Dear Friends,

Thank you for reading Empower, our quarterly update to partners and community members. Fall is upon us and, while the leaves and weather are rapidly changing, what remains constant is our commitment to giving the people we serve the opportunities they need to realize their educational, economic and personal development goals. This would not be possible without your partnership.

In this issue we will recap several recent events including the launch of our IMPACT Leadership Development Program, our inspiring STEM Summer Camp, and our support of a unique program that is cultivating business leaders in several African countries.

Other topics in this quarter’s newsletter include a special feature on a graduate of our successful Transportation Construction Apprenticeship Readiness Program (TCART) and our annual Back to School Fest that helped several hundred students start the school year off right with backpacks and school supplies. Our Partner Spotlight recognizes Walgreens for their longtime support of the Chicago Urban League. Be sure to read the insightful Q&A with John Gremer, Director of Community Affairs at Walgreens.

Hopefully you’ve marked your calendar for the 53rd Annual Golden Fellowship Dinner on Saturday, November 15th at the Hilton Chicago. The celebration will be hosted by comedian Damon Williams and will feature the remarkably talented Vanessa Williams. If you have not already made your commitment to the best gala in town, there is still time. More information about the dinner and our recent Preview Party is in the newsletter.

Thank you again for reading Empower and for your commitment to the Chicago Urban League. Together we are building a stronger African American community and a better Chicago.

Yours in the movement,

Andrea L. Zopp
President & CEO
For more than 25 years, Walgreens has partnered with the Chicago Urban League, providing significant volunteer and financial support for the League’s programs and initiatives. In 2013, Walgreen Co. President & CEO, Gregory P. Wasson served as co-chair of the League’s signature fundraising gala, the Golden Fellowship Dinner. Recently, Walgreens staff volunteers provided inoculations for student travelers participating in the League’s Student Mission to China Initiative.

Below, John Gremer, Director of Community Affairs at Walgreens, discusses Walgreens’ commitment to social responsibility initiatives, how volunteering, philanthropy and leadership development work together, and the shared missions between Walgreens and the Chicago Urban League.

Describe your role with Walgreens.

Like my nearly 250,000 teammates, my role is to help our customers get, stay and live well. As the director of community affairs, my focus is to ensure that our community outreach and corporate philanthropy support that same goal.

Can you speak to the importance of Walgreens’ social responsibility initiatives like the ‘Way to Well Tour’?

The Way to Well Tour is designed to help empower individuals and provide them knowledge in regard to their health. Too often African American and Hispanic communities are impacted disproportionately by preventable and treatable diseases such as hypertension and diabetes. The tour, which provides blood pressure, blood glucose, and cholesterol and body mass index tests, is an important tool to provide free and convenient testing. At the National Urban League Conference this year in Cincinnati, we celebrated providing more than one million people with free tests with our partners, the National Urban League and AARP. Again, developing programs that benefit the community and having partners which make them successful is key to helping people get, stay and live well.

What does the ideal partnership with a non-profit organization look like to Walgreens?

A great partner has shared goals and a shared focus on results. An ideal partner has those qualities and shared values and passion. The closer you are aligned with your partner, the more effective you can be and provide exceptional results. I can’t say it any better than National Urban League President and CEO Mark Morial, “We share a commitment to improving the health outcomes in our communities and are looking forward to continuing to work together to empower people to live healthier lives.”

Why has Walgreens remained a longtime partner of the Chicago Urban League and how do you see the partnership evolving moving forward?

The Chicago Urban League and Walgreens not only share a mission, but we also believe that all people should have equal opportunity for success and health. Over the years, our partnership will take different forms and manifest itself in different programs as needs and circumstances dictate. I believe that because both organizations value service, we will always find new ways to work together. For example, this spring we were able to provide free travel vaccinations and counseling to Chicago Urban League’s Student Mission to China travelers. While the focus of the program was to create more knowledgeable global citizens, our focus was to help ensure the students’ health as they traveled. Because of our shared beliefs, passions and goals, the Chicago Urban League is a valued partner. We are proud to partner with the League and of our shared service to the citizens of Chicago.
On Tuesday, August 26, 2014, the Chicago Urban League hosted a Welcome Reception for its first IMPACT Leadership Development Program (IMPACT) class. The reception, hosted at the offices of Baker & McKenzie, brought together for the first time the 34 program fellows and their mentors, as well as members of the IMPACT Advisory Council, and program partners, The Joyce Foundation, The Chicago Community Trust and University of Chicago Booth School of Business.

“Tonight we introduce you to our inaugural fellows who will, for the next nine months, sharpen their leadership skills, receive valuable advice from business leaders and form lasting professional bonds with each other,” said Chicago Urban League President and CEO, Andrea L. Zopp. “One of the things we want to do with this program is create a strong network of leaders who know each other, support each other, respect each other, and can help each other when needed.”

In addition to serving as the education partner for the IMPACT program, the University of Chicago’s Booth School of Business will host the program at the Gleacher Center, in downtown Chicago. “When first discussing this program, it immediately felt like something the University of Chicago had to be involved in,” said Dr. George Wu, Professor of Managerial and Organizational Behavior at the Booth School of Business. “I look forward to working with the fellows over the coming year.”

For at least one program fellow, IMPACT is not her first experience with the Chicago Urban League. “I was first exposed to the Chicago Urban League when I was a teenager and participated in a college readiness program that prepared me for the ACT/SAT,” shared Tasha Henderson, Chief Financial Officer at Loop Capital. “As I embark on the next chapter of my career, I wanted to get more involved both professionally and civically, share my knowledge and experiences as well as build a stronger network of individuals not only taking my same path, but who also look like me.”

Mavis Laing, Executive Director of IMPACT, shared her hopes for the first class of fellows, “We have an extraordinarily talented group of young professionals who have already established a strong track record of achievement,” stated Laing. “What we hope to do is to have them become even more prepared to take on more significant roles in the future through what they learn in the program.”

For more information about the Chicago Urban League’s IMPACT Leadership Development Program, contact Mavis Laing, Executive Director, at mlaing@thechicagourbanleague.org or visit TheChicagoUrbanLeague.org. For more information about the University of Chicago Booth School of Business, visit ChicagoBooth.edu.
BACK TO SCHOOL FEST

On Saturday, August 16, 2014, the Chicago Urban League hosted its annual Back to School Fest attended by more than 750 students and their families. In preparation for the beginning of a new school year, the Fest celebrated students and motivated them to invest in their learning by providing them with a variety of fun activities as well as backpacks filled with school supplies. Chicago Urban League President & CEO, Andrea L. Zopp welcomed the families to the Fest, while thanking event sponsors, Walmart, First Midwest Bank, Walgreens and PepsiCo.

Longtime supporter of the Chicago Urban League, Walmart provided 600 supply-filled backpacks that were distributed during the Fest. “Walmart is pleased to support the Chicago Urban League and is committed to helping students in need in the communities where we serve,” said John Bisio, Director of Public Affairs and Government Relations at Walmart. “By providing backpacks and school supplies to the Back to School Fest, we hope these students feel supported and prepared for a successful school year.”

While students enjoyed a host of fun activities including basketball, manicures and face paintings, parents learned more about programming at the Chicago Urban League and the Charles A. Hayes Family Investment Center. After lunch, families enjoyed an energetic and gravity defying performance by the Chicago Boyz Acrobatics team.

To learn more about the Chicago Urban League’s Back to School Fest, contact Danielle Parker, Director of the Education Department, at dparker@thechicagourbanleague.org, or visit TheChicagoUrbanLeague.org.

BUSINESS LEADERSHIP ROUNDTABLE

On July 21, 2014, the Chicago Urban League’s Entrepreneurship Center hosted the Washington Fellows Business Leadership Roundtable for 23 Washington Fellows from the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI). As a part of the Business Entrepreneur Institute at Northwestern University, the fellows had the opportunity to visit with the Chicago Urban League to learn how the Entrepreneurship Center empowers individuals to become leaders in the private sector. The visiting Fellows are part of a group of 500 promising young leaders from each Sub-Saharan African country involved in YALI.

“I’ve looked into the Chicago Urban League’s entrepreneurship programs and believed that a roundtable would be a unique opportunity for the Fellows,” shared Matthew Pietrus, Program Coordinator for YALI Washington Fellowship, Farley Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation at Northwestern University.

During the Roundtable, Fellows shared their expertise and ideas in a variety of business areas with Entrepreneurship Center alumni, current clients and local business owners. Participants discussed a variety of topics that included marketing and branding, access to capital, international trade, operations management and quality control.

To learn more about the Chicago Urban League’s Entrepreneurship Center, contact Selena Sizemore, Director of the Entrepreneurship Center, at ssizemore@thechicagourbanleague.org or visit TheChicagoUrbanLeague.org. For more information on the Young African Leadership Initiative, visit usaid.gov/yali.
TCART SUCCESS

Avis Minor graduated from the first cohort of the Chicago Urban League’s Transportation Construction Apprenticeship Readiness Training, Referral and Intermodal Placement Program (TCART). Minor, like many TCART participants, came to the Chicago Urban League with a previous criminal record and was referred to TCART because it provides disadvantaged people, minorities, and women, access to hands-on training in transportation and highway construction.

Minor is a single parent to two young girls, ages 5 and 7. While enrolled in TCART, Minor was also working full-time at Jiffy Lube. It was her familiarity with hard work and a busy schedule that helped Minor to excell during the training program.

After graduating from TCART, Minor sought employment in the construction field, and in the interim, accepted a job as a delivery truck driver. By remaining in contact with the Chicago Urban League’s Workforce Development Department employment specialists, Minor was ultimately able to realize her career goal of working in the construction industry.

In June 2014, Minor signed a contract with The Local 150 Labors Union, as a Construction Material Inspector. Minor is currently the first African American and the only female to hold this position.

TCART is an 11-week, hands-on construction training program funded by the Illinois Department of Transportation. Participants in the program receive mentoring, training, access to union apprenticeships and placement assistance once they have completed the program.

To learn more about the Chicago Urban League’s TCART program, contact Clayton Pryor, Director of Workforce Development, at cpryor@thechicagourbanleague.org or visit TheChicagoUrbanLeague.org.

UNITED SUPPORTS NATIONAL DAY OF SERVICE

On September 11, 2014, the Chicago Urban League and United Airlines partnered to participate in the National Day of Service at CUL partner school, Community Youth Development Institute (CYDI). Forty-five members of United’s Legal department volunteered, working side-by-side with CYDI students and staff on urban gardening, beautification and technology projects.

“We thought this year would be a terrific opportunity to deepen the relationship between United and the Chicago Urban League,” said Brett Hart, Executive Vice President, General Counsel and Secretary at United and Chicago Urban League board member. “Today’s activity provides United with an invaluable opportunity to get out into the community and really see where students are focusing their energy. To work with these kids in any way we can is a great opportunity for United.”

United volunteers created paintings to hang throughout the school, assisted CYDI technology instructors with teaching students key aspects of linear problem solving concepts and skills, and helped winterize the school’s urban garden, including weeding, building planter boxes and storage sheds, and repositioning the chicken coop.

“I was so impressed by the attitude and hard work of the volunteers,” shared Aaron Royster, Principal of CYDI. “The projects that United volunteers completed represent how we can impact the community and young people when we work together on initiatives that have a direct impact.”

To learn more about the Chicago Urban League’s programs and initiatives, visit TheChicagoUrbanLeague.org. For more information on United Airlines visit United/globalcitizenship.com.
On August 15, 2014, the Chicago Urban League’s two-week Project Ready - STEM Summer Camp came to a successful close. More than 50 elementary and middle school students participated in the camp, increasing their career exploration in STEM fields through hands-on learning, workshops, guest speakers and field trips. This year, Abbott served as lead program partner, providing leadership support for the camp, including interactive presentations and workshops for the young participants, as well as a tour of Abbott’s Molecular Facility. During the interactive workshops, Abbott engineers and scientists showed campers how to build electrical circuits as well as demonstrated the process of turning tea into water.

“STEM jobs will continue to grow for years to come and the availability of potential employees to meet that demand is not currently projected to keep up,” said Corlis Murray, Senior Vice President, Quality Assurance, Regulatory and Engineering Services at Abbott. “Programs geared to fill this gap, such as those provided by the Chicago Urban League, are invaluable in creating opportunities to expose young people to this high-demand field at an early age. Abbott is pleased to have an active role in supporting this program.”

While on their day-long field trip to Abbott’s Molecular Facility, students learned about the importance of Molecular Biology in modern medicine. Attired in their white lab coats and safety goggles, campers learned to successfully extract DNA from strawberries. In addition to the lab coats, proudly worn by the engineers- and scientists-in-the-making, Abbott provided each camper with a backpack full of accessories including a lunch bag, water bottle, lip balm, and a notebook.

“I really enjoyed the Chicago Urban League’s STEM Summer Camp…and the field trip to the Abbott Molecular Facility was awesome!,” said sixth-grader, Anthony*. “I’m looking forward to next year’s camp and exploring more cool ways to learn about STEM!”

To learn more about the Chicago Urban League’s Project Ready - STEM Summer Camp, contact Danielle Parker, Director of the Education Department, at dparker@thechicagourbanleague.org or visit TheChicagoUrbanLeague.org. To learn more about Abbott, visit Abbott.com/abbott-citizenship.html.

*Last name withheld to protect client confidentiality
NORTHERN TRUST HOSTS PREVIEW PARTY

On Tuesday, September 16, 2014, Northern Trust hosted the Chicago Urban League’s 53rd Annual Golden Fellowship Dinner Preview Party in their newly created, state-of-the-art Global Conference Center. The intimate Preview Party gathered dinner sponsors, members of the event’s Host Committee, as well as the Chicago Urban League Board of Directors and prospective sponsors.

“The Golden Fellowship Dinner is a great party,” said Andrea L. Zopp, President and CEO of the Chicago Urban League. “But what makes it great is its purpose. It provides critical financial support for the Chicago Urban League and its efforts to provide educational, economic and social empowerment to the African American community.”

This year’s 53rd Annual Golden Fellowship Dinner will take place on Saturday, November 15, 2014, at the Hilton Chicago. Themed: Opportunity, Community, Impact: A Movement that Matters, the dinner will be headlined by the multifaceted performer, Vanessa Williams. This year’s Bill Berry Award honorees include opera legend Jessye Norman and Chicago housing activist, Clyde Ross.

To learn more about the 53rd Annual Golden Fellowship Dinner, including sponsorship opportunities, please contact Erika Soria at esoria@thechicagourbanleague.org or visit TheChicagoUrbanLeague.org.

PROGRAM & EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Illinois Governor, Pat Quinn, with members of the Chicago Urban League’s Workforce Development Program at the launch of the TCART training program’s second year.

The winning team of the ComEd Ice Box Derby included a Chicago Urban League ‘Project Ready’ program participant. The Chicago Urban League was one of ComEd’s community partners for the Derby.

Cook County Board President, Toni Preckwinkle poses with Andrea L. Zopp, President and CEO of the Chicago Urban League and two Chicago Urban League students at the annual Bud Billiken parade, celebrating the start of a new school year.
10/30/14
**Weekly Workforce Development Program Orientation**
Chicago Urban League, 9:30am

11/5/14
**Foreclosure Prevention Workshop**
Chicago Urban League, 4pm-6pm

11/10/14
**Chicago Urban League Women’s Board Meeting**
Chicago Urban League, 6:30pm

11/13/14
**The Leaguers of the Chicago Urban League Meeting**
Chicago Urban League, 5pm

11/13/14
**Metropolitan Board of the Chicago Urban League Meeting**
Chicago Urban League, 6:30pm

11/15/14
**53rd Annual Golden Fellowship Dinner**
Hilton Chicago, 6pm-12am

11/29/14
**Second Annual Sip & Shop (Small Business Saturday)**
Chicago Urban League, 10:30am-3pm