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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
THURSDAY, JANUARY 21, 2016

MEDIA ALERT

CHICAGO LEADS NATIONAL AVERAGE, NEW YORK & LOS ANGELES IN OUT OF WORK, OUT OF SCHOOL YOUTH *New Youth Employment Data To Be Released At Chicago Urban League Hearing*

WHAT: Despite a growing national economic recovery, a new report by the University of Illinois Chicago Great Cities Institute, *Lost: The Crisis Of Jobless And Out Of School Teens and Young Adults In Chicago, Illinois and the U.S.*, shows that Chicago is one of the nation's leaders in youth joblessness with **88 percent of Chicago's black teens (16-19) and 85 percent Hispanic teens jobless.** In response to these findings, as well as proposed cuts in federal and state employment programs, and the rising death toll as gang battles escalate, a group of youth, legislators, public officials and key agency leaders will tackle the impact of youth joblessness at a public hearing, ***Solution to the CRISIS: Youth Employment.***

Blacks and Hispanics continue to be significantly behind with 47 percent of young Black men (20-24) and 20 percent of young Hispanic men jobless and out of school in Chicago. This is compared to 32 percent nationwide and 31 percent in both New York and Los Angeles for Black men and 18 percent nationwide and in New York 27 percent and Los Angeles 14 percent for Hispanics. The new data also shows jobless rates for youth 20 to 24 are concentrated, with the highest on the South and West Sides and lowest on the North, Northwest and Southwest sides of Chicago.

Hearing conveners, the Alternative Schools Network, Chicago Urban League, Westside Health Authority, Chicago Area Project, Black United Fund of Illinois and Youth Connection Charter School, will release a platform of policy steps that are urgently needed to address this crisis. Former out-of-school high school students will present testimony to the panel of federal, state and local public officials regarding the impact of youth joblessness.

WHO: Youth Hearing Panelists include:

- IL State Sens. Mattie Hunter, Dist. 3; Kimberly Lightford, Dist. 4; & Napoleon Harris III, Dist. 15;
- IL State Reps. Monique Davis, Dist. 27; Will Davis, Dist. 30; Ken Dunkin, Dist. 5; Marcus Evans Jr., District 33; Mary Flowers, Dist. 31; La Shawn Ford, Dist. 8; Robyn Gabel, Dist. 18; Elizabeth Hernandez, Dist. 24; Camille Lilly, Dist. 78; Elgie R. Sims Jr., Dist. 34; Cynthia Soto, Dist. 4; & Arthur Turner, Dist. 9;
- Chicago's Department of Family and Support Services Commissioner Lisa Morrison Butler & Deputy Commissioner Mary Ellen Messner;
- City of Chicago Aldermen Walter Burnett Jr., Ward 27; George Cardenas, Ward 12; Willie Cochran, Ward 20; Harry Osterman, Ward 48; & Christopher Taliaferro, Ward 29;
- Cook County Commissioners Richard R. Boykin, District 1; Bridget Gainer, District 10; Jesus G. Garcia, District 7; Karen Chavers, District Director for Cook County Commissioner Larry Suffredin; and
- Audra Wilson, Deputy Chief of Staff for U.S. Congresswoman Robin Kelly.

Speakers include:

- Quiwana Bell, Chief Operating Officer, Westside Health Authority
- Teresa Córdova, Director, University of Illinois at Chicago Great Cities Institute
- Henry English, President & CEO, Black United Fund of Illinois
- Jesse Ruiz, Chairman, Chicago Park District
- Shari Runner, President & CEO, Chicago Urban League
- Sheila Venson, Executive Director, Youth Connection Charter School
- David Whittaker, Executive Director, Chicago Area Project
- Jack Wuest, Executive Director, Alternative Schools Network

WHEN: 9:00 a.m. – noon, Monday, January 25, 2016

WHERE: Chicago Urban League, 4510 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL

WHY: Out of school and out-of-work teens and young adults face adverse labor market consequences in their adult years, including higher incidence of unemployment, reduced earnings, and higher incidence of poverty. Jobless youth are also susceptible to influence by gangs and various behavioral and health problems. Investments in creating meaningful work for these youth will pay dividends immediately and for years to come.

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