



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

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CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

MAYOR RAHM EMANUEL AND CHICAGO PUBLIC LIBRARY ANNOUNCE MORE THAN 110,000 KIDS PARTICIPATED IN RAHM'S READERS SUMMER LEARNING CHALLENGE

Rahm's Readers participants read more than 108 million minutes and completed more than 1.3 million learning activities

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Chicago Public Library (CPL) Commissioner Brian Bannon announced today that the 2018 Rahm's Readers Summer Learning Challenge engaged more than 110,000 participants, an increase of 5 percent from the previous year. Rahm's Readers completed more than 1.3 million "Discover" and "Create" learning activities and read more than 108 million minutes, a 19 percent increase in engagement from the previous year.

"Rahm's Readers didn't take a break this summer; they broke records with more kids engaging in more books and more activities than ever before," said Mayor Emanuel. "With more than 110,200 participants transforming into Earth Explorers, I am more confident than ever that the city's youngest residents will be part of the solution as we continue to address the environmental issues that affect our city and the world and work towards a more sustainable future."

The program was designed to prevent the "summer slide" where children can lose up to three months of math and science learning during summer months if they do not remain engaged in learning. Through a strategic partnership with the Museum of Science and Industry, CPL embeds STEAM programming as a vital track of learning in the free Summer Learning Challenge. Program participants are encouraged to engage in various critical thinking, create and design activities to encourage creativity, problem solving and persistence.

"Not only was it a record-breaking year, but we are proud to say that the library's free out-of-school learning opportunities helped Chicago kids beat the summer slide and made them ready to learn," said CPL Commissioner Brian Bannon.

Rahm's Readers this summer were Earth Explorers, challenged to read 20 minutes a day, participate in STEAM activities and investigate earth systems science, environmental literacy and climate resiliency. All CPL branches, in partnership with the Museum of Science and Industry (MSI), facilitated the summer challenge.

Students learned about environmental issues and how to be strong global citizens, with thousands of interactive programming and events for kids and families throughout the city. Students participated in include a range of science experiments, singalongs, story times, in-branch animal

121 NORTH LASALLE STREET, ROOM 507, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60602

visits, concerts and art projects, including building terrarium landfills, live trout raising tanks, and play-based learning around the issues of recycling and renewable resources.

A Chapin Hall analysis of the program found that, on average, children participating in the program demonstrated 15 percent greater reading gains and 20 percent greater math gains over and above their peers who did not participate in the program.

CPL's Summer Learning Challenge has received national acclaim. In 2015, CPL became the first - and to this day the only - public library system in the nation to receive an award from the National Summer Learning Association's Founders Award for Excellence in summer learning.

The Rahm's Readers Summer Learning Challenge now serves as a national model for summer learning. CPL's Director of System Wide Children's Services Elizabeth McChesney co-authored "Summer Matters: Making All Learning Count" (ALA Publications, June 2017), a guide based on the Library's approach to summer learning with partner institution MSI. A second book will be released in 2019.

Chicago Public Library and the Museum of Science and Industry earned a Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian grant for \$300,000 from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. This grant supports CPL and MSI's Summer Learning Challenge collaboration, allowing them to refine, document and share the highly effective professional development work they've built for and with CPL's children's librarians to deliver effective STEM programming. They have begun working with King County Library System in Washington to share their professional development around summer learning.

The 2018 Summer Learning Challenge is made possible in great part by Lead Corporate Sponsor Wintrust; the Helen M. Harrison Foundation; the Walter E. Heller Foundation; Peoples Gas; PNC Bank; Macy's; Paul M. Angell Foundation; Boeing; Cubs Care; a McCormick Foundation Fund; Daniel F. and Ada L. Rice Foundation; Westinghouse Electric Company; and other generous donors to the Chicago Public Library Foundation.

About Chicago Public Library

Since 1873, Chicago Public Library (CPL) has encouraged lifelong learning by welcoming all people and offering equal access to information, entertainment and knowledge through innovative services and programs, as well as cutting-edge technology. Through its 80 locations, the Library provides free access to a rich collection of materials, both physical and digital, and presents the highest quality author discussions, exhibits and programs for children, teens and adults. CPL received the Social Innovator Award from Chicago Innovation Awards; won a National Medal for Library Services from the Institute for Museum and Library Services; and was ranked number one in the U.S. and third in the world by an international study of major urban libraries conducted by the Heinrich Heine University Dusseldorf in Germany. For more information, please call (312) 747-4050 or visit chipublib.org.

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