



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT ANNOUNCES JUAN CARLOS LINARES AS CHIEF
ENGAGEMENT OFFICER**

Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot announced today the appointment of Juan Carlos Linares as Chief Engagement Officer for the Office of Public Engagement to lead her administration's efforts in improving outcomes of all Chicago's communities by connecting on a deeper level, building stronger relationships with neighborhoods and removing barriers to government and city agency services and assistance.

"The Office of Public Engagement is essential to our mission that every voice is heard and every community is recognized," said Mayor Lightfoot. "Juan Carlos's experience in building neighborhood and housing equity, along with his commitment to transparency, inclusion and accountability, will ensure Chicago is serving all of its citizens no matter their background, status or zip code."

As Executive Director of LUCHA, a Chicago-based affordable housing development agency that offers counseling, foreclosure prevention and legal assistance, Linares led the organization to excel in health and energy equity by building the first multi-family "Passive House" building in Illinois, completing a first-of-its-kind Health Action Plan under its Tierra Linda housing development, and proposing a preservation ordinance and land trust initiative along Chicago's 606 Trail.

In addition to his work in building community and advancing housing as a human right, Linares is a strong advocate for the equitable allocation of resources to underserved communities in Illinois and Chicago. In 2018, he served on the Pritzker Gubernatorial Transition Team Healthy Children and Families Committee, and in 2019 as Co-Chair of the Housing Committee on the Mayor Lightfoot's transition team.

"The Lightfoot Administration is presenting new ways of thinking about how the city and its agencies engage community and vice-versa, from merely "informing" residents to having residents own the process and activate our shared outcomes," said Juan Carlos. "My career has been dedicated to leading meaningful community



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engagement, from preventing the displacement of low-income households to positioning our neighborhoods as catalysts for growth and innovation in a global city. Despite our city's legacy of segregation, disinvestment and disengagement, I am galvanized by the voices in our communities who are designing creative solutions and who are collectively advancing Chicago in this new era of governance.”

Linares serves as Chair of the Illinois Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, which has published reports on the issues of Environmental Justice, Voting Rights and Fair Housing in Illinois. He was appointed to the Chicago Low-Income Housing Trust Fund Board by the previous administration and serves on the boards of the Metropolitan Planning Council, The Woodstock Institute and Urban Theater Company. He also serves on Northeastern Illinois University's El Centro Campus Advisory Council and is a lecturer at the University of Chicago Law School.

Juan Carlos holds an MBA from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business, a JD from DePaul University and an LL.M. in International Business Law from The John Marshall Law School. He also holds a BA in Sociology and Spanish from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. For his work, Juan Carlos has been awarded the Friends of the Parks “Lakefront Protection Award” and the “Top Lawyer under 40 National Award” from the Hispanic National Bar Association among other recognitions, and has participated in Fellowships with the Aspen Institute, The Chicago Community Trust, the Latino Policy Forum and Leadership Greater Chicago, among others.

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The Office of Public Engagement is a direct link between the Mayor's Office, city departments, sister agencies, external partners and communities with the goal of making city government, resources and services more accessible and equitable. The Office of Public Engagement enhances and improves community outreach through collaboration with neighborhood and civic organizations, nonprofits, policy advisory groups and city agencies.