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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August 16, 2013

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**MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES NEARLY 100,000 BADGES AWARDED  
THROUGH CHICAGO SUMMER OF LEARNING**

*Due to Success of this Year's Summer of Learning Program, the City Has Committed to Continue the Program Next Summer*

Today, Mayor Rahm Emanuel announced that nearly 100,000 badges will be awarded to students who participated in learning activities through Chicago's first Summer of Learning. This summer, more than 210,000 young people participated in learning opportunities provided by more than 100 organizations. Due to this year's success, the City of Chicago will continue this program next summer so that every young person in every neighborhood access to high-quality learning programs when school is out of session.

"This summer, I visited Summer of Learning sites across our city where I witnessed the energy and enthusiasm of our students as they challenged themselves creatively, intellectually, and socially," Mayor Emanuel said. "This year's high participation level confirmed that by turning our entire city into a classroom during the summer, we can make learning fun and accessible for every child in Chicago. We look forward to continuing this tradition next year."

In a unique public-private partnership, the City teamed up with the MacArthur Foundation and Mozilla to become the first city to pilot a citywide digital badge system that recognizes and rewards students' achievements. Nearly 100,000 badges have been earned by this summer's participants in both on-site activities at a park, museum, or library and on-line activities.

"The Chicago Summer of Learning stands out as a national example – for its innovation, scope, and the tremendous partnerships that make it possible," Senior Advisor for Nonprofit Partnerships at the U.S. Department of Education Michael Robbins. "And this is not just about summer – the work that is being done here in Chicago can inform how we advance student engagement and learning year round."

To further encourage learning during the summer, the Mayor also proposed a challenge that if Chicago children read 2 million books this summer he, former Chicago Bears player Israel Idonije and Chicago Public Library Commissioner Brian Bannon would jump into Lake Michigan for the annual Polar Plunge. Chicago children met and exceeded this challenge, reading over 2 million books and counting. The big day will happen in March to benefit the Special Olympics.

To celebrate all of these student achievements this summer, the City today held a Summer of Learning Summer Showcase displaying student projects at the Museum of Science and Industry. The event included a variety of hands-on interactive activities such as the following:

- Creating a drawing, painting or sculpture using recycled materials, found objects and non-traditional art materials
- Getting a crash course in on-camera interviewing and creating a short video of their own combining the interview with clips from an online video and film library
- Creating 3-D models of jewelry, miniature cityscapes, or stylish glasses frames using CAD software and 3-D printers
- Recording youth opinions and environmental pledges to their communities using an online application and video camera
- Creating 2-D designs to be physically rendered using a vinyl and laser cutter

Over 100 organizations participated in creating interactive learning experiences across the city including the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago Children's Museum, Little Black Pearl, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Little Linguistics Academy, the Poetry Foundation, and Youth Technology Corps.

The Summer of Learning's sister agencies and participating organizations included: Chicago Public Schools, the Chicago Public Library, the Chicago Park District, the Chicago Department of Family and Support Services, After School Matters, the Chicago Housing Authority, City Colleges of Chicago, the Cook County Forest Preserve, DePaul University, the Chicago Architecture Foundation, the Museum of Science and Industry, the National Veterans Museum, the MacArthur Foundation, Mozilla and more.

For more information about Chicago Summer of Learning, go to: <http://chicagosummeroflearning.org/>.

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