



***For the Robert R. McCormick Foundation***

Phil Zepeda  
312-445-5039 (o) / 312-622-2640 (m)  
pzepeda@mccormickfoundation.org

***For the Chicago Sports Alliance***

Meghan Bower - Chicago Bears  
847-739-5230 (o)  
meghan.bower@bears.nfl.net

**ROBERT R. MCCORMICK FOUNDATION, CHICAGO SPORTS ALLIANCE  
PARTNER TO ADDRESS VIOLENCE IN CHICAGO**

*Second-year grant funds from the Bears, Blackhawks, Bulls, Cubs and White Sox matched by McCormick at 50 percent*

**CHICAGO, March 5, 2019** – The Robert R. McCormick Foundation announced today it has matched donations from the Chicago Sports Alliance to support innovative solutions that decrease violence in the city, contributing a \$500,000 match toward the Alliance’s second year \$1 million commitment.

In November 2018, the Alliance, comprised of the Chicago Bears, Chicago Blackhawks, Chicago Bulls, Chicago Cubs and Chicago White Sox, announced grant funding to support the University of Chicago Crime Lab, Choose to Change (C2C), which combines Youth Advocate Programs Inc’s (YAP) high-intensity mentoring and advocacy with trauma-informed therapy provided by Children’s Home & Aid, and READI Chicago (Rapid Employment and Development Initiative), a targeted transitional job training program.

"Ending gun violence in Chicago requires a city-wide effort," said David Hiller, President and CEO of the McCormick Foundation. "There’s a role for all businesses and citizens to play in helping to make Chicago neighborhoods affected by violence safer for everyone. We are proud to join with the Chicago Sports Alliance to fuel programs that are showing great signs of success in reducing violence in this city we love."

Through the Chicago Sports Alliance Fund, C2C will expand its mentoring and trauma therapy program to more participants who are most at-risk for violence involvement in the Englewood community. Also, READI Chicago will add more young men who are at a higher risk of becoming involved in gun violence to participate in the 18-month program providing transitional job training and trauma-informed cognitive behavioral therapy. In addition, the ongoing support will further the Crime Lab’s mission of working closely with nonprofits and city government to identify and help scale the most effective ways to reduce violence in Chicago.

Grant funding will be presented later this spring.

"We are extraordinarily grateful to the Robert R. McCormick Foundation for their generous matching grant, which will help to significantly expand our collective work to reduce gun violence and increase opportunities for youth and young adults in Chicago facing some of the most significant barriers and

highest rates of trauma,” said Roseanna Ander, University of Chicago Crime Lab Executive Director, on behalf of the [UChicago Crime Lab](#), [Choose to Change](#) and [READI Chicago](#).

All five teams will continue their individual charitable and community relations efforts, which donate millions in financial and in-kind support annually to hundreds of organizations and programs across the Chicagoland area. As an added benefit to these Chicago Sports Alliance grant organizations, each team also will continue to provide in-kind support and tap into their vast networks of fans and organizational strengths to help bring awareness to the programs.

The partnership signals the launch of the Chicago Sports Alliance Fund, a McCormick Foundation Fund. The teams will look to continue the Chicago Sports Alliance Fund on an annual basis, and decisions regarding programs that will receive future funding will be made as the effort progresses.

For more information about the Chicago Sports Alliance, visit <http://urbanlabs.uchicago.edu/projects/chicago-sports-alliance>.

### **About the Robert R. McCormick Foundation**

The Robert R. McCormick Foundation works with communities in Chicagoland and across Illinois to develop educated, informed, and engaged citizens. Through philanthropic grantmaking and Cantigny Park, the Foundation works to make life better in Chicagoland. The McCormick Foundation, among the nation's largest foundations with more than \$1.5 billion in assets, was established in 1955 upon the death of Col. Robert R. McCormick, the longtime editor and publisher of the Chicago Tribune. Find out more at [www.mccormickfoundation.org](http://www.mccormickfoundation.org).

### **About the Chicago Sports Alliance**

In December 2017, the Chicago Bears, Blackhawks, Bulls, Cubs and White Sox joined together to lend their broad reach and resources in support of solutions to decrease violence in the city. Working collectively as the Chicago Sports Alliance, over \$2 million total in grants have since been donated to support four initiatives addressing this critical issue: Choose to Change, READI Chicago (Rapid Employment and Development Initiative), analyst training by the Crime Lab for the Chicago Police Department’s Strategic Decision Support Centers (SDSCs) and the University of Chicago Crime Lab.

### **About the University of Chicago Crime Lab**

The University of Chicago Crime Lab partners with policymakers and practitioners to help cities design and test the most promising ways to reduce crime and improve human lives at scale. We focus on the most important criminal justice challenges of our time, including efforts to help Chicago and other cities prevent crime and violence from happening in the first place, improve schooling and income opportunities for those living in communities most impacted by violence and reduce the harms associated with the administration of criminal justice itself. To learn more about the Crime Lab, visit <https://urbanlabs.uchicago.edu/labs/crime>.

### **About Choose to Change (C2C)**

The Choose to Change (C2C) program was developed by Chicago nonprofits Youth Advocate Programs (YAP), Inc. and Children’s Home & Aid and selected as a winner of the University of Chicago Crime Lab’s 2015 Design Competition. C2C is a six-month program focused on developing the individual strengths of

youth to reduce criminal and violent behavior and improve academic achievement. Recognizing the multiple needs of youth at high-risk for being involved in violence, C2C provides youth with YAP's intensive support and holistic mentorship with Children's Home & Aid's trauma-informed therapy that seeks to help youth understand how trauma can influence their decision-making and help them develop a capacity for slowing down and thinking through alternatives before acting. Since 2015, C2C has served approximately 500 youth between the ages of 13-18 in Chicago's Greater Englewood community. For more information, please visit <https://urbanlabs.uchicago.edu/projects/choose-to-change>.

**About Rapid Employment and Development Initiative (READI Chicago)**

READI Chicago is an innovative response to gun violence. The program connects individuals most highly impacted by gun violence involvement to paid transitional jobs, cognitive behavioral therapy and support services to help them create a viable path and opportunities for a different future, and to reduce violence in the city's most impacted neighborhoods. Heartland Alliance is partnering with six community organizations in Austin, West Garfield Park, North Lawndale, and the Greater Englewood to implement the program. Since Fall 2017, READI Chicago has already engaged over 300 men. The University of Chicago Crime and Poverty Labs are studying the program's impact through a randomized control trial evaluation. For more information, please visit [www.heartlandalliance.org/readi](http://www.heartlandalliance.org/readi).