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**MAYOR EMANUEL, COLUMBIA COLLEGE CHICAGO AND SOUTH LOOP ORGANIZATIONS
ANNOUNCE WABASH ARTS CORRIDOR**

*Corridor to Promote Creative Assets of Educational Institutions, South Loop Organizations, Artists and
Businesses*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel announced today a plan to partner with Columbia College Chicago and other South Loop organizations to create public art under the umbrella of the Wabash Arts Corridor, a stretch of Wabash Avenue from Congress Parkway to Roosevelt Road. The announcement was made during a public forum attended by local colleges, universities, arts organizations and South Loop business associations where Mayor Emanuel called the dynamic arts corridor an integral part of the newly created City of Chicago Cultural Plan.

"The Wabash Arts Corridor puts into action two major goals of the City's Cultural Plan. First, coordinating our cultural and educational assets, and second, leveraging them in a way that benefits our children's education and spurs local businesses," said Mayor Emanuel. "I have seen firsthand the power the arts can have to transform a neighborhood economically as well as culturally."

Released in October 2012, the Chicago Cultural Plan creates a framework to guide the City's future cultural and economic growth. The Cultural Plan will be the centerpiece to continue to elevate the City as a global destination for creativity, innovation and excellence in the arts. The Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events has identified four areas of focus for implementing the Plan in 2013: Arts Education, Creative Industries, Cultural Districts and Tourism. Roughly 20 percent of the 241 initiatives in the Cultural Plan are already done or nearly done. An additional 46 percent are near-term items anticipated to be completed by the start of 2014.

"The Wabash Arts Corridor is a powerful concept that can help bring together the residents, businesses and institutions of this district and allow us to leverage our creative assets in a very exciting and palpable way," said Columbia College President Warrick L. Carter. "This collaboration with the city certainly has put the project on the fast track toward further developing the South Loop into a dynamic arts space including murals, sculptures, image projections, concert series, and more long-term projects."

The public forum also served as the unveiling for concepts of the next Wabash Arts Corridor project, a series of large-scale photographs to be installed on the exterior of the iconic Chicago

Hilton, 720 S. Michigan Avenue. The images are being developed by Columbia College's photography department with original student works to be installed in May.

Initial projects in the Wabash Arts Corridor were created last year with the completion of an aerosol art mural at the northwest corner of Balbo and Wabash Avenue. Columbia College Chicago alumnus and Chicago-based artist Nino Rodriguez (B.A. '05) transformed a beige parking garage into an abstract mural of Chicago scenes depicting the city skyline, CTA trains and sports teams. The building is nearby an earlier initiative, Columbia College's Papermaker's Garden utilizing plants to beautify a vacant corner lot and produce sustainable papermaking fibers as well as offer collaborative, cross-disciplinary educational opportunities for students. Photography and English students will soon collaborate on creating images and text to be installed on the support beams for the Red Line El tracks on Harrison Street.

Columbia College Chicago is an urban institution that offers innovative degree programs in the visual, performing, media and communication arts for nearly 11,000 students in 120 undergraduate and graduate programs. An arts and media college committed to a rigorous liberal arts curriculum, Columbia is dedicated to opportunity and excellence in higher education. For further information, visit www.colum.edu.

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