



**NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**
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**Charter One Foundation Provides \$100,000 to
YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago to Support Education,
Extracurricular Programming to Underserved Youth**
*Grant enables hundreds of Chicago children and teens to
participate in the Y's Community Schools program*

CHICAGO – The YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago announced today it has received a generous grant from the Charter One Foundation to support the Y's Community Schools program. The \$100,000 grant will fund this vital community initiative for the 2009-10 academic year and positions Charter One—one of Chicago's top banks with more than 100 branches in the metropolitan area—as the lead corporate partner of the YMCA's Community Schools initiative. Combined with Charter One's generous support in 2008, the bank has contributed more than \$300,000 to the Y's Community Schools program.

The YMCA's Community Schools program is an innovative collaboration with Chicago Public Schools and other organizations that aims to help children and families living in Chicago's most underserved neighborhoods by improving academic performance, reducing school absenteeism and drop-out rates, and enhancing youth wellness and health. YMCA Community Schools address the need to keep kids safe and families productively engaged by providing educational programming focused on positive development. More than 2,100 Chicago youth living in poverty currently benefit from the nine YMCA Community Schools across the city.

"Recent headlines underscore the importance of having programs like YMCA's Community Schools available for Chicago's children," said Steve Dahlin, interim president and CEO of the YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago. "We are extremely grateful for Charter One's corporate leadership through their generous grant. Last year, their support made it possible for us to extend Community Schools programming into the summer months. This year, their grant will ensure that hundreds of Chicago's children that most need the services provided by our Community Schools program will have access to them."

YMCA Community Schools work closely with school councils, principals and faculty at inner-city schools, as well as local businesses, community leaders and organizations such as the Joffrey Ballet, Merit Schools of Music, Chicago Botanic Gardens and others to offer a range of programs that help children improve their grades, stay in school and have fun in a structured and safe environment. Community Schools activities include writing workshops, foreign language, vocabulary builders, debate and communications, homework help, math and reading, group counseling, yoga, martial arts, character education, social/emotional learning, health and wellness, teacher and staff professional development and parent and community workshops.

"As the oldest and one of the largest social service agencies in the Chicago area, the YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago has been an innovator and leader in providing family and child services for more than 150 years. Charter One is proud to support the YMCA's efforts and its Community Schools initiative, which provides critical after-school programming for hundreds of children," said Stacey Sather, senior vice president and director of public affairs for Charter One.

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The nine YMCA Community Schools are:

- Kipp: Ascend Charter School, 715 S. Kildare Ave.
- LEARN Charter School, 1132 S. Homan Ave.
- Libby Community School, 5300 S. Loomis Blvd.
- Morton School of Excellence, 151 N. Troy St.
- Murray Language Academy, 5335 S. Kenwood Ave.
- Oglesby Elementary School, 7646 S. Green St.
- Robert H. Lawrence Elementary School, 9928 S. Crandon Ave.
- Ryerson Community School, 646 N. Lawndale Ave.
- Whistler Community School, 11533 S. Ada St.

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About YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago

Through its 65 locations and more than 100 extension sites, the YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago helps children learn and grow, teaches young people to lead, brings families closer, and encourages individual health and well-being. The fourth largest non-profit in Chicago and one of the largest human services organizations in the nation, YMCA programs impact hundreds of thousands of lives annually, helping to strengthen neighborhoods and respond to community needs across Chicagoland. To learn more, visit www.ymcachgo.org.

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