



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



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MAYOR LIGHTFOOT ANNOUNCES 2022 MAYOR'S MEDAL OF HONOR WINNERS

Second annual award ceremony will honor individuals and organizations who have made extraordinary contributions to Chicago's residents

CHICAGO—Today, Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot announced the winners of the 2022 Mayor's Medal of Honor. The Mayor's Medal of Honor is an annual award presented by the Mayor to honorees who have demonstrated a passionate commitment to public service, to uplifting residents of Chicago's 77 neighborhoods, and to bettering the lives of all who reside in the city. This year's event is hosted in partnership with the Clayco and The One Chicago Fund.

"As the City continues to recover from this once-in-a-lifetime pandemic and its lingering impacts on residents, it is more important than ever that we highlight those who have supported their neighbors and communities through it all," said Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot. "Chicago is a city of compassionate, hardworking residents and it is my privilege to honor those who have worked tirelessly to improve the lives of others."

"We are thrilled to be a part of the civic initiative recognizing Chicagoans from all sectors as they collaborate to empower and better the lives of their fellow citizens," said Bob Clark, Executive Chairman and Founder of Clayco. "At Clayco, our mantra is 'Beyond These Walls' which simply means that we strive to be part of the community wherever we live, work and build. Clayco is proud to partner with One Chicago to celebrate the individuals who also believe their impact goes 'beyond these walls.'"

This year's Mayor's Medal of Honor awardees are:

INDIVIDUALS

- **Cecile De Mello, Executive Director, Teamwork Englewood** – As a founding member of Mayor Lightfoot's Community Safety Coordination Center Launch Committee, Cecile organized City and community resources to improve streetscapes and vacant lots as a violence prevention strategy.



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- **Janah Ricardson, Member, Mayor’s Youth Commission** – As Chair of the Mayor’s Youth Commission’s Public Safety Committee, Janah organized “Face2Face” sessions between City of Chicago leadership and youth to create dialogue about youth safety and improve transparency. Janah started a podcast called The Bottom Line, where she hosts conversations about politics, identity, and inclusion.
- **Camille Kerr, Founder, Upside Down Consulting and ChiFresh Kitchen** – Camille helped launch and manage ChiFresh Kitchens, a worker cooperative foodservice contracting business co-owned by formerly incarcerated individuals. In 2021, ChiFresh partnered with Urban Growers Collective to meet emergency food needs caused by the pandemic.
- **Grace Chan McKibben, Executive Director, Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community** - Grace is a member of Mayor Lightfoot’s Asian American and Pacific Islander community engagement council. In 2021, Grace worked to improve her community by supporting public health initiatives and advocating for racial justice.
- **Karina Ayala-Bermejo, CEO, Instituto del Progreso Latino** – Karina is Chair of the Chicago Commission on Human Relations New Americans Advisory Council. In 2021, Karina advocated for immigrant communities by standing up for the welcoming city ordinance amendments, hosting naturalization workshops, supporting Afghan refugees, organizing vaccine outreach, and facilitating food drives.
- **Nick Cave and Bob Faust, Creators** - Nick and Bob’s practice of “art with civic responsibility” was evident in AMENDS, a three-part exhibit exploring race and accountability following the murder of George Floyd. Their powerful work on the CTA, at their FACILITY studio on the Northwest side and in partnership with CPS’ Schurz High School brought people together and activated community conversations.
- **Sandro Miller, Photographer** – Sandro partnered with the Chicago Department of Public Health and Oglivy on FACE FORWARD, a project designed to encourage youth between the ages of 12-18 to get the vaccine. Sandro’s 200 beautiful portraits highlight the resilience and hope of Chicago teens coming out of the pandemic who have chosen to get the vaccine to protect themselves, families and friends.

ORGANIZATIONS & COLLABORATIVES

- **Infiniteach** helped the Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities create its first “social story,” a tool to support individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities on how to complete specific tasks about the vaccine process. In 2021, Infiniteach worked to make Chicago sporting venues and community access points more accessible to people with disabilities.



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- **Southwest Organizing Project** was a founding member of the Mayor's Racial Equity Rapid Response team and a Health Equity Zone delegate. In 2021, SWOP mobilized hundreds of volunteers to increase vaccine participation and distribute COVID safety and prevention information on Chicago's southwest side.
- **Lakeview Pantry** is one of Chicago's largest and longest operating food pantries. In 2021 they served 4,000,000 meals across the city and expanded their focus on wraparound mental wellness services, including providing 1600 mental wellness sessions with licensed clinicians and social workers.
- **ENLACE and New Life Centers** are leaders in the Violence Prevention Collaborative, which includes 25 member organizations working to comprehensively address community violence, domestic violence, and the built environment. In 2021, ENLACE and New Life Centers were active in violence interruption, youth advocacy, and community support for the Little Village neighborhood.
- **Phalanx Family Services** is the Far South Regional Lead for the Health Equity Zone program and the Roseland My CHI. My Future. anchor organization. Throughout 2021, Phalanx hosted several events for youth and families to boost vaccine adoption and promote youth engagement.
- The leadership and dedication of **Epidemiologists from Chicago Department of Public Health** reduced the risk and occurrence of COVID-19 impacts through research, community education, and health policy. Their commitment to keeping the public safe and informed led to the creation of the COVID-19 dashboard utilized by City leadership and residents alike.
- The **United Center** was the first mass vaccination site in the city. 301,000 doses of vaccine were administered at the site through drive-thru and walk-up appointments. The United Center served as a distribution hub for food and personal protective equipment to community organizations across the city.
- **Northwest Center** is an active member in Mayor Lightfoot's Racial Equity Rapid Response team and a community leader for Protect Chicago Plus. In 2021, Northwest Center worked with Oak Street Health and over 70 community volunteers to encourage vaccinations through grassroots outreach resulting in a 794% increase in vaccination rates for the Belmont Cragin community.
- **Eli's Cheesecake** has committed that at least 10% of employees are refugees. In 2021, Eli's partnered with RefugeeONE to hire refugees from Afghanistan. In addition, Eli's has generously donated cheesecake to support vaccine efforts across the city.
- **The City of Chicago Legal Protection Fund's Community Navigators** is a corps of community-based individuals comprised of primarily immigrant women. Throughout the pandemic, the navigators, in partnership with The



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Resurrection Project, presented Know Your Rights information and helped encourage vaccinations against COVID-19 through door to door outreach.

Together, and each in their own ways, these honorees truly embody the principle of leading by example, and centering equity as the guiding value of their work. The Mayor, along with the entire City of Chicago is deeply honored and humbled to have such selfless, talented, and civic-minded partners, and looks forward to the continuance of their outstanding work for years to come. A special ceremony honoring these incredible individuals, organizations, and collaboratives will be live streamed on April 26th.

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