



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**CHICAGO**

PARTNERING FOR  
**COMMUNITY**  
— **IMPACT** —

# OUR COMMITMENT TO CHICAGO

Highlights of our economic  
and social impact in the city  
and on the South Side



## OUR COMMITMENT TO CHICAGO

**The University of Chicago is proud that we have called the city of Chicago home for more than 125 years.** We are committed to helping meet the challenges that will shape our city in this century and beyond. Our faculty, students, and staff work with partners across the city every day to advance educational programs; promote health and provide excellent medical care; develop jobs and economic vitality; conduct community-engaged research; serve the cause of public safety; and help build the civic infrastructure our communities need to thrive. These long-term contributions to addressing pressing societal challenges help make UChicago a distinctive member of the Chicago community. Through this work, our university improves the lives of Chicagoans every day.

This document provides a snapshot of UChicago's positive impact for the city and its social fabric—including contributions that will have a lasting effect for generations to come.



## COVID-19 Community Response and Support

**University of Chicago efforts in 2020 and 2021 supported South Side residents, small businesses, and community-based nonprofits as they navigated a landscape shaped by the ongoing pandemic and growing economic challenges.**

- As part of UChicago's COVID-19 Community Support Initiative, the University partnered first with the Greater Chicago Food Depository, then South Side catering businesses, to prepare and distribute **more than 300,000 meals to South Side residents facing food insecurity** from March through August 2020.
- With campus food halls empty, the University continued to pay our dining contractors more than \$3 million in Spring Quarter 2020 to ensure they **continued to employ their workforce of 445 individuals, the majority of whom are South Side residents.**
- UChicago also awarded COVID-19 **emergency bridge grants totaling more than \$840,000 to more than 200 South Side small businesses, including 27 University commercial tenants, and totaling \$400,000 to 79 South Side nonprofits** as part of the Community Support Initiative. Additionally, the University offered virtual workshops and programs to help local small businesses and nonprofits facing ongoing challenges.
- In another element of the Community Support Initiative, **the University provided \$880,000 in rent abatement to small business tenants in the first twelve months of the pandemic** and also provided rent deferral for larger tenants that were unable to operate for periods of time due to COVID-19.
- The University of Chicago Medicine health system has **provided at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine to more than 64,000 people.** Additionally, UChicago Medicine held a series of vaccination clinics in hard-hit communities of color on the South Side.
- UChicago Medicine has had **more than 3,600 inpatient COVID-positive admissions**, 69 percent of whom were South Side residents and 78 percent of whom were African American.
- UChicago Medicine responded to Gov. J.B. Pritzker's request for support in reaching 10,000 daily COVID tests statewide by supporting a full 10 percent of that commitment. UChicago Medicine has **tested up to 1,000 people daily with no out-of-pocket costs to patients for a total of more than 523,000 COVID tests across the UChicago Medicine health system.** More than 13 percent of those tests were conducted for community partners, including South Side nursing homes and federally qualified health centers.
- **UChicago Medicine worked collaboratively with the Chicago Department of Public Health to identify communities in greatest need of COVID-19 support** and coordinated efforts with its FQHC partners. UChicago Medicine provided technical assistance in expanding and setting up federally qualified drive-thru and community testing sites and provided a mobile van for federally qualified testing in South Shore and other community areas.



### COVID-19 Community Response and Support (continued)

- Dr. Emily Landon, UChicago Medicine's lead infectious diseases expert, advised Gov. J.B. Pritzker on Illinois' public health response to the pandemic and, in addition to other experts at UChicago Medicine, **served as a source of critical health care information to the general public.**
- Assoc. Prof. Sarah Cobey, of UChicago's Department of Ecology and Evolution, advised the State of Illinois on its public health response. Her research team has **developed predictive models that explore how COVID-19 will spread or ebb under different scenarios.**
- The Inclusive Economy Lab at the Harris School of Public Policy and the Rustandy Center for Social Sector Innovation at the Booth School of Business launched **a survey of small businesses in Illinois aimed at understanding their current financial situation**, expectations for the coming months, and responses to federal and local loan programs.
- The Polsky Center's Small Business Growth Program **convened a special virtual cohort of more than 20 South and West Side small businesses grappling with COVID-related challenges and offered specific consulting support.**
- The Arts + Public Life Initiative **supported multiple local arts leaders and artists during the COVID-19 pandemic by providing technical assistance and other immediate resources.** UChicago Arts additionally developed a website dedicated to ongoing virtual arts engagement that included a virtual artist dinner series and remote arts learning workshops, among other offerings.



## Educational Programs

The University of Chicago is committed to extending its education mission to ensure greater opportunity for Chicago residents.

- Through a range of targeted programs, UChicago assists low-income and first-generation Chicago Public Schools (CPS) students in preparing to apply to and succeed in college. We offer **free, year-round college readiness programs to hundreds of CPS students annually and advise thousands of Chicago students about their applications to colleges nationwide.**
- Our **numerous financial aid programs**, such as Odyssey and UChicago Promise, support lower-income Chicago students, as well as children of police, firefighters, and educators from Chicago.
- **UChicago guarantees free tuition for families with typical assets making \$125,000 or less**, and free tuition and room and board for families with typical assets making \$60,000 or less. We have eliminated the student loan expectation from all financial aid we provide to undergraduates. This allows most students to graduate debt-free.
- The UChicago Charter School, a public charter school in the Chicago Public Schools district, enrolls approximately **1,500 students** throughout Chicago and serves grades prekindergarten through 12.
- UChicago's newly expanded My Very Own Library program has provided nearly **250,000 free books to South Side Chicago Public Schools students** since 2019.
- In an average school year, the Neighborhood Schools Program connects more than 500 UChicago students to 50 schools and community centers on Chicago's South Side, with students serving as tutors and teaching assistants for **more than 4,000 local youth each year.**
- Collectively the UChicago Arts Amplify K-12 Arts Education program works with **25,000 students and teachers from more than 235 Chicago area schools annually.** Since 2013, in partnership with After School Matters, Arts + Public Life has worked with **more than 800 teen participants** and offered stipends to students totaling **more than \$349,000.**



## Civic Infrastructure

**The University of Chicago provides broad capacity building support for community-based nonprofits, civic leaders, and small businesses.**

- UChicago's Community Programs Accelerator has helped strengthen the capacity of **more than 160 organizations on Chicago's South Side** through 50,000 hours of skills-based support from University students, staff, and consultants. The Accelerator has also provided **\$725,000 in direct funding to community-based organizations**.
- The Civic Leadership Academy (CLA) is a leadership development program for emerging high potential leaders in nonprofits and local government agencies across Chicago. Since the program's inception in 2014, **more than 200 fellows from all 77 neighborhoods** of the city have participated.
- UChicago Arts has helped strengthen the capacity of **more than 450 South Side artists and arts organizations** through programs offering state-of-the-art facilities, capacity building workshops, and support for creative entrepreneurs.

## Medical Care and Health Promotion

**The University of Chicago Medicine provides major health benefits to the community, particularly residents living on the South Side.**

- UChicago Medicine opened a Level 1 Adult Trauma Center in 2018, which is among the busiest in the city, serving a key need for the city and local community. Our adult and pediatric emergency departments also are among the busiest in the city, treating **109,639 patients in fiscal year 2020**.
- In addition to trauma care, UChicago Medicine provides many **highly specialized clinical services that aren't available elsewhere in the community**—including comprehensive care for strokes and severe heart attacks, advanced cancer treatment, the South Side's only burn center, and highly specialized care such as organ transplantation and high-risk obstetrics.
- UChicago Medicine provided **more than \$567 million in benefits and services to the South Side community in fiscal year 2020**, including more than \$513 million in uncompensated care to patients (charity care, Medicaid and Medicare losses, and unrecoverable patient debt).
- UChicago Medicine treated 12,035 Medicaid patients in 2019—the highest total of any private hospital in the State of Illinois. UChicago Medicine is **the largest provider of Medicaid inpatient and outpatient days in the State of Illinois**.
- Through direct intervention and in partnership with community-based service providers, UChicago Medicine's Violence Recovery Program provides **trauma recovery support to victims of intentional violence and their families**. Through fiscal year 2020, the program has **directly engaged 1,500 patients and served 586 families**.



## Urban Research

### The University of Chicago's community-engaged research leads to tangible results in K-12 student success, violence reduction, and greater economic opportunity.

- For **more than 100 years**, the UChicago Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy, and Practice has conducted research and formed civic partnerships resulting in improved and enduring policies, practices, and outcomes that meaningfully impact the lives of the most vulnerable people in Chicago.
- The Crown Family School's Chicago Center for Youth Violence Prevention partners with Bright Star Community Outreach in Bronzeville to create **evidence-based solutions to reduce violence** and evaluate existing and new community-led violence-prevention programs.
- For nearly 30 years, the UChicago Consortium on School Research has conducted essential research in **partnership with CPS to inform policy that contributes to student success**.
- Former school leaders at the Crown Family School's Network for College Success collaborated with Chicago Public Schools (CPS) principals to create a capacity building model that has yielded historic improvements in CPS high school graduation rates. The initiative provides **research, real-time data, professional learning, and coaching to 300 CPS educators and 15 to 20 CPS schools** annually.
- The UChicago Crime Lab partners with the Chicago Police Department and community organizations to **design, test, and grow programs and policies to reduce crime and violence**.
- The UChicago Inclusive Economy Lab partners with policymakers, community-based organizations, and others to generate **rigorous evidence that leads to greater economic opportunity** for communities harmed by disinvestment and segregation.
- The UChicago Education Lab partners with civic and community leaders to identify, rigorously evaluate, and learn how to scale **programs and policies that improve education in distressed urban neighborhoods**.
- The Harris School of Public Policy's Center for Municipal Finance conducted **research showing the inequalities in the property tax assessment system** in Cook County, leading to significant reforms.

## Public Safety

### The University of Chicago Police Department (UCPD) provides a public service on the South Side that extends beyond the University's campus.

- UCPD is a professionally trained, CALEA-accredited police department with approximately **100 sworn officers** who are on call to the community 24/7.
- UCPD serves in a supporting role to the Chicago Police Department within our extended patrol area, **serving more than 55,000 City of Chicago residents** from 37th Street to 64th Street and from Lake Shore Drive to Cottage Grove Avenue. UCPD's mission and expanded patrol area were authorized by a city ordinance at the request of community leaders in response to community needs.
- In partnership with local community organizations, UCPD provides year-round academic support, mentoring, life-skill building, arts, and athletic engagement through the PAL program. More than **120 South Side youth** have participated in the program since its launch in 2018.

## Jobs and Economic Benefits

**As the largest private employer and purchaser of goods and services on the South Side, the University of Chicago ensures its presence supports inclusive economic opportunities for the city and its residents.**

- In 2020, the University of Chicago and the University of Chicago Medicine together employed **more than 13,000 Chicago residents who earned a total of \$1.24 billion**. Approximately **25 percent of all UChicago and UChicago Medicine employees live on the South Side**.
- UChicago sets construction contracting goals that are among the highest in the city for the hire of minority-owned (MBE) and women-owned (WBE) businesses, with an MBE goal of 35 percent, a WBE goal of 6 percent, and a minority hiring goal of 30 percent. The University's business partnerships with minority- and women-owned construction firms have resulted in **\$720 million in contracts over 10 years** and led to reciprocal value for both the University and the firms.
- Additionally, the University has spent **\$224 million with M/WBE suppliers** (not including construction firms) in the city of Chicago over the past ten years.
- The University has spent **more than \$3 billion on goods and services** from companies in the city of Chicago over the past 10 years, with **more than \$235 million of that total directed to companies in our South Side focus area**.
- The University supports **more than 300 South Side businesses** annually through technical assistance, capacity building programs, and workshops. We have also worked with local service vendors to set ambitious hiring and purchasing commitments that specifically target the University's nine-neighborhood focus area on the South Side.
- The University has worked closely with such key stakeholders as local aldermen, businesses, and residents to develop a vision for the 53rd Street corridor in Hyde Park, contributing to unprecedented economic vitality—including 40 new restaurants and retailers, two new hotels, **more than 1,500 new jobs** and 1,000 new residential rental units.
- The Polsky Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation's startup hub provides monthly online programming to more than 400 community members not affiliated with the University to help them translate their ideas into startups. **Businesses chosen for the Polsky Exchange Incubator have generated more than \$52 million in venture capital or investment since 2015**.
- Since 2017, the Polsky Center has provided **98 minority-, women-, and veteran-owned small businesses on the South and West Sides of Chicago with more than 26,000 hours of UChicago student consulting** support to address specific business challenges, find new strategies for growth, and improve access to capital.

## Direct Payments to the City

- **The University and UChicago Medicine pay approximately \$11 million in taxes and fees to the City of Chicago annually**, including more than \$4 million for water and sewer services, more than \$300,000 in building permit fees, and more than \$600,000 in municipal parking taxes.
- Additionally, the University and UChicago Medicine pay approximately **\$6 million in real estate taxes annually** on property owned by the University but used for non-academic and non-health care purposes (e.g., for lease to retail businesses).

## OUR IMPACT

The University contributes to the city of Chicago every day and is committed to having a positive impact. A conservative estimate of the University’s annual public benefit for the city is **\$3.5 billion**, based on direct spending by the institution. When considering the University’s full economic impact, including local businesses that benefit from the presence of the UChicago community, our public benefit rises to **\$5 billion** annually.

The University is a mission-based institution and makes investments and establishes partnerships in the city that are broad and socially impactful. We are committed to contributing to Chicago’s success through educational programming, health services, jobs and economic vitality, public safety, civic engagement, and community-engaged faculty research. For more information on the positive impact of the University of Chicago for our city, please contact Sarah Sheehan at [sarahsheehan@uchicago.edu](mailto:sarahsheehan@uchicago.edu). Our media contact is Jeremy Manier at [jmanier@uchicago.edu](mailto:jmanier@uchicago.edu).

