



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO

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CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

[press@cityofchicago.org](mailto:press@cityofchicago.org)

**MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES EXPANSION OF  
CHICAGO PUBLIC LIBRARY YOUmedia DIGITAL SKILLS LEARNING PROGRAM**

*Budget Investment will Increase Number of Teens Served by 25 percent; Announcement Made at First of Three Budget Roundtables to Discuss 2014 Budget*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel held the first of three budget roundtables this afternoon to discuss the 2014 budget and announced a new \$500,000 investment that will allow the Chicago Public Library (CPL) to increase the number of teens that receive training in web design, digital media production, and programming from the nationally recognized YOUmedia program by 25 percent.

"Budgets are statements of values and priorities, and as we have done during the past 2 years, we will make major reforms while making major investments, especially in the lives of children," said Mayor Emanuel. "YOUmedia builds on teens' interest in technology and motivates them to create, innovate and become active learners. By increasing access to digital media and safe, inviting spaces, we are empowering Chicago's teens to engage technology in new ways."

Mayor Emanuel met with residents at Mary Lyon Elementary school in the Belmont Cragin neighborhood on the northwest side to discuss the 2014 budget and listen to their concerns and priorities regarding their neighborhoods and the city.

Starting in the summer, CPL will offer regular digital skill development programs at six new library locations and an additional "pop up" program that will provide resources at a new branch library in a different neighborhood each month throughout the year. These activities will support Chicago's youth in developing 21st Century skills and help them gain exposure to education and career pathways in fields related to their interests.

A 2013 study of YOUmedia conducted by the Chicago Consortium of Chicago School Research, revealed that nearly half of program participants were African American teenage boys, and that 80 percent of program participants travel on average 5 miles to access the program. According to the study, YOUmedia is cultivating a sense of community among teens who participate. This sense of community, along with peer relationships, serves as a potent force for driving teens to engage in digital media creation in new ways. A majority of YOUmedia participants report that they have improved their digital media skills due to

YOUmedia. The majority of teens also report that YOUmedia has helped them with their school work and better understand opportunities available to them after high school.

"We're excited to expand this model into more neighborhoods as it's been so successful in engaging teens in deep learning," said Library Commissioner Brian Bannon. "Now more than ever, libraries must serve as community learning centers and connect young people to resources that support their success in school and beyond."

More than 1500 teens receive digital skills training from YOUmedia programs offered at five sites throughout the city. At the Harold Washington Library Center, high school YOUmedia participants attend workshops in digital music, video & animation, photography, graphic design and STEM. Teens can borrow laptops, use gaming stations, attend workshops and programs, create digital media, and use a music recording studio.

Four CPL neighborhood branches offer YOUmedia programs providing youths in grades 6 to 8 access to up-to-date technology equipment as well as mentors and library staff who share their expertise in various areas of digital media production. CPL branch locations include: Rudy Lozano Branch Library, Richard M. Daley Branch Library, Humboldt Park Branch Library, and Thurgood Marshall Branch Library. Mayor Emanuel's 2014 budget investment will increase number of teens served by 25 percent.

YOUmedia was launched in 2009 based on research supported by the John D. And Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation as part of its digital media and learning initiative, which is exploring how digital media are changing the way young people learn, play, socialize, and participate in civic life.

"The Chicago Public Library has done extraordinary work in re-imagining its role in the lives of youth in the City and has become a model for the library of the future for the entire country" said Julie Stasch, Vice President of U.S. Programs at the MacArthur Foundation. "We are pleased the city is expanding the benefits of YOUmedia to many more young people throughout the city. We look forward to our continuing partnership as the Chicago Public Library continues to lead the nation."

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