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THE CHICAGO COOK WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIP ANNOUNCES NEW WORKFORCE CENTER COMING TO CHATHAM

*Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership Is Bringing Opportunities to South Side
Neighborhood*

CHICAGO—(May 13, 2019) Today, the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership (The Partnership) Congressman Bobby L. Rush (D, IL-1), Alderman, community leaders, public and private partners gathered to formally announce the beginning of construction for the new Chatham Workforce and Training Center. Offering an array of high-quality services for job seekers, businesses, workers, and a much needed gathering space for residents, this center is serving as part of the Greater Chatham Initiative's strategic plan to strengthen economic growth and neighborhood vitality in Chatham.

"Five years ago, I convened elected officials, business leaders, and community stakeholders to build on the historic strengths of the Greater Chatham area and identify concrete approaches to move these communities towards a prosperous and healthy future," said Congressman Bobby L. Rush (D, IL-1). "This Center is a powerful and tangible outcome of that shared community process, and a meaningful investment that will open the doors of employment opportunity and provide economic stability to the residents of Chatham and the contiguous communities."

Chatham has long been a strong and stable community, but following the tragic death of Dr. Betty Howard, a beloved special education teacher at Gwendolyn Brooks College Preparatory Academy, from a stray bullet, community leaders realized the need to do more to support the community.

Workforce development is one of the first issues targeted by that process. Karin M. Norington-Reaves, CEO of The Partnership and a Chatham resident, identified the building at 640 E. 79th Street, which had been sitting vacant for some time and is now set to become the Chatham Workforce and Education Center. The center will feature a full range of workforce resources, and some special programs and community resources. The Partnership operates the public workforce system in the City of Chicago and Cook County and is providing leadership on the development of the new center.

"The Chatham Education and Workforce Center is more than a building," said Karin M. Norington-Reaves, CEO of The Partnership. "It represents a collective effort to revitalize communities by cultivating innovation and laying the foundation for future economic opportunity."

Chicago Treasurer Kurt Summers, is among the many collaborators of this project who identified an architectural firm to provide pro bono services in re-designing what will become the workforce center section of the building. "This center will be a beacon that helps light the way to economic growth and renewal on the South Side," Summers said.

“At JPMorgan Chase, we are committed to creating economic opportunity for more people on Chicago’s South and West sides,” said Whitney Smith, Head of Midwest Philanthropy for JPMorgan Chase. “By supporting innovative financial solutions for projects like the Chatham Center, our goal is to breathe fresh air into the neighborhood and help create long-term opportunities for local residents to access the resources they need to qualify for jobs of the future.”

Last year, the building was purchased by IFF, a mission-driven lender, real estate consultant and developer, which leveraged funds from JPMorgan Chase’s \$40 million three-year investment in Chicago’s South and West Sides.

“We are so proud to be working with great partners like the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership, 4S Bay Partners, and JPMorgan Chase on the development of a workforce center in the Chatham neighborhood,” said Joe Neri, CEO of IFF. “IFF worked closely with our partners to create a thoughtful process focused on equitable community development leveraging our development tools, facilities expertise, and capital. This new workforce center, in a long-vacant commercial building, will connect hundreds of residents to employment each year and will be an important asset to the Chatham community.”

This year, 4S Bay Partners, a Chicago-based family office, purchased the building outright from IFF and is funding the build-out and furnishing of the Chatham Workforce and Education Center. “We are delighted to support the Chatham community,” said Steve Sarowitz of 4S Bay. “Supporting this Center advances our work in promoting educational opportunities for adults and economic advancement for under-resourced communities.”

The Center will open this fall and will feature an array of services, including but not limited to resume writing, interview preparation, job training services and employer related services to name a few. Additionally, it will be home to two premier initiatives of The Partnership: ConstructionWorks, powered by the Illinois Tollway, and Chicago Codes.

The **Illinois Tollway’s ConstructionWorks** program, administered by The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership, launched in 2018 and is providing free pre-apprenticeship training and support services to underemployed and disenfranchised individuals seeking training and career opportunities in the highway construction industry, including members of minority groups, women and veterans.

"This investment demonstrates what’s possible when we harness collaboration between the city, the county, the state and the private sector, each working together, to champion new programs that will open the doors for rewarding careers that will always be in demand," said Illinois Tollway Executive Director José Alvarez.

Chicago Codes offers rigorous, tuition-free training in computer coding with an industry-approved curriculum. Participants will secure software development internships with local firms and ultimately permanent employment. Chicago Codes is made possible with generous support from The Rockefeller Foundation, Facebook, Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, and Microsoft.

About the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership

Created in 2012, The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership (The Partnership) is an umbrella organization operating the public workforce system in the City of Chicago and Cook County. The Partnership combines federal and philanthropic resources to broaden the reach and impact of workforce development services for both employers and job seekers. As the largest non-profit workforce development system; in the nation, The Partnership has helped place more than 60,000 individuals in employment, collaborated with more than 2,000 employers and administers more than \$300 million in federal and philanthropic funds. The Partnership's network of more than 50 community-based organizations, 10 American Job Centers, and sector-driven workforce centers serve 132 municipalities.

About 4S Bay Partners, LLC

4S Bay Partners is a family office dedicated to the improvement of humanity, and the elimination of the barriers and obstacles that divide and impede people. 4S Bay supports educational opportunity; economic improvement; immigration and human rights; wellness; environmental sustainability; and the preservation of cultural heritage.

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