How is your city investing in the next generation of civic leaders?

CIVIC LEADERSHIP ACADEMY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Transforming Leaders
Transforming Cities
The University of Chicago created the Civic Leadership Academy to tap into the University’s intellectual strengths to educate a new kind of student—the civic leaders who are working within the neighborhoods of our city, addressing our most complex urban issues.

Through the Civic Leadership Academy, we provide these rising nonprofit and government leaders with an opportunity they rarely encounter, to develop essential leadership skills while working together to benefit the city and region.

We designed the Civic Leadership Academy to be a mutually beneficial opportunity. In addition to the nonprofits and public leaders who are hungry for leadership development, CLA benefits their sponsoring organizations by equipping fellows with tools to carry out their missions. It also impacts the University faculty whose research and teaching can be informed by the experience of local civic leaders.

It would not have been possible to launch the Civic Leadership Academy without support and partnership from all facets of Chicago’s civic life: government, nonprofits, foundations, and corporations. Recognizing the transformative potential this program has for cities throughout the country, JPMorgan Chase supported a three-year evaluation to understand the efficacy of the Civic Leadership Academy. The data that has emerged from that evaluation confirms what we had hoped—the University’s investment in emerging leaders has individual, organizational, and citywide benefits.

The Civic Leadership Academy is indicative of the University’s larger strategic vision for civic engagement and education that fosters leadership, service, and new ideas. Not only does it enhance our partnerships across the city, but it helps to expand the capacity of our city’s institutions and their leaders. It fuels a growing network of civic leaders who contribute to an impactful exchange of ideas within the University of Chicago community and across the city of Chicago.
In September 2017, JPMorgan Chase announced a $40 million commitment over three years to help drive inclusive growth in Chicago’s underserved neighborhoods on the South and West Sides. Drawing from proven models we implemented in Detroit, our support focuses on key drivers of inclusive growth to help more Chicagoans move up the economic ladder.

As we look to the work ahead, one lesson stands out to me, and it’s this: Transforming cities and communities can’t happen without strong networks of capable and committed civic leaders. Just as well-run companies cultivate a deep talent bench, the nonprofit and public sectors need a pipeline of individuals with the skills, networks, and leadership ability to successfully tackle key challenges facing America’s cities. This is why we are so proud to support the Civic Leadership Academy (CLA) at the University of Chicago as part of JPMorgan Chase’s larger effort to build the capacity of the nonprofit sector across the country.

In cities across the country, JPMorgan Chase is involved in a wide-ranging effort that links the private, public, and nonprofit sectors to stabilize neighborhoods, train workers, and bolster local small businesses, all while attracting new investors to the city. And it all starts with ensuring that local leaders have the support they need to realize their hopes and dreams for their hometowns—together.

For Chicago and other cities to reach their full potential as vibrant, inclusive centers of opportunity, it is essential to invest in civic leadership. With the CLA, the University of Chicago has created an innovative model for doing that, one that would serve other cities well. Whether CLA participants are working in government or the nonprofit sector, or on issues ranging from education and economic development to public health and social services, through this experience, these emerging leaders are poised to have a positive impact in shaping Chicago’s future.

We are proud of our continued collaboration with the University of Chicago, and we look forward to all of the great contributions the CLA graduates will make to ensure that Chicago is a city of opportunity for all residents.
William Howell serves as the Faculty Director of the Civic Leadership Academy. He is the Sydney Stein Professor in American Politics at the University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy and a professor in the Department of Political Science and the College.

The Civic Leadership Academy at the University of Chicago is where civic leaders come together and grow.

CLA is the catalyst and host that brings together civic leaders so they can gain knowledge and skills from UChicago faculty and each other, and make the city better for all.

110 hours of curricula
20+ faculty and practitioners
7-day global practicum
The University of Chicago recognizes its civic responsibility to leverage its intellectual resources, bring together government and nonprofit leaders with an interdisciplinary team of faculty, and grow the civic infrastructure of a dynamic city.

The University of Chicago brings together...

GOVERNMENT
The Civic Leadership Academy works closely with local government officials to tailor the program in a way that addresses the urgent need for leadership development within the city and county.

NONPROFITS
The University works with established and emerging nonprofits at the city and neighborhood level to design the curriculum, recruit high-potential leaders, and cultivate individuals who will become senior leadership in the next three to five years.

FACULTY
The Civic Leadership Academy is distinctive because it draws faculty from all five professional schools, exposing fellows to conceptual knowledge from behavioral science, political science, economics, humanities, and public policy, and creating mutual benefits for the fellows and faculty who learn from one another.

LOCAL PARTNERS
The CLA is enabled by partnerships with organizations such as LISC Chicago, which supports local nonprofits; the Civic Consulting Alliance, bridging the private and government sector; local practitioners, who share their domain-specific knowledge; and foundations, corporations, and individuals that care about investing in the city’s future.

THE CITY
In a city as large and complex as Chicago, it’s important that government and nonprofit leaders can collaborate across sectors in meaningful ways.

PHILANTHROPY
The CLA engages community foundations and civic-minded corporations as co-creators of its structure, content, and evaluation, which provides the needed catalyst resources and connections to launch and sustain the innovative program.
The University of Chicago brought together local government and non-profit sectors to study with faculty from multiple disciplines and civic practitioners, making a positive impact on the individual fellows, their organizations, and the larger civic network of Chicago, thus benefiting the city.
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With the generous support of JPMorgan Chase, Outlier Research & Evaluation conducted a three-year, comprehensive evaluation of the Civic Leadership Academy between April 2015 and December 2017.

Read the full 75-page report at cla.uchicago.edu/impact
The Reach

88 fellows focused on:

- EDUCATION
- TECHNOLOGY
- HOUSING
- ENERGY
- SOCIAL SERVICE
- ENVIRONMENT
- PUBLIC SAFETY
- TRANSPORTATION
- ARTS & CULTURE
- LEGAL
- WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
- COMMUNITY ORGANIZING
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CLA fellows served all neighborhoods in Chicago, with a concentration on the South and West sides.

from all 77 Chicago neighborhoods

The Methodology

1. Leadership Survey
   (before and after each cohort with fellows and supervisors)
2. Network Survey
   (before and after each cohort)
3. Focus Groups
   (with fellows and supervisors)
4. Case Studies
   (deep dive interviews with 12 fellows every six months for three years)
The Civic Leadership Academy’s impact starts with the fellow, but it doesn’t stop there.

As the fellows’ leadership skills improve, their organizations feel the benefit, and the combination of individuals and organizations working in concert strengthens the civic fabric of the city.
Individual Evaluation

How has the leadership behavior and self-efficacy of fellows changed because of the Civic Leadership Academy?

From beginning to end, fellows became more confident in:

- Using data to guide decision-making
  - Start: 59%
  - End: 91%

- Understanding others’ perspectives
  - Start: 59%
  - End: 82%

- Developing effective action plans
  - Start: 77%
  - End: 91%

“The way I approach my work right now is totally different than how it was done before.”

TENISHA JONES ’15
Director of Education, Greater Auburn-Gresham Development Corporation

“My standards for myself as well as for my office have fundamentally changed because of CLA.”

A.D. LEWIS ’17
Director of Public Policy and Legislative Affairs, City of Chicago Civilian Office of Police Accountability
Quantitative and qualitative data confirms there is a positive organizational outcome from the Civic Leadership Academy. Supervisors confirmed their fellows’ participation enabled new organizational collaborations, and resulted in more professional connections outside of the organization. 78% agreed or strongly agreed that CLA improved their fellow’s ability to be a better leader in the organization.
How has the Civic Leadership Academy produced a useful civic network in Chicago?

CLA fosters an environment of collaboration, so leaders can find areas of common interest and develop opportunities for sharing resources and enacting change.

“Collaboration among civic leaders is essential to advancing new solutions to support a vibrant, innovative, and dynamic city. The Civic Leadership Academy at the University of Chicago is an opportunity for government and nonprofit leaders to pool their collective knowledge and advance their leadership skills while working on projects that will strengthen communities in Chicago.”

MAYOR RAHM EMANUEL

“Many nonprofits and government agencies don’t have regular professional development opportunities. By providing the next generation of key decision-makers with a forum for gaining new knowledge, insights and skills, the Civic Leadership Academy has helped them deepen their impact on the communities we serve. I am grateful for their collaboration with Cook County.”

COOK COUNTY BOARD PRESIDENT
TONI PRECKWINKLE
New Chicago Public Library Deputy Commissioner collaboration helps homeless individuals find work.

Baronica Roberson met Bob White, Chief Program Officer for the CARA Program, a nonprofit organization focused on job placement, training, and coaching for people affected by poverty and other life challenges, when both were fellows in the first Civic Leadership Academy cohort.

Because of their relationship through CLA, Bob contacted Baronica to ask who he could get in touch with at Chicago Public Library to offer employment training to homeless individuals who come to the library looking to escape the elements. Baronica connected Bob with library senior staff responsible for workforce development, and from there the organizations jointly developed and implemented a plan. Two years post-CLA, Baronica reports the Chicago Public Library–CARA partnership is going strong, accomplishing the library’s goal of serving patrons effectively while also bringing in expertise the librarians do not have on their own.

View all 12 case studies in the full report at clauschicago.edu/impact
“To have someone on the ground who can come in and can take these patrons and assist them in a very targeted and professional way...it’s beyond measure. People are actually getting jobs as a result of that.”

BARONICA ROBERSON, ’15
Deputy Commissioner,
Chicago Public Library
Invest in the individuals, organizations, and civic network of your city.

To learn more about investing in civic leadership in your city, please contact Joanie Friedman, Executive Director of Civic Leadership, at joaniefriedman@uchicago.edu.