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FIVE CHICAGO SPORTS FRANCHISES TEAM UP TO ADDRESS VIOLENCE

Chicago Bears, Blackhawks, Bulls, Cubs and White Sox Join Forces to Help Support Solutions to Decrease Violence Affecting Hometown

CHICAGO – For the first time, five of Chicago’s professional sports teams are joining together to work on a vital social issue, lending their broad reach and resources in support of solutions to decrease violence in the city. The Chicago Bears, Chicago Blackhawks, Chicago Bulls, Chicago Cubs and Chicago White Sox, operating collectively as the Chicago Sports Alliance, today announced they will be donating a total of \$1 million in one-time grants to support three programs addressing this critical issue. The teams will look to continue the Chicago Sports Alliance effort on an annual basis, and decisions regarding programs that will receive future funding will be made as the effort progresses.

All five teams will continue their individual charitable and community relations efforts, which donate millions in financial and in-kind support annually to hundreds of organizations and programs and have significant impact on communities across the Chicagoland area.

Through the joint effort, the teams have partnered with the University of Chicago Crime Lab to strengthen their collective capacity to identify programs and make evidence-informed investments to reduce violence. The University of Chicago Crime Lab, which partners with policymakers and practitioners to help cities design and test the most promising ways to reduce crime and improve human lives at scale, drew on its experience to help the teams assess how to target funding in the first year of this effort to maximize impact.

Working with the Crime Lab, the teams sought to be as evidence-informed as possible with this first year of Chicago Sports Alliance support and chose to start with investments in programs with encouraging evidence behind them, as well as investing in efforts to generate better and more actionable evidence.

In the first year, the Chicago Sports Alliance will provide one-time grants to three programs in the city: Choose 2 Change (C2C), a high intensity mentoring and trauma therapy program proven to reduce violent behavior among youth in the Greater Englewood community who are at-risk for violence involvement; analyst training by the Crime Lab for the Chicago Police Department’s Strategic Decision Support Centers (SDSCs), which are rooms in the city’s highest violence police districts in which district leadership and civilian analysts work together to develop localized crime reduction strategies using a suite of technology, data analysis and human intelligence; and the University of Chicago Crime Lab to support efforts to measure and assess the impact of the teams’ initial investments to improve outcomes for the most vulnerable Chicagoans.

Each team will also engage with the grant recipients throughout the year by providing in-kind support, as well as tapping into the teams’ vast networks of fans and organizational strengths to help bring awareness to the programs.

"We are all deeply saddened every day when we read a new headline about shootings and violence in Chicago," said Chicago White Sox and Bulls Chairman Jerry Reinsdorf. "Chicago is our home. This is the greatest city in the world. Collectively, we need to work together to preserve it, and now is the time for us to double our efforts. While we understand that as sports teams we don't have all of the answers to solving such complicated issues, we do appreciate the incredible position of leadership that we are fortunate to hold. We have a responsibility to give back to our city and to all of our fans who have given us their hearts and cheers. These teams have brought championships to Chicago, but the great people of this city deserve a champion – or an alliance of champions – to stand together against this unacceptable level of community violence."

"I hope that we can change the narrative in the community for so many kids in Chicago," said Chicago Bulls President and Chief Operating Officer Michael Reinsdorf. "These kids can no longer dream. Now they have to think 'How can I get to school safely?' or 'Should I take a chance and go to the park to play ball?' I hope we can change that. I hope we can bring back the opportunity for kids to dream."

"This partnership is not about the teams, it is about the power of coming together as Chicagoans to do all we can to try to make a difference," said Chicago Bears Chairman George H. McCaskey. "The credit for this should go to Jerry Reinsdorf, as it was his idea. We are all doing things already with our own teams but it was his vision to bring everyone together to collectively have a greater impact. The monetary factor is important of course but we are also hoping because so many of our great fans and so many young people look up to our players that we can have an impact that way. If we can get through to them in some way, we can send a positive message about making our city better."

"While our teams wear different uniforms and have different names, this city is something we all share," said Chicago Blackhawks Chairman Rocky Wirtz. "Chicago comes first in all of our names, and we share an unconditional commitment to build strong communities around us and do what we can to help identify solutions to one of the city's toughest and most complicated problems."

"In many neighborhoods, crime and gun violence are major problems," said Chicago Cubs Chairman Tom Ricketts. "We look forward to working with other Chicago sports teams to invest in proven programs that help to address these issues and, hopefully, make our communities safer."

"The great power of the Chicago Sports Alliance is its potential to use the influence and reach of the teams to bring our entire city together to address our most critical challenge – violence," said Dr. Jens Ludwig, director of the University of Chicago Crime Lab and co-director of the University of Chicago Education Lab. "Collectively the five teams reach people from all walks of life, all backgrounds, and all corners of our city."

"We all need to treat this challenge as though it is happening in our neighborhoods," said Roseanna Ander, Executive Director of the University of Chicago Crime Lab. "We believe that together the Chicago sports teams can play a critically important role in fostering this citywide engagement in reducing violence. By bringing to bear their resources and influence, Chicago's teams can make a huge impact, supporting promising programs, using evidence to make progress in our hardest hit communities, and inspiring others to step up as well."

About the University of Chicago Crime Lab

The University of Chicago Crime Lab partners with policymakers and practitioners to help cities design and test the most promising ways to reduce crime and improve human lives at scale. We focus on the most important criminal justice challenges of our time, including efforts to help Chicago and other cities prevent crime and violence from happening in the first place, improve schooling and income opportunities for those living in communities most impacted by violence, and reduce the harms associated with the administration of criminal justice itself. To learn more about the Crime Lab, visit <https://urbanlabs.uchicago.edu/labs/crime>.

About Choose 2 Change (C2C)

The Choose 2 Change (C2C) program was developed by Chicago nonprofits Youth Advocate Programs and Children's Home + Aid and selected as a winner of the University of Chicago Crime Lab's 2015 Design Competition. C2C is a five month program focused on developing the individual strengths of youth to reduce criminal and violent behavior and improve academic achievement. Recognizing the multiple needs of youth at high-risk for being involved in violence, C2C provides intensive support. Youth are involved in therapy that seeks to improve their decision-making in high-stakes situations and teaches youth to avoid situations where violence is likely. Since 2015, C2C has provided services to more than 400 youth between the ages of 13-18 in Chicago's Greater Englewood community.

Analyst Training for Strategic Decision Support Centers

Starting in the 007th and 011th districts in February 2017, CPD has built Strategic Decision Support Centers (SDSCs) staffed by analysts from the University of Chicago Crime Lab. In March 2017, the Department expanded this strategy, opening SDSCs in districts 006, 009, 010, and 015. The SDSCs are rooms in which a suite of technology, district leadership, and civilian analysts work together to develop localized crime reduction strategies using data analysis, human intelligence, and input from the community. These efforts are tailored to meet the unique needs of each community, with community concerns incorporated into the district's daily planning process. Through the SDSC initiative, CPD districts have also expanded their proactive community engagement efforts, with officers from the district routinely attending local block parties, community meetings, and youth sporting events. By mid-December 2017, Chicago experienced 715 fewer shootings (-18%) relative to 2016. Two-thirds of this reduction – 473 shootings – came from the SDSC districts. In District 007 specifically, these impressive gains are promising not just compared to 2016, but also when looking at violence in Englewood over the longer term – since the launch of the SDSC, District 007 has experienced the fewest shooting incidents in any year since CPD began storing this data electronically. The reductions in gun violence both create, and bolster, conditions under which residents, community organizations, and civic partners can collaborate on the economic development and quality of life improvements in their communities. CPD will expand the SDSCs to six additional districts on the south and west sides by the end of 2018 and the Crime Lab will provide ongoing training and support throughout the expansion.

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