



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO

*The Coca-Cola Company*

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**MAYOR EMANUEL AND COCA-COLA ANNOUNCE \$3 MILLION GRANT FROM COCA-COLA FOUNDATION THAT WILL CREATE JOBS FOR VETERANS**

*Grant Will Create Largest Affordable Wellness Program in the City*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel joined The Coca-Cola Foundation Monday to announce a new, \$3 million grant to the Garfield Park Conservatory Alliance. This grant will create the Park Families Wellness Initiative, which will feature affordable nutrition education and active lifestyle programs for Chicago communities who are most in need of wellness services. The initiative, which will be run by the Chicago Park District, will also allow the Park District to hire U.S. veterans to teach military-style fitness classes called "Troops for Fitness." The program will be available in more than 60 community facilities reaching 125,000 residents a year by 2016, making the Park District the leading provider of affordable health programs in the city.

"This public-private partnership will improve nutrition and health in our neighborhoods while creating jobs and economic opportunity for Chicago's returning heroes," said Mayor Emanuel. "These resources will allow residents across the city to live a healthier lifestyle and will help inspire good nutritional and health choices by our families."

The Park District will also tap returning military veterans to teach military style fitness classes through the Troops for Fitness program. Over the next four years, military vets will teach sessions on calisthenics, sit-ups, push-ups, pull-ups and other fitness and nutritional techniques. The grant also provides resources to create adaptive recreation classes for disabled veterans.

“Together with Mayor Emanuel and Garfield Park Conservatory, we want to increase access to nutrition education and physical activity programs in underserved communities,” said Steve Cahillane, President & CEO, Coca-Cola Refreshments. “Obesity can’t be solved overnight. However, collaborative programs like the Parks Families Wellness Initiative are a start and should be encouraged throughout the country.”

The Coca-Cola Foundation is committed to building sustainable communities by encouraging individuals, families and communities to live active, healthy lifestyles. Garfield Park Conservatory Alliance, working with the City of Chicago and the Chicago Park District, is among many grantees from around the country that are amplifying their active living and nutrition education programs as a result of local grants from The Coca-Cola Foundation.

“Investing in Chicago’s parks will provide long term benefits to improve the health of our communities,” said Michael Kelly, Superintendent, Chicago Park District. “The grant from The Coca-Cola Foundation will allow us to hire some of our nation’s heroes and create exciting ways to get youth, adults and families active. It is one of many things that Chicago is doing to improve health in our neighborhoods and get people into our parks, and allows us to support national efforts like Michelle Obama’s ‘Let’s Move’ initiative. This is exactly where we hope to be in Chicago.”

Last month, The Coca-Cola Company joined the beverage industry to launch the Calories Count™ Vending Program in Chicago and San Antonio. This initiative will give people the choices, information and encouragement they need to choose the beverages that are right for themselves and their families. Beginning in 2013, Coca-Cola vending machines, as well as those of all other industry beverage partners in both cities, will feature calorie information for each beverage selection. Messages will promote lower calorie beverages and remind people that all calories count. Following the launch in Chicago and San Antonio, the program will be rolled out across the country in 2013.

These are just some of the advancements the City of Chicago has made to combat obesity and improve wellness in Chicago. Chicago Lives Healthy, the nation’s largest municipal

wellness program, launched this year and has more than 38,000 registrants. Additionally, the City now has 100 percent healthy vending in parks and schools and numerous programs to combat obesity in our neighborhoods. Mayor Emanuel has additionally led an effort to combat food deserts and has worked with national retailers to ensure that access to fresh fruits and vegetables is available in every part of Chicago.

The Coca-Cola Foundation awarded more than \$70 million to 263 community organizations around the world in 2011 to support sustainable community initiatives, including water stewardship, community recycling, active, healthy living, and education. For more information about The Coca-Cola Foundation, please go to [www.thecoca-colacompany.com/citizenship/foundation\\_coke.html](http://www.thecoca-colacompany.com/citizenship/foundation_coke.html).

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