**Civic Leadership Academy Selects 31 Local Government and Nonprofit**

**Leaders for 2018 Class**

*Five new faculty join UChicago program*

On Wednesday, January 10, the Civic Leadership Academy at the University of Chicago announced the 31 government and nonprofit leaders selected for its 2018 class and welcomed five new faculty members to teach courses this year.

The new fellows, who represent the City of Chicago, Cook County, and citywide and community-based nonprofit organizations, were introduced at a ceremony at the Harold Washington Library Center Winter Garden that featured Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle, Chicago Deputy Mayor Robert Rivkin, University of Chicago Provost Daniel Diermeier, UChicago Vice President for Civic Engagement and External Affairs Derek Douglas, Dean of the University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy Katherine Baicker, UChicago Professor Will Howell, and Academy alumna Jessica Marshall, director of social science and civic engagement at Chicago Public Schools.

“The University of Chicago has a longstanding commitment to urban scholarship and to civic engagement,” said Douglas, who chairs the Civic Leadership Academy Advisory Council. “We created the Civic Leadership Academy with the goal of bringing our focus on those two areas together to develop nonprofit and government leaders who will work to find solutions to the challenges affecting our communities.”

While there are numerous leadership development programs for the private sector, such opportunities for nonprofit and government leaders are rare, but necessary.

“I had done a lot of leadership education, but what is so special and transformative about the Civic Leadership Academy is that it focuses on the next generation of civic leaders,” said Diermeier, who was dean of Harris Public Policy, CLA’s academic home, when the program was conceived. “It is a testament to what makes Chicago unique, the sense of civic engagement that brings together higher education, the business community, nonprofits, philanthropy, and the government side to work in partnership.” Diermeier also teaches in the program.

The Office of Civic Engagement and Harris launched the Civic Leadership Academy in 2014, in partnership with the University’s other professional schools – Chicago Booth School of Business, Graham School of Continuing Liberal and Professional Studies, UChicago Law School, and School of Social Service Administration – and the Institute of Politics, as well as Local Initiatives Support Corp. (LISC) Chicago, Civic Consulting Alliance, the City of Chicago, and Cook County.

“I want to thank the University of Chicago for the investment it is making in effective leaders in government and our nonprofit sector,” said Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle.

Chicago Deputy Mayor Robert Rivkin also spoke at the event. “As an advisory council member, I had the opportunity to be involved in the selection process and to meet many of this year’s fellows,” he said. “They are an unquestionably talented and passionate group, from an impressive diversity of backgrounds.”

This year, the Civic Leadership Academy is welcoming four new faculty from UChicago and one from Northwestern University, Jessica Thebus, Associate Professor and Director of the MFA Directing Program. The UChicago faculty are: Wendy Doniger, Mircea Eliade Distinguished Service Professor of the History of Religions; also in the Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, the Committee on Social Thought, and the College; Boaz Keysar, Professor of Psychology and Chair, Cognition Program; Adam Green, Associate Professor of American History and the College; and Christopher Berry, Professor at Harris.

“The University of Chicago and the Harris School have long prided ourselves on giving all of our students the analytical tools, the data tools, and the clear-eyed analysis we think is necessary for good public policy out in the world,” Harris Dean Katherine Baicker said. “The tools are great, but the tools don't change the world, it's the people using them, who deploy them on our thorniest problems and biggest challenges.”

On Jan. 11, the fellows began a rigorous six-month program that will teach essential leadership skills and provide the time and space to focus on a specific leadership skill that will benefit their work. In March, the fellows will travel to the University of Chicago Center in Delhi, India, for a weeklong global practicum. Upon completion of the program, they will receive a certificate in civic leadership from Harris.

By bringing nonprofit and government professionals together, the Civic Leadership Academy fuels an exchange of ideas within the University community and across the city that will help improve practices and civic outcomes. The 2018 class includes 16 fellows who work for nonprofit organizations, nine from the city, and six from the county.

Addressing the new class, Academy alumna Jessica Marshall, director of Chicago Public Schools’ Department of Social Science and Civic Engagement, said “Maximizing your experience in CLA is about the possibilities that will emerge while you engage these next six months. It is about this precious, unique opportunity to deeply reflect, challenge your long-held assumptions, question the impact you are making, and think about the partnerships and relationships that you value most.”

The 2018 fellows are:

* Ali Abid, Program Coordinator, Cook County Justice Advisory Council
* Kulsum Ameji, Senior Attorney, LAF
* Allison Arwady, Chief Medical Officer, Chicago Department of Public Health
* William Campbell-Bezat, Legislative Coordinator, Cook County
* Carrianne Carallis, Chief Performance Analyst, City of Chicago
* Rodney Carter, Jr., Chief Operating Officer, Bright Star Community Outreach, and Assistant Pastor, Bright Star Church
* Seemi Choudry, Director, Office of New Americans, City of Chicago Office of the Mayor
* Arianna Cisneros, Program Officer, Robert R. McCormick Foundation
* Robin Cline, Assistant Director, NeighborSpace
* Avik K. Das, Acting Director and Chief Probation Officer, Circuit Court of Cook County
* Jeff Deutsch, Director, Seminary Co-op Bookstores
* Ben Felton, Director of Educator Quality & Equity, Chicago Public Schools
* Eleanor Esser Gorski, Deputy Commissioner, Planning, Design and Historic Preservation, Chicago Department of Planning and Development
* Bridget Hayman, Director, Digital Marketing, Easterseals
* Verónica Herrero, Chief Program Officer, One Million Degrees
* Khari Matthew Humphries, Senior Manager of Community Life, The Community Builders, Inc.
* Abin Kuriakose, Program Manager, ChicagoNEXT, World Business Chicago
* Risa Lanier, Deputy Bureau Chief, Criminal Prosecution's Bureau, Cook County State's Attorney's Office
* Katharine Lunde, Director, Labor Relations, Chicago Transit Authority
* Kouri Marshall, Chief of Staff, Cook County Commissioner Richard R. Boykin (1st District)
* Rob McCloskey, Chief Financial Officer, Cristo Rey Jesuit High School & Corporate Work Study Program
* Alejandro Espinoza Olazaba, Director, School Partnerships, OneGoal
* Hilesh Patel, Deputy Director, Hyde Park Art Center
* Alexandra DeSorbo Quinn, Executive Director, Pilot Light
* Karen Benita Reyes, Executive Director, ArtReach Chicago
* Brian Richardson, Deputy Commissioner, Chicago Department of Public Health
* Mike Rodríguez, Executive Officer Cook County Medical Examiner's Office
* Christine Rolan, Deputy Commissioner, Chicago Department of Family and Support Services
* Angela R. Rudolph, Chief Operating Officer, ConTextos, NFP
* Erica Swinney Staley, Director of Operations, Manufacturing Renaissance
* Beth Meier Tomlins, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Chicago Park District

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For more information about the Civic Leadership Academy, visit cla.uchicago.edu.

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