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## **CHA Residents Connect with Technology Training** *Residents Learn to Advance in Digital Age*

CHICAGO – Leading the charge of bringing low-income populations into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) held an open house for its new technology center at the Charles A. Hayes Family Investment Center, Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2009.

TEC Services, an information technology consultant, moved into the Hayes Center earlier this year and offers technology training courses onsite and online to public housing residents. Hours spent taking the course can be used to fulfill the CHA's newly instituted work requirement in family developments.

From 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., TEC Services Consulting, Inc. signed up residents, held hourly information and orientation sessions, and provided information to Family Works providers to share with their clients.

CHA Chief Executive Officer Lewis Jordan welcomed residents to an afternoon session with Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity deputy director Ray Williams and representatives from 4<sup>th</sup> Ward Ald. Toni Preckwinkle's office and the Chicago Chamber of Commerce.

"Part of the Plan for Transformation is equipping residents with the skills to advance economically and professionally," said Jordan. "Becoming computer literate is essential – especially in today's workforce. We're glad we have partners to offer these services to residents."

TEC Services offers two certificate programs – one basic course in Digital Literacy and a more advanced course in Unlimited Microsoft Potential. Once residents get both certifications, they are given the opportunity to work with TEC Service's social enterprise unit to apply new skills and gain training, which will lead to an IT job such as a data or helpdesk operator.

Gerrie Lynn Boyd, a resident from Trumbull Park Homes, came to the lab for the first time on Wednesday, and was impressed by the

attentiveness of TEC Services staff and looked forward to learning more basic computer skills.

“I came here today because I’m basically computer illiterate. I’ve already started one course and I’m learning a lot,” she said. “I got stuck a few times, but there are people here to help me through it and that’s reassuring. I’m definitely coming back”

CHA provided transportation to the open house from several developments, including far south developments like Trumbull and Altgeld Gardens. More than 100 residents in attended with dozens of walk-ins and representatives from CHA service providers stopping in during the day.

TEC Services consultant Greg Sutton says participation from Family Works providers will be instrumental in expanding the online curriculum to other public housing residents and throughout the city.

“It is encouraging to see interest from social service agencies because representatives can champion the benefits and convenience of online technology training to their clients and public housing residents,” said Sutton.

The lab at the Charles Hayes center is open to CHA residents Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. During these hours, residents can use the computers to continue their online courses or to work on other educational or job-related purposes.

To learn more about TEC Services or the Microsoft certification courses offered, visit [www.cha.terau.com](http://www.cha.terau.com) or contact TEC Services at [elarning@terau.com](mailto:elarning@terau.com) or (630) 305-7486.

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