Program will provide 150 youth with 20 hours of paid summer employment for seven weeks. The program will be hosted at six different sites, with 15 participants per site in the morning and another 15 participants in the afternoon. For more information about GCYP, please visit greencorpschicago.org.

Other summer youth opportunities include:

- Chicago Housing Authority's specialized summer programs including a filmmaking class in partnership with DePaul and the Neighborhood Youth Corps with the Chicago Police Department.
- Youth 16 and up looking for free work readiness in Chicago can connect with one of over 20 Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership youth service providers in the city to get career coaching, resume writing, interview preparation, and internship and job placement services at <https://chicookworks.org/services/youth-programs/>.



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- Chicago Department of Public Health’s Playstreets returning with live, virtual programs, grab & go activity kits, and more.
- Department of Assets, Information and Services in partnership with the Chicago Park District will offer a 12-week “Fishing on the Jetty”sh program for youth to learn to fish, and learn about the ecosystem and the history of the Chicago River.
- After School Matters paid summer programs delivering high quality, hands-on, project-based apprenticeship programs in a variety of content areas, including the arts, communications and leadership, sports, and STEM. Application for summer programs are open now at afterschoolmatters.org.

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