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## **Windows “Turnaround” Kids Back to School** *CHA Nonprofit Hosts its Second Annual Back to School Jam*

CHICAGO – As the days of summer wind down, school-aged children are soaking in their last month of vacation. To ease the sting of trading in the Slip ‘N’ Slide for school supplies, the Chicago Housing Authority and Windows of Opportunity are hosting Project Turnaround II Back to School Jam.

The festival and fundraiser is coming back for its second year to help underprivileged students gear up for the school year. In addition to a show by the Jesse White Tumblers and appearances from the Chicago Bulls, children will also be given school supplies and tips on how to stay safe outside the classroom.

This year’s theme – “Increase the Peace” – will focus on violence prevention following a 2007-2008 school year that saw the shooting deaths of 27 Chicago Public School students.

“This is a day to promote a safe school year and increase their enthusiasm about returning to school with positive messages,” says Crystal Brown-Black, executive director for Windows of Opportunity. “Our mission is for each student to start the year with a smile.”

More than 500 children attended last year’s Back to School Jam, and organizers are expecting a similar turnout this year.

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### **About the Chicago Housing Authority**

The CHA was created by state legislation in 1937 to create and expand affordable housing opportunities for low income families and seniors. Today, through federal and other resources, the CHA assists approximately 35,000 families who participate in the Housing Choice Voucher program in private units owned by private landlords. In addition, the CHA owns 15,500 units for families in scattered site, traditional public housing or mixed income developments and 9,500 units of housing for senior citizens in 56 senior developments across the city.

### **About the Plan for Transformation**

In 1999, the City of Chicago began a multi-billion dollar, 15-year initiative to renovate or replace the CHA’s entire portfolio of 25,000 public housing units throughout the city. Currently, 61percent of the units have been completed, including the comprehensive renovation of the entire senior developments and scattered-site stock. Eighty percent of the portfolio is scheduled to be complete by 2009. The Plan is a collaboration between the CHA, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the City of Chicago and its many agencies, area businesses and non-profit organizations.