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INAUGURAL SEASON OF WINDY CITY HOOPS WRAPS UP WITH CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

More than 1,200 teens participate in basketball league providing youth a safe and productive activity

Mayor Rahm Emanuel, NBA Hall of Famer and basketball legend Isiah Thomas, Chicago Park District Superintendent Michael Kelly, and the Chicago Parks Foundation announced that more than 1,200 teens participated in the inaugural season of Windy City Hoops basketball league. On Saturday June 1, players will gather at ten park district basketball courts across the city to compete in the Windy City Hoops Championship Games.

"Windy City Hoops provides teens across Chicago the opportunity to learn team work and leadership skills both on and off the court," said Mayor Emanuel. "The Inaugural season of Windy City Hoops was a success thanks to the contributions of the business community and every day Chicagoans. I will continue working with leaders from the private, public, and nonprofit sectors, as well as the general public, to find innovative ways to support our youth."

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and NBA Hall of Famer Isiah Thomas announced the creation of the Windy City Hoops basketball league in February. Demonstrating the value of private, public, and nonprofit collaboration to support our youth, Sammons Financial Group, Gardner Family Foundation, Integrys Energy Services and GEM Capital Realty, Inc. as well as Chicago residents came together to donate funds for the program exceeding \$450,000.

Open gym began in March, with official league play starting on April 19, running Friday evenings 7-10 p.m., and Saturday evenings, 5-10 p.m. Following the success of the inaugural season the Windy City Hoops Summer Season is will begin June 14, with open gym at all ten parks starting June 7. Interested teens should visit www.chicagoparkdistrict.com or one of the ten participating park district sites.

“Thanks to the support of Mayor Emanuel, the Chicago Police Department, and both private and corporate donors, the Chicago Park District is able to provide this program to encourage safe and active communities,” said Park District General Superintendent and CEO Michael Kelly.

The ten Windy City Hoops sites were spread across eight community areas chosen because of a few factors, including crime levels and the need for teen programming. They are:

- Loyola Park (Rogers Park)
- Amundsen (Austin)
- Columbus (Austin)
- Garfield (East Garfield)
- Franklin (North Lawndale)
- Kennicott (Kenwood)
- Jackson (Woodlawn)
- Ogden (Englewood)
- Hamilton (Englewood)
- Fernwood (Roseland)

Over the past year, the Park district has received close to 15,000 total registrations in its basketball programs - including open gym, leagues, instructional programs, and camps.

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