

eliminating racism empowering women

ywca press release

YWCA Metropolitan Chicago
Administrative Offices
One North LaSalle Street
Suite 1150
Chicago, Illinois 60602

T: 312-762-2712
F: 312-346-2231
www.ywcachicago.org

Contact Information:
Jacqueline Priego
Manager, Brand Experience and Communications
YWCA Metropolitan Chicago
312-762-2712
jacqueline.priego@ywcachicago.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Chicago Business and Philanthropic Leaders Cheryl and Zed Francis Provide Additional Investment in Economic Empowerment for South Side Community.

Chicago, IL (September 1, 2016) – YWCA Metropolitan Chicago has received a \$500,000 gift from local business and philanthropic leaders Cheryl and Zed Francis. This contribution comes ten years after an initial \$500,000 investment which made the opening of YWCA's south side center possible, named after the donors' mothers, Laura Parks and Mildred Francis.

This new gift will ensure their mothers' legacies live on through ongoing support of the Woodlawn-based Parks Francis Center with an emphasis on the YWCA's Economic Empowerment offerings providing women and families with career services, digital literacy education, and training and technical assistance for local entrepreneurs.

This private investment will also help sustain the YWCA's young parents program which allows teen moms to continue their education, explore employment opportunities and also ensures that their children are receiving appropriate care to grow and develop.

"Our family is proud to continue to invest in the important work being done by the YWCA on the south side of Chicago. We honor our mothers who were examples of strength and resiliency and wish to encourage the same from these communities that face obstacles but offer such promise. We believe in the power of the YWCA's services to foster skills growth, career development, employment retention, economic self-sufficiency and aspirational opportunities for women and youth," said donors Cheryl and Zed Francis.

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Cheryl Francis serves on the boards of Aon, Morningstar and HNI Corporation, and is co-founder and co-chairman of Corporate Leadership Center, a mission-driven non-profit which partners with CEOs and respected academics to advance top corporate leaders and leadership practices. Zed Francis is an entrepreneur, investor and serves as a Director for Wintrust Financial Corporation and one of its charter banks, Hinsdale Bank & Trust.

"It is encouraging to see leaders like Cheryl and Zed, who recognize the value created by the YWCA, stepping up to make investments during a time when the need is so great. This recent gift will allow us to grow and expand in areas where we see a significant demand for our services," said Dorri McWhorter, YWCA Metropolitan Chicago's Chief Executive Officer.

For more information, please contact Jacqueline Priego at 312-762-2712 or jacqueline.priego@ywcachicago.org.

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About YWCA Metropolitan Chicago

[YWCA Metropolitan Chicago](http://www.ywcachicago.org) is the oldest and largest women's organization in the region, with a mission to eliminate racism and empower women. For 140 years, YWCA Metropolitan Chicago has been committed to serving the evolving needs of women and girls. Today, we help more than 200,000 individuals annually through programs focused around safety, wellness and economic sustainability. We are the largest provider of sexual assault support services in the state of Illinois, offering crisis intervention, counseling, prevention education and medical and legal advocacy services. We also offer career, financial management and business services to help women achieve financial stability, obtain training to enter non-traditional careers and provide young women STEM education in our TechGYRLS program. To learn more, please visit www.ywcachicago.org and connect with us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.