

For Immediate Release

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## **Children's Home + Aid Wins \$1 Million Grant for Project to Curb Youth Violence**

*Winners of the Chicago Design Competition include three programs to start in 2015*

CHICAGO, June 4, 2015 – From more than 200 proposals, a program developed by Children's Home + Aid, a leading child and family service agency in Illinois, in partnership with Youth Advocate Programs, Inc., has won a \$1 million grant to reduce youth violence in Chicago.

Two additional recipients, the David Lynch Foundation and the Sweet Water Foundation, won grants of \$300,000 each for smaller-scale pilot programs in the Chicago Design Competition. The programs are being generously supported by Get IN Chicago, the John D. And Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and Pritzker Pucker Family Foundations.

The competition was designed to bring innovative resources to make Chicago safer for its children and generate insights that can be used nationally. A major component of the competition will be a rigorous evaluation of the programs with University of Chicago Crime Lab researchers working with the grantees to analyze their program's impact, outcomes and cost-effectiveness. The three winners were selected by a team of experts in youth services, juvenile justice advocacy and adolescent development from over 200 applicants.

“This innovative and collaborative approach will help us break through the cycle of violence and lack of opportunity that distress Chicago communities and the youth that navigate them,” said Toni Irving, executive director of Get IN Chicago, started two years ago as a public-private partnership to bring innovation and resources to at-risk youth in Chicago neighborhoods hardest hit by poverty and violence. “We are thrilled to partner with two world-class foundations, The University of Chicago Crime Lab and three innovative service organizations.”

The \$1 million Children's Home + Aid grant will support a study of a new program that combines the agency's trauma-focused cognitive behavior therapy with services from Youth Advocate Programs, Inc. These advocates serve youth by devoting time to them before and after school and on weekends – the times when they are most susceptible to violence. The collaborative initiative will assist 220 youth ages 13-18 who are most at-risk for engaging in violent behavior and becoming involved in the juvenile justice system or disconnecting from school. The program will be deployed in the Englewood and West Englewood neighborhoods.

“We are excited about this partnership with Youth Advocate Programs and the Crime Lab, and about the opportunity to work on reducing gang activity and violence in the lives of Chicago's highest-risk youth,” said Nancy Ronquillo, president and CEO of Children's Home + Aid. “We believe we can help these youth stay connected to their schools, families and communities, as well as access the therapy and support they need to deal with the trauma and violence they have already experienced in their lives.”

Receiving the pilot project grants are:

- David Lynch Foundation, whose project will support teaching its Quiet Time program to youth in high crime areas. Roughly 250 teens are expected to participate in the first year

of the program, whose goal is to reduce criminal and violent behavior by using evidence-based meditation as a tool to decrease stress and the effects of trauma.

- Sweet Water Foundation, whose project will support its Apprenticeship and Outreach Program at its current Perry Avenue site and its plan to expand into the Englewood, North Lawndale, Woodlawn or Roseland neighborhoods of Chicago. Fifty youth will participate in this program, which provides education and career training in urban agriculture and aquaponics, a system of aquaculture, in an effort to decrease violence and crime.

“As heartbreaking as the challenge of youth violence is, it has been incredibly inspiring to see the level of commitment, range of ideas and hard work of people and organizations on the ground working to keep Chicago youth safe. We look forward to partnering with these organizations to generate evidence that can help Chicago and other cities struggling with youth violence,” said Roseanna Ander, executive director of the University of Chicago Crime Lab and the Urban Education Lab, and Senior Director of the UChicago Urban Labs.

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#### About Get IN Chicago

Get IN Chicago (GIC) is an innovative five-year, \$50 million partnership that focuses on identifying, funding, and rigorously evaluating evidence-based programs that lead to sustainable reductions in violence for individuals and communities. Since 2013, GIC has awarded more than \$6 million to 32 non-profit organizations for evidence-based community programs to support 5,300 at-risk youth and their families in Chicago communities most affected by violence and poverty. More information is available at [www.getinchicago.org](http://www.getinchicago.org).

#### About the MacArthur Foundation

The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation supports creative people and effective institutions committed to building a more just, verdant, and peaceful world. In addition to selecting the MacArthur Fellows, the Foundation works to defend human rights, advance global conservation and security, make cities better places, and understand how technology is affecting children and society. More information is available at [www.macfound.org](http://www.macfound.org).

#### About the Pritzker Pucker Family Foundation

The Pritzker Pucker Family Foundation, in its violence prevention portfolio, focuses on promoting strategies, programs and interventions that strengthen communities, change the trajectory of people’s lives and allow neighborhoods to flourish. More information is available at [www.pritzkerpuckerfamilyfoundation.org](http://www.pritzkerpuckerfamilyfoundation.org).

#### About the University of Chicago Crime Lab

Since its launch in 2008, the Crime Lab has partnered with government agencies and nonprofits to conduct randomized controlled trials of promising policies and interventions to prevent crime and violence. In 2011, Crime Lab leaders founded the Urban Education Lab to bring the same rigorous scientific model and public-private collaboration to improving schooling and life outcomes for urban youth. Since early 2015, the Crime Lab and the Urban Education Lab have begun to work with three new labs – Poverty, Health, and Energy and Environment – to address urban challenges across all five areas. This new initiative, UChicago Urban Labs, brings together world-class faculty and a distinctive approach, combining action-oriented scientific inquiry with real-time impact. More information is available at [www.crimelab.uchicago.edu](http://www.crimelab.uchicago.edu).