

1. [Home](#)
2. Entity Print

[Print Page](#)

[Press Releases](#)

CHA bids adieu to more than 200 college-bound freshmen at 15th annual Take Flight College Send-Off

Published on August 6, 2025





Students enjoy event hosted by CHA's nonprofit partner Springboard to Success (S2S)

CHICAGO (Aug. 6, 2025) - Nearly 70 schools locally and from across the country were represented Tuesday at the Chicago Housing Authority's Take Flight College Send-Off – the largest turnout in the event's 15-year history with 210 incoming freshman being provided a fond farewell at Malcolm X College days before leaving for college.

Students received words of encouragement and parting gifts, as they embark on the next chapter.

"College is an important step in your life and CHA and our partners are working in concert to make sure you are successful," said Mary Howard, CHA's Chief Resident Services and Administrative Officer. "I know that the hard work happens when you walk away from here and roll up your sleeves to get the job done. This is just the start of your journey and we will continue to offer you support every step of the way."



“Beyond our mission to our members, we look for ways to demonstrate our investment in communities in unique ways,” said Cedric D. Thurman, EVP and Group Head, Community Investment at FHLBank Chicago. “Seeing our laptops repurposed for these students inspires us to know they will have the tools needed to succeed and to continue to grow into future leaders. It’s a different way of thinking about investing in communities.”

“Digital access opens a world of opportunities for education, social connection and economic growth, and it all starts with a computer,” said Megan Steckly, CEO of Compudopt. “It’s an honor to help equip college-bound students for success through our partnership with the Chicago Housing Authority, and we can’t wait to see all of these young adults thrive.”

Mary Toomer said “The Black McDonald’s Operators Association of Chicagoland and Northwest Indiana is proud to stand with the Chicago Housing Authority in uplifting the next generation through the Take Flight College Reception. Education has always been at the heart of our mission—and nothing inspires us more than supporting Chicago’s future leaders as they take bold steps toward their dreams. Today, we celebrate their journeys, their promise, and the power of community to help them soar.”

The giant CHA trunk party is made possible thanks to the generous sponsorship support of Federal Home Loan Bank, Compudopt, Meijer and Black McDonald’s Operators Association (BMOA). All funds are raised by Springboard to Success.

More than 200 CHA youth and their parents represented 70 different schools across the country.



The breakdown of the school representation:

- 2 are attending the University of Michigan.
- 3 are attending Marquette University.
- 3 are attending University of Wisconsin.
- 6 are attending Morgan State University.
- 7 are attending Jackson State University.
- 14 are attending University of Illinois.
- 27 are attending Northern Illinois University.
- 29 are attending Southern Illinois University.
- And 42 are attending Illinois State University.

Among the Take Flight participants was Ranye Holmes who, along with his mother Winter Morris, have made a formidable team over the years.

“My Mom had me pretty young. She raised me – but we kind of raised each other,” Ranye said. “We’ve been through it all, from shelters and everything – just getting through life together.”

Now they’re on the brink of a dream. He is closing in on the possibility of attending his dream school, Morehouse College.

Ranye missed one day of school throughout his entire elementary, junior high and Kenwood Academy High School career. Morris says she thanks God for her son “multiple times a day.” And she’s doing everything in her power to make sure he doesn’t go through some of the things in life that she did.

“Morehouse was his number one choice. We went in April, and he fell in love,” she said. “He is very determined to get to this school, and I’m trying to see if I can get a second job now. He would be the first person in our family to do something like go to an HBCU or a good college. I’m trying my best to get him there.”

