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**MAYOR EMANUEL AND SENATOR DURBIN ANNOUNCE \$6 MILLION ACCELERATED STEM AND LEADERSHIP ACADEMY PILOT AT PHOENIX MILITARY ACADEMY**

*Research Partnership with the University of Chicago's Urban Education Lab Will Examine STEM Models that Prepare Students for College and Career Success*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Senator Dick Durbin joined the United States Army and Chicago Public Schools (CPS) officials today to announce \$6 million in funding from the Department of Defense, including for a new STEM and Leadership Academy Pilot Program at Phoenix Military Academy. These funds will support an accelerated STEM program of study at Phoenix and a Leadership Academy Program that will help prepare students for college and career success. In partnership with the University of Chicago's Urban Education Lab, this pilot program will test college and career outcomes for students receiving additional STEM and leadership programs.

"The Phoenix Military Academy pilot program will increase access to high-quality STEM education in the City of Chicago and provide leadership development to prepare our students for the technical economy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century while complementing our citywide STEM education strategy," said Mayor Emanuel. "Whether choosing a career in the service or as a civilian, this effort will give our students the STEM education and leadership skills needed today to seize many more opportunities tomorrow."

"The pilot program announced today is an investment in STEM education for Chicago's next generation of leaders," said Senator Durbin. "I've heard from business owners across the state about the good paying jobs they're unable to fill with qualified candidates because science and math skills are too often lacking in today's workforce. The same is true for the nation's military. So, for the last several years as chairman, and now ranking member of the Senate Defense Appropriations subcommittee, I've worked to increase funding for STEM and JROTC leadership development for students" Durbin said. "It's no surprise Chicago's application for this competitive grant stood out from the pack. When it comes to educating the next generation of leaders and preparing them to succeed, Chicago Military Academies are leading the way."

Chicago has the largest Service Leadership program in the country, serving 10,700 students through six CPS Military Academy high schools and a 39-unit Junior Reserve Officers' Training

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Corps (JROTC) program. Chicago is the only city with a network of Military Academy High Schools. These Academies are diverse and have strong student outcomes. Demand for enrollment at these academies has risen sharply, making the Academies extremely competitive; last year 6,500 students applied for only 900 first-year spots. Over the last several years, CPS has made significant investments to ensure student access to Service Leadership opportunities.

The STEM and Leadership pilot program provides significant research to other school districts, the Army, and the private sector, these skills are considered critical to innovation, economic growth and national security. In partnership with the University of Chicago, CPS will structure this research pilot program to test outcomes on student development, achievement and preparedness ultimately providing a model that other school districts can replicate to encourage student preparation and qualification for highly competitive STEM colleges and universities, including the United States Military Academy at West Point, and careers in STEM fields.

Beginning this summer, fifty cadets will be randomly selected from the Phoenix Military Academy freshman class each year for three years to receive enhanced math courses and STEM enrichment activities. By their senior year, these students will be on track for Advanced Placement science and math classes. Half of those students will also participate in leadership development programming, with additional enrichment activities and mentoring.

Increasing access to STEM education remains a priority for Mayor Emanuel and the City of Chicago. In 2014, Mayor Emanuel announced a city-wide strategy to increase STEM learning experiences from early childhood through college and career. The city-wide strategy will strategically bring together and direct educational, corporate, and philanthropic resources toward the shared goal of increasing STEM opportunities for Chicago students. With the support of multiple sectors, the strategy seeks to triple the number of Chicago students earning STEM credentials by 2018.

Chicago Public Schools is also home to five Early College STEM Schools (ECSS) that focus on technology skills and career readiness, as well as earn college credits, under a partnership agreement with CPS and City Colleges of Chicago and five technology companies, including IBM, Cisco, Microsoft Corporation, Motorola Solutions and Verizon Wireless. The companies have helped develop a unique curriculum at each school to teach students the skills required in the marketplace, as well as providing mentors and internships. Chicago's ECSS were recognized on the cover of [Time Magazine](#) as the new educational model in 2014. This program brings the strength of CPS's investment in STEM curriculum to its Service Leadership academies.

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