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MAYOR LIGHTFOOT ANNOUNCES EXPANDED SUNDAY HOURS, THE OPENING OF ALTGELD BRANCH LIBRARY AND ONE SUMMER CHICAGO APPLICATIONS IN HONOR OF NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK

New branch is the fourth co-located Library project, includes a childcare center and opportunities for summer employment through the One Summer Chicago program

CHICAGO – Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot, joined by 9th Ward Alderman Anthony Beale, Chicago Public Library (CPL) Commissioner Chris Brown, Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) CEO Tracey Scott, and Department of Family Support and Services (DFSS) Acting Commissioner Brandie Knazze convened at the Altgeld Branch of Chicago Public Library today to celebrate the opening of the new branch, announce the expansion of Sunday hours to ten more CPL branches, and announce the One Summer Chicago (OSC) applications have opened for another year.

The new, 14,164-square-foot library branch, located at 955 E 131st St on Chicago's Far South Side, is a \$7.5 million project first announced in 2016 that replaced the previous library within the Altgeld Gardens/Murray Homes community. The joint announcements build on Mayor Lightfoot's aligned work to expand equitable services and remove barriers to access in Chicago's most vulnerable neighborhoods alongside the City's partners. This will be the fourth partnership between CPL and CHA and the One Summer Chicago program will provide youth with employment and enrichment opportunities during the summer months. One Summer Chicago offers summer employment to youth between the ages of 14 and 24. Most programs are between 20 and 25 hours per week.

Last year, more than 20,000 young people across the city had summer jobs directly from this program. This upcoming summer, young people will be compensated for participating in career exploration opportunities in fields such as coding and tech, healthcare, media and more.

“As someone who is passionate about libraries and expanding opportunities for our young people to thrive, I am thrilled to formally celebrate the opening of the Altgeld branch, the expansion of Sunday hours and the opening of applications for One



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Summer Chicago,” said Mayor Lightfoot. “Taken together, these efforts will empower for residents of all ages to skill up, achieve upward mobility, and above all, chase after their dreams without being burdened by a lack of access to knowledge and resources.”

All CPL branches will expand to include Sunday hours - through a phased rollout plan - by the end of 2021. Beginning April 18, CPL’s Altgeld, Mt Greenwood, South Shore, Back of the Yards, Chinatown, Merlo, Edgewater, Independence, Richard M. Daley, and Austin Branch Libraries will add an additional day of service to the public, opening from 1:00-5:00 p.m. on Sundays. This expansion of services makes CPL more accessible, by allowing Chicagoans with work or religious restrictions to utilize in-person essential library services on their schedule.

Mayor Lightfoot first announced the planned Sunday hours expansion in June 2019 as part of CPL and Mayor Lightfoot’s ongoing effort to ensure that library services are more equitable and accessible for all Chicagoans. The first nine branches opened on Sundays in December 2019, in addition to the Harold Washington Library Center, and CPL’s three regional libraries—Sulzer, Legler, and Woodson Regional— which are open 68 hours per week, including Sundays.

“The Library’s core mission is to provide free and equitable access to ideas and knowledge, books, materials, inspiring spaces, and technology-- things Chicagoans need and deserve everyday—seven days a week,” said Chicago Public Library Commissioner Chris Brown. “Whether it’s this partnering with the Chicago Housing Authority to design and revitalize our libraries, the elimination of overdue fines, or reestablishing a West Side Regional Library in partnership with the Mayor’s Invest South/West initiative, the Library is constantly seeking to remove barriers and bring comprehensive, equitable library services and learning opportunities to our communities.”

The new Altgeld Branch Library project marks the fourth collaboration in recent years between the CHA and CPL. In 2019, the Library and CHA opened three co-located buildings that combined public library branches with affordable and mixed-income housing in Chicago’s Little Italy, Northtown, and Independence neighborhoods. The Altgeld Branch was built to serve the community of Altgeld Gardens and will also house a Centers for New Horizons childcare facility. In addition, the new building includes a fully independent YOUmedia teen space with a student recording studio, a Maker Lab for patrons of all ages, dedicated early learning space for children five years old and under, and private community and meeting rooms for collaborative use.



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"The Chicago Housing Authority is proud of the investments we have made for the residents of the historic Altgeld Gardens community. The Altgeld Library and Family Resource Center provides a place where everyone, especially children, can learn and grow," said CHA CEO Tracey Scott. "This successful effort was the result of a unique collaboration that included residents, special financing tools, nonprofits, and government all working together to deliver much-needed resources to Chicago's Far South Side."

The Altgeld renovation closely aligns with Mayor Lightfoot's Invest South/West initiative, which seeks to increase access to investment and public facilities on Chicago's South and West Sides where there are acute disparities. Altgeld Garden's geographic isolation from other areas of the city has created barriers to access for residents in the past, and the state-of-the-art library building seeks to address those gaps. More than 75% of Altgeld Gardens residents live below the federal poverty line, and nearly all residents, 98% are Black, according to CHA data.

The Altgeld Branch will offer job search and computer skill training, as well as homework help and traditional library programs like book clubs, film screenings, and story time. Altgeld is one of multiple South and West Side capital projects CPL has focused on in recent years.

"These are important tools which help create new opportunities that enhance people's lives and transform under-resourced neighborhoods into strong, sustainable communities," said 9th Ward Alderman Anthony A. Beale. "Today's announcements demonstrate what can be accomplished when the city and community encouraged by a shared commitment to improving a neighborhood's quality of life work together."

Modern libraries are hubs in healthy communities, keeping residents, especially young people, connected to rich, engaging, and safe environments where they are empowered to explore their passions and potential. This new Altgeld Branch Library, and rollout of Sunday hours, concretely furthers the Mayor's vision to revitalize Chicago neighborhoods.

One Summer Chicago will run from July 5 to August 13 and will include remote and socially distanced, in-person job and life-skills training for youth ages 14 to 24. The application deadline is Friday, June 11, and it can be found at [OneSummerChicago.org](https://www.onesummerchicago.org). More than 21,000 slots are available for youth this summer. Returning this year under the OSC portfolio is the Chicago Youth Service Corps (CYSC), Everyone Can Code, Photography for All programs and more. One Summer Chicago is an integral part of "[My CHI. My Future.](#)" (MCMF), Mayor



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Lightfoot's signature youth-focused initiative designed to connect youth across Chicago to meaningful out-of-school experiences.

“One Summer Chicago provides more than a summer job, it helps young people build life skills they will carry with them long after the program has ended,” said Department of Family Support and Services Acting Commissioner Brandie Knazze. “One Summer Chicago teaches youth the essential skills that they need to succeed in career and in life.”

Altgeld Branch Library will be open to the public in coming weeks. Chicago Public Library remains open to circulate materials and provide resources to Chicagoans as the city weathers the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Social distancing and hygiene standards are in place, per public health guidelines. CPL continues to encourage patrons to stay connected with both online programming and in-branch offerings. A full list of digital programs and additional information are available online at chipublic.org.

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