A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends of the Chicago Urban League,

This, our Centennial year, has provided key opportunities to showcase our collective impact as a civil rights organization for 100 years and counting. We find ourselves doing so against a landscape that is fertile with growing racial inequality and the increased normalization of hate and intolerance that threatens to further divide our already heavily segregated city. And so, as we commemorate this milestone, we continue to challenge others with the most fundamental question: How do we grow as a city while making sure everyone has access to what they need to succeed and thrive?

The League’s programming and advocacy is indicative of our commitment to advancing racial equity by clearly and consistently positioning the discussion of race and structural racism at the front and center of the policy and practice landscapes in Chicago. As you’ll read in this issue of Empower, 2017 ushered in additional opportunities for us to engage supporters of all ages and in a variety of different sectors—from youth to seasoned professionals and policymakers.

We’re pleased to spotlight a longstanding partner in this edition of Empower, Lisa Cooper, Community Relations Specialist at State Farm Insurance Company.

We also held the second in our series of CULtivate Thought Leadership Breakfasts, sponsored by U.S. Bank and hosted by Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP, where we released our most recent research report entitled The Impact of Racial Residential Segregation on Education in a “No Excuses” Environment. Featuring keynote speaker Ralph Martire from the Center for Tax and Budget Accountability, highly engaged attendees—which included educators, community activists, and more—discussed how segregation has affected educational funding in Chicago.

And this past February, in partnership with Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP, we hosted our sixth annual Black Film Festival. As you’ll read in the newsletter, students from our Center for Student Development showcased their self-produced documentaries and had the chance to receive feedback from professionals in the film industry.

Looking forward, our SUMMIT Luncheon – Centennial Edition on Wednesday, May 24th will feature the esteemed Mellody Hobson, President, Ariel Investments, in conversation with Connie Lindsey, Executive Vice President and Head of Corporate Social Responsibility and Global Diversity & Inclusion at Northern Trust. Themed the “Color of Business,” this year’s event focuses on diversity in the workplace. As in past years, we will highlight four local innovators who have been making strides in changing the racial make-up of the business sector in the Chicagoland area.

This quarter proved that our programming and events could not have been done without the continued support of our partners. Indeed, the intergenerational exchange we foster in a quest for a more equitable Chicago would be unattainable without your presence—thank you for taking this journey with us, each and every day.

President and CEO
State Farm, a national insurance company, has supported the Chicago Urban League for more than 21 years. State Farm has provided significant financial and volunteer support to the League's Center for Student Development, Housing and Financial Empowerment Center, and signature fundraising events. In the following Q&A, Lisa Cooper, Community Relations Specialist at State Farm, discusses why State Farm invests in resources that enhance educational development and financial empowerment in underserved communities as well as the motivation for her personal commitment to philanthropy.

What is your role at State Farm Insurance?
As a household brand, State Farm's mission is to help people manage the risks of everyday life, recover from the unexpected and realize their dreams. I do this by connecting with community organizations, educational institutions, legislators and more than 650 State Farm agents in an effort to educate, strengthen and grow communities in the Chicago area. This work has offered me the chance to connect with the community in a variety of ways. It is exhilarating for me and State Farm agents to have the chance to: clean vacant lots, build community gardens, paint murals, judge Science Fair projects, teach financial literacy modules for children and young adults, speak with teens about distracted driving and recognizing hazards on the roadway, and meet and speak with legislators about issues that affect the community.

Can you share more about State Farm Insurance's commitment to impacting communities through safety, community development and education?
State Farm prefers to utilize our local philanthropic resources to support programs and activities that align with our business purpose: auto/home/fire safety, financial literacy, first-time homebuyer education, foreclosure prevention, creating/growing small businesses, and two specific educational initiatives (service-learning and Teacher Excellence programs). Our work with the Chicago Urban League is a fit for our community development efforts and we have enjoyed supporting the League's programs and events including the Housing & Financial Empowerment Center, Project Ready College, Project Ready High School, Youth Investor/Entrepreneur Project, the Annual SUMMIT Luncheon, and the Annual Golden Fellowship Dinner.

Why has State Farm Insurance remained a longtime partner of the Chicago Urban League and how do you see the partnership evolving?
Many years ago State Farm sponsored the National Urban League’s Achievement Matters program. The planning committee worked tirelessly to recognize and reward city and suburban high school students who were excelling academically, through extra-curricular activities and in service to their community.

State Farm later expanded the partnership with the Chicago Urban League to offer free certified child passenger safety seat inspections and provided free safety seats, if needed, through our National Child Passenger Safety Day events. Since then we have also connected with the League’s programs that promote financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and homeownership.

What does an ideal partnership with a nonprofit organization look like to State Farm Insurance?
An ideal partnership for State Farm should include connecting our local agents to volunteer opportunities. The local State Farm agent is the face of the company in the community. Our agents are small business owners and they want to connect to others in their neighborhood as would any other successful business owner. This includes connecting with local legislators on key issues that affect the communities where we live and work. Lastly, we are looking to develop the workforce of the future. We want to ensure their educational and training success so that they will be adequately prepared to keep our communities vibrant and productive.

For more information on State Farm and its products and services, please visit: www.statefarm.com
On February 28, 2017, the Chicago Urban League and U.S. Bank presented the second CULTivate Thought Leadership Breakfast, hosted by Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP, a legal services corporation. Attended by more than 120 guests, Shari Runner, President and CEO of the Chicago Urban League, spoke to the audience about the impact of segregation on education.

“Our goal is to act as a conduit to connect diverse sectors of Chicago to engage in important discussions, the exchange of ideas, and a commitment to action,” Ms. Runner said. “It is no secret that Chicago remains a city of contrasts: separate and unequal.”

Brian Duwe, Partner at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP and Chicago Urban League Board Member, and Marsha Cruzan, Senior Vice President and Regional President at U.S. Bank, discussed the importance of collaboration when working to provide the best possible support to underprivileged children in Chicago.

“We are grateful that the Chicago Urban League is not only committed to gathering data that helps us identify the challenges that plague our communities, but also taking necessary actions to counter what years of policies have done to produce racial inequities,” said Mr. Duwe.

Dr. Stephanie Bechteler, Vice President and Executive Director of the League’s Research and Policy Center, presented the report entitled The Impact of Segregation on Education in a “No Excuses” Environment. Mr. Ralph Martire, Executive Director of the Center for Tax and Budget Accountability, explained several pieces of state policy that have hindered the development of more successful educational budgeting at the state level.

As Ms. Cruzan said, “each of us…is committed to the climb for a more equitable Chicago, and I’m confident that, in the League, we have the right team leading the way.”

For more information about the Research and Policy Center, please contact Dr. Stephanie Bechteler, Vice President and Executive Director of the Research and Policy Center, at sbechteler@thechicagourbanleague.org.
PROGRAM AND EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Angela Hamilton, Director of the Chicago Urban League’s Human Capital Center, poses with the Group Mentoring Youth IMPACT Award, presented to the Center at the Illinois Mentoring Partnership Breakfast on January 27, 2017.

Senator Dick Durbin (center) and Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle, (right), at the Youth Unemployment Hearing hosted by the League on January 30, 2017.

Chicago Urban League President and CEO Shari Runner (center) participated in a City Club of Chicago Panel Discussion, “Crime in Chicago: Some Facts and Some Puzzles for 2017” with Jens Ludwig, McCormick Foundation Professor at the University of Chicago (left) and Fred Waller, Chief of the Bureau Patrol of the Chicago Police Department, on January 26.

U.S. Bank hosted a job training workshop for participants of the Workforce Development Center on February 21.

George Wu, Professor of Behavioral Science at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business, discussing decision making with IMPACT Fellows and alumni on Thursday, February 23.

Peter K. Gillespie, Regional President Chicago of Huntington Bank (left) and Richard Remiker, Senior Executive Vice President of Huntington Bank (right) pose with Margaret Wooten, Senior Director of the League’s Housing & Financial Empowerment Center, during the presentation of a grant for the Center on Thursday, March 23.

George Wu, Professor of Behavioral Science at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business, discussing decision making with IMPACT Fellows and alumni on Thursday, February 23.
Thursday, April 20, 2017  
**Workforce Development Orientation**  
Chicago Urban League, 9:00am - 12:00pm

Thursday, April 20, 2017  
**Tech Around Town: Business Model Canvas Workshop**  
Chicago Urban League, 6:00pm - 8:00pm

Friday, April 28, 2017  
**Homeownership: Becoming a First Time Home Buyer**  
Chicago Urban League, 6:00pm - 7:30pm

Monday, May 15, 2017  
**On the Table**  
Chicago Urban League, 8:00am - 9:30am

Thursday, June 19-20, 2017  
**Employment to Empowerment Workshop**  
Chicago Urban League, 10:00am - 4:00pm

Thursday, June 22, 2017  
**Workforce Development Orientation**  
Chicago Urban League, 9:00am - 12:00pm

**STAY CONNECTED**

For more information about the Chicago Urban League, visit www.thechicagourbanleague.org.