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CHA KICKS OFF SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM

July 7, 2003

The Chicago Housing Authority has kicked off its 26th Annual Summer Food Service Program, which began yesterday and will run through August 29, 2003. Through the program, over 20,000 low-income children will receive nutritious meals throughout the summer.

The program, funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) provides daily breakfasts and lunches, at no charge, for children ages 18 and younger and adults over 18 who are enrolled in a state-approved educational program for the mentally or physically handicapped.

Many children lose an important source of nutritious meals when schools close for the summer. The Summer Food Program is critical to ensuring that those meals reach kids even when the school year has ended. It also allows their parents peace of mind, knowing that their children will still be adequately fed during the summer months.

The Summer Food Service Program was established by CHA in 1978 to provide meals to children who might otherwise be deprived of the same food assistance received during the school year. Bobbie Bolden, Senior Manager of Special Initiatives, and also a CHA resident, has been involved with this program since its inception.

"This program is a lifeline to the many kids who otherwise would not receive nutritious meals during the summer. Many children in the U.S. who qualify for summer meals don't receive them but I'm happy to say that this program is one that does help serve the kids during the summertime," said Ms. Bolden.

CHA's Local Advisory Councils help organize over 1,200 resident volunteers to staff the 147 breakfast sites and 147 lunch sites. These volunteers will serve over one million meals to the children this summer.

"The volunteers get up as early as 4:45am to meet the food trucks" said Francine Washington, LAC President for CHA's Stateway Gardens development. "They wash, cook, and cleanup for all the meals. We couldn't do it without them."

"We're very grateful to the Local Advisory Councils and the many residents who generously volunteer their time and support to this program year in and

year out," said Terry Peterson, CEO of the Chicago Housing Authority. "These meals give our young residents the nutrition they need to stay healthy and active."

CHA community centers and social rooms are used as dining sites along with the facilities of public and private on-site agencies serving public housing residents. Information on the specific locations is available at the property management offices for CHA developments.

Meals are available to all eligible participants without regard to race, color, national origin, handicap, sex or age. Any person who believes that he or she has been discriminated against in this or any USDA-related activity should write, immediately, to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250