

"METROSQUASH" continued from front

The project is the latest phase of Woodlawn Park, a master planned development of POAH. Woodlawn Park is being developed on the site of the former Grove Parc apartment complex, a 504-unit, HUD-assisted housing development built in the 1960s on the 6000 to 6300 blocks of South Cottage Grove Ave.

"MetroSquash, and the work being done by POAH, is an example of how we're investing in the future of Woodlawn and in the social fabric and the economic future of every neighborhood across the City," Mayor Emanuel said. "MetroSquash provides more of Chicago's youth an opportunity to persevere both on the court and in the classroom, but as importantly, when you make investments like this, other investments follow, creating opportunities throughout the neighborhood and lifting the economic fortunes of the entire community."

"The ribbon cutting is another significant step toward fulfilling the vision of what it takes to create a "Choice community," said Alderman Willie B. Cochran. "This deliberate process of leveraging resources responsibly and in partnership, with a holistic emphasis on community, is positively impacting the Woodlawn community in a way that we all can be proud of."



Letter from the Alderman

Life gives us all many windows of opportunities. It is up to each of us to get through that window and seize them. Every day on this earth is a day we are given to put forth dedicated effort to make our lives better. No matter what our circumstances are we can commit to making a positive change in our own lives, the lives of others and the place we live.



The community is changing for the better. New housing, new squash court, new community service center, new coffee house, new small business development center, new improvements to Fiske Elementary School and, last but not least, a new presidential library is coming. The Woodlawn community and the residents who live in Woodlawn and Washington Park have an open window of opportunity. Every day an effort should be made to get prepared to climb through that window to a promised future. Our communities are poised to be positively impacted. Let's work to ensure those who want to seize the opportunity for what our communities' offers are ready to do just that.

I want to applaud the national office of Preservation of Affordable Housing and the local staff in Chicago for working with me to achieve the outstanding results in transforming the Cottage Grove Corridor over the last 4 years. "Together we are Getting Things Done."

- Alderman Willie B. Cochran, 20th Ward



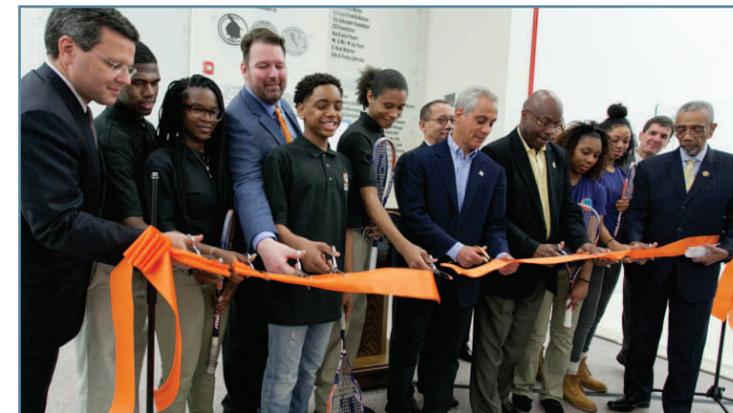
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6101 South Evans Avenue | Chicago, IL 60637

SUMMER 2015

WOODLAWN PARK

A Preservation of Affordable Housing NEWSLETTER

MetroSquash Opens New Academic and Squash Center in Woodlawn



Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Alderman Willie B. Cochran, Congressman Bobby Rush, MetroSquash representatives and members of the community recently cut the ribbon for the opening of MetroSquash's Academic & Squash Center, the first free-standing, 21,000 square-foot facility of its kind located at 6100 S. Cottage Grove.

MetroSquash's holistic program provides local youth with athletics (squash), academic tutoring, mentoring and life skills training to augment their success in school through college. Through the generous support of Chicago's squash, civic, foundation, and corporate communities, MetroSquash raised more than \$6.5 million. In addition, the City of Chicago and J.P. Morgan Chase provided a New Markets Tax Credit allocation that was instrumental in guaranteeing the successful completion of the project.

The new MetroSquash facility houses seven singles courts, a doubles court, four classrooms and office space. It is the largest squash facility in Chicago, the first urban squash center outside of the Northeast, and features the first street-level front-wall glass squash court in the world. The center will allow the program to more than double its capacity to serve over 300 students. Two-thirds of the current participants come from Woodlawn and its immediate neighboring communities.

See "METROSQUASH" on back cover >>>

From the POAH Chicago Office

With summer here, POAH and its partners continue to build, of course – but not just buildings.



In addition to transforming sections of Woodlawn block by block, we are also harnessing the energy and talents of our neighborhood youth. Between now and the time they head back to school, more than 100 Woodlawn youth will be engaged in camps, workshops, leadership seminars and jobs as part of our ongoing Choice Neighborhoods Initiative work.

In one case, we have neighborhood youth collaborating with Woodlawn seniors on art projects for our new senior building soon to open on Cottage Grove. Together, the seniors and youth will produce a series of paintings and other work that will adorn the walls.

That building, The Burnham, will open to its first new residents in August. In addition to high-end amenities for residents, the building will include the Woodlawn Resource Center and the Chicago headquarters for POAH Communities, our property management company. Our other summer "investments" cover a broad range of activities and ages. Kids, as young as four, will be attending day camps at Harris Park and the South Side YMCA.

See "CHICAGO OFFICE" inside >>>

Things are Blooming at the 62nd Street Community Garden

With an all new irrigation system, soil, woodchips and two new city lots at South Dorchester, the 62nd Street Community Garden has been renovated for the 2015 growing season.

Started in 2010, the 62nd Street Community Garden was created by Hyde Park and Woodlawn gardeners displaced from their original community garden at Blackstone and 61st. According to Charis Wuerffel, co-director of the garden, the 62nd Street Community Garden is committed to growing food organically and in giving back to its neighbors.

"We grow a variety of vegetables in garden boxes specifically for neighbors to pick located outside the fences along the sidewalk on Dorchester and 62nd Street," said Wuerffel. "Anyone walking by can pick and eat whatever is growing."

Now a part of NeighborSpace, a non-profit land trust whose goal is to protect and sustain community gardens in Chicago, 62nd Street Community Garden is in the process of remaking the entire garden. In April the east side of the garden was leveled, with new soil installed over a soil barrier into a new plot layout. In fall 2015, the garden's west side will be renovated in the same way.

"The 62nd Street Garden is open to all. We want our community garden to grow into a special kind of urban neighborhood that enriches the lives of many people," said Wuerffel.

For more information, questions or concerns about the garden or plot reservations, please contact the garden committee at info@62garden.com or leave a message at 773.789.8147.



New Businesses Coming to Woodlawn's Green Line Stops

Commuters at CTA's Green Line's Cottage Grove station will have a chance to enjoy fresh squeezed juice while commuters at the King Drive station can get their snacks and periodicals from a new newsstand.

Donald Grayson is opening Liquids1, a juice bar on the northbound Green Line Cottage Grove platform in mid-July, where he will offer five rotating varieties of juice and vegan snacks. A mix of lemon, apple and cucumber juice is slated to be featured this summer.

"I really wanted to make something so people could get their nutrients and vitamins," said Grayson.

Meanwhile, the King Drive Green Line stop will afford customers an opportunity to select periodicals from motor sports to music or politics to poetry at Chris & Cedric's Newsstand. Chris Montgomery and Cedric Harris, both Woodlawn residents, will fill a vacant concession space and add amenities to CTA Green Line riders and benefit the local community.



"CHICAGO OFFICE" continued from front

Thirty young people ages 14-18 will once again participate in the Chicago Youth Leadership Academy, living at the University of Chicago for six weeks while engaging in quality-of-life activities and other programming. Another group of kids will be working on a TV/radio production program and produce their own show for CAN-TV. Meanwhile, After School Matters, Chicago's nationally-recognized academic enhancement entity, will run a six-week program in Woodlawn during which youths will develop a mosaic that will be displayed publicly.

But we obviously don't do this work alone. We have so many partners – the City of Chicago, Harris Park, Ald. Willie Cochran, WECAN, Sunshine Gospel Ministries, to name just a few. But perhaps most importantly, we have dozens of families working with us to immerse their children in these wonderful offerings. Thanks to you all, and may we all have a happy, safe and productive summer.

- Bill Eager,
Vice President, Chicago Area
Preservation of Affordable Housing

Woodlawn Park Wins Urban Land Institute 2015 Vision Award



The Urban Land Institute (ULI) Chicago has awarded Woodlawn Park a 2015 'Program' Vision Award.

The ULI Chicago Vision Awards define the standard for real estate development in the Chicagoland area. The Vision Awards recognize the full development process – construction, economic viability, marketing, and management—as well as design – and promote best practices in development identifying projects and programs that exemplify the policy and practice areas that underpin ULI.

Fiske Elementary School – Meets the Challenge

Students at John Fiske Elementary School were treated to a visit by Chance the Rapper on May 29 after winning the Spring Get Schooled Get Connected Challenge. The contest was supported by the Chicago City of Learning (CCOL) and held in partnership with Comcast's Internet Essentials program. During the 10-week contest 4,000 youth from more than 20 CPS schools participated in 150,000 online sessions designed to make their paths to college smoother. Topics of the games, videos and interactive tools ranged from how to succeed in school and plan for continuing education to how to apply for college and identify financial aid resources. Because Fiske was one of the two schools to garner the most points in the challenge, Chance stopped by to present a Comcast sponsored check for \$1,500 to further assist students in the technology program.

At www.ChicagoCityofLearning.org youth ages 4-24 can find other programs and activities that meet every interest and are hosted online – as well as onsite throughout Chicago. Users earn digital badges that reflect what they've learned and accomplished, are stored in their free CCOL accounts, and can be shared with prospective employers or linked to college applications.

