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**CHICAGO SPORTS FRANCHISES CONTINUE ALLIANCE FOR SECOND YEAR
TO ADDRESS VIOLENCE**

*Chicago Bears, Blackhawks, Bulls, Cubs and White Sox Move Forward
with Support for Violence Reduction Programs in 2019*

CHICAGO – The Chicago Sports Alliance, the collaboration of five of Chicago’s professional sports teams, announced it will move forward in 2019 to lend the teams’ collective reach and resources in support of finding innovative solutions to decrease violence in the city. This is the second consecutive year of the Alliance and its contributions.

With this announcement, the Chicago Bears, Chicago Blackhawks, Chicago Bulls, Chicago Cubs and Chicago White Sox, operating together as the Chicago Sports Alliance, confirmed the group will donate a total of \$1 million in grants to continue supporting a partnership with the University of Chicago Crime Lab and Choose to Change (C2C), which combines Youth Advocate Programs (YAP), Inc’s high-intensity mentoring and advocacy with trauma-informed therapy provided by Children’s Home & Aid. New this year, the Alliance will fund the targeted transitional job training program, READI Chicago (Rapid Employment and Development Initiative).

Last year, the Alliance provided a grant earmarked for analyst training at the Chicago Police Department’s Strategic Decisions Support Centers (SDSCs). In 2018, additional support fully funded the training program and SDSCs. The support created the opportunity for the Alliance to direct investments toward a new program, READI Chicago.

The Alliance maintained the approach established in its first year by relying on data and expertise from the Crime Lab to direct the group’s investments toward programs and efforts structured to produce more actionable insights.

The Crime Lab, which partners with policymakers and practitioners to help cities design and test ways to reduce crime and improve lives at scale, provides data-driven recommendations to the Alliance about promising ways to reduce violence. The ongoing support from the teams will further the Crime Lab’s mission of working closely with nonprofits and city government to identify and help scale the most effective ways to reduce violence and support thriving communities in Chicago.

With support from the Alliance for a second year, C2C will expand its mentoring and trauma therapy program to more participants who are most at-risk for violence involvement in the Englewood community. Support from the Alliance in 2018 allowed C2C to add a fifth group of participants, reaching 60 additional at-risk youth. Preliminary results from the Crime Lab’s randomized controlled trial evaluation indicate that participation in C2C reduced violent arrests by about 50 percent.

Through the Alliance grant, READI Chicago will add more young men at highest risk of becoming involved in gun violence to participate in the 18-month program providing transitional job training and trauma-informed cognitive behavioral therapy. READI Chicago is grounded in research that suggests the promise of employment opportunities coupled with therapy and training to help participants slow down their decision-making in high-stakes situations. READI Chicago is the first program of its scope and scale ever to be implemented.

Each team also will continue to work 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.

"Our thanks to Jerry for organizing us. The Chicago Sports Alliance was his idea," said Chicago Bears Chairman George H. McCaskey. "He came to us and said, 'We've got to do what we can about the gun violence that is tearing apart our city.' Michael, Tom and Rocky have been incredibly supportive. My hat's off to them."

"Today we collectively recommit to supporting these important gun violence initiatives because we share a desire to give back to the community by making it a safer place to live, work and play," said Chicago Blackhawks Chairman Rocky Wirtz. "The Chicago Blackhawks organization is honored to host this announcement at the MB Ice Arena, which was built for the community with the same vision and provides essential programming to underprivileged youth."

"We are proud to continue the Chicago Sports Alliance and partner with great organizations that are working to address the violence plaguing our city," said Michael Reinsdorf, Chicago Bulls President and Chief Operating Officer. "We want our players, coaches, front office, corporate partners and, most importantly, our fans to know we are committed to this issue and to join us in helping to find and support solutions. This cannot be done alone, and we are grateful that the Alliance teams have come together to try to make a positive and lasting impact on our city."

"Chicago has given my family and the Cubs so much. We want this city to reach its fullest potential. To do so, we must put an end to the senseless violence and offer hope and opportunity to every young person and every family in every neighborhood," said Chicago Cubs Chairman Tom Ricketts. "We're determined to keep up the progress on this mission and do it in the spirit of teamwork with the Chicago Sports Alliance."

"Our organizations are part of the identity and history of the city of Chicago. Our teams live in the hearts of all Chicagoans. It's our responsibility to lend our collective power as iconic institutions to find solutions and motivate others to get involved," said Chicago White Sox and Bulls Chairman Jerry Reinsdorf. "We have seen progress in the first year of this journey, and we're moving forward with the Chicago Sports Alliance into 2019 because gun violence continues to plague our hometown."

"This new investment by the Chicago Sports Alliance comes at a critical time for our city. We have already lost over 480 people to gun violence this year. That is 480 too many lives cut short," said Roseanna Ander, Executive Director of the University of Chicago Crime Lab. "The expansion of these promising programs with the support of the Alliance has the potential to stop bloodshed, to support our most vulnerable, and help build a safer, more vibrant Chicago. We are proud to partner with the Sports Alliance on this work, but there is much left to be done and the stakes could not be higher."

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 across the Chicagoland area.

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.

For more information about the partnership, please visit urbanlabs.uchicago.edu/projects/chicago-sports-alliance.

Media Note: The Chicago Sports Alliance leadership will hold an exclusive event on November 16 at 11 a.m., welcoming local civic, corporate and philanthropic leaders in Chicago to discuss the issue of gun violence in Chicago. Media interested in covering the event must RSVP to Meghan Bower at Meghan.Bower@Bears.NFL.net.

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 to Change (C2C)

The Choose to Change (C2C) program was developed by Chicago nonprofits Youth Advocate Programs (YAP) and Children's Home & Aid and selected as a winner of the University of Chicago Crime Lab's 2015 Design Competition. C2C is a six-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 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 served more than 500 youth between the ages of 13-18 in Chicago's Greater Englewood community.

About Rapid Employment and Development Initiative (READI Chicago)

READI Chicago is an innovative response to gun violence. The program connects individuals most highly impacted by gun violence involvement to paid transitional jobs, cognitive behavioral therapy and support services to help them create a viable path and opportunities for a different future, and to reduce violence in the city's most impacted neighborhoods. Heartland Alliance is partnering with six community organizations in Austin, West Garfield Park, North Lawndale, and the Greater Englewood to implement the program. Since Fall 2017, READI Chicago has already engaged over 300 men. The University of Chicago Crime and Poverty Labs are studying the program's impact through a randomized control trial evaluation.

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