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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Chicago Loop Alliance launches Street Team Ambassador program

New initiative a continuation of CLA's creation and maintenance of a high-performing urban environment in the Loop

CHICAGO (October 21, 2013)—**Chicago Loop Alliance (CLA)** announced today the launch of its **Street Team Ambassador** program, an initiative that advances CLA's ongoing creation and maintenance of a high-performing urban environment in the Loop. Comprised of a group of highly trained individuals with nearly 100 years of combined experience in supportive service programs, the Street Team Ambassadors will provide enhanced hospitality and foster a consistent pedestrian experience on State Street for the 220,000 workers, visitors, residents and students who traverse the area each weekday.

CLA's new initiative has historic precedent; successful hospitality programs have been implemented in metropolitan business improvement districts across the nation, including those in New York City and Los Angeles. The Street Team Ambassadors will help identify and assist with quality-of-life issues ranging from providing directions and reporting sidewalk cleaning needs to connecting the homeless with social service providers. Chicago Loop Alliance will collaborate closely with the City of Chicago and agencies such as supportive housing advocate CSH to augment services that are currently being administered, serving to provide "extra eyes" on State Street and day-to-day support.

The Street Team Ambassador program is funded through the end of 2014, allocating funds sourced through Chicago's Special Service Area (SSA) program. As the sole service provider for SSA #1—a business improvement district that includes property on both sides of State Street from Congress Parkway north to Wacker Drive—Chicago Loop Alliance administers supplemental services for SSA #1 under the guidance of the State Street Commission, a body of public and private officials appointed to oversee the allocation of funding.

"The Street Team is a natural evolution of our ongoing efforts to cultivate and manage a consistent, high-performing experience in the Loop," said **CLA Executive Director Michael Edwards**. "Working alongside the city and our social service agency partners, the Street Team Ambassadors will provide extra on-site assistance to support existing programs. We're offering help to those who may need it through a social service-driven approach."

Street Team Ambassadors will also reach out to the homeless, offering assistance and referring any identified needs to one of a number of social service agency partners. Organizations already committed to collaborating with Chicago Loop Alliance include CSH, Thresholds, Chicago Health

Initiative, Chicago Temple, Health and Disability Advocates, Heartland Health Outreach, Safer Foundation and the Chicago Department of Family and Support Services.

“We are very encouraged that CLA and its members are investing in outreach services in the downtown area and coordination with the larger efforts of the City to end homelessness. This will help connect people in need to tangible services, including supportive housing referrals for the most chronically homeless,” said **CSH Director Betsy Benito**.

“We applaud Chicago Loop Alliance for continuing to find ways to enhance the pedestrian experience on State Street. The new Street Team Ambassador initiative is another layer of special programs that makes State Street a great street. Pedestrians who are workers, shoppers, tourists and students will benefit from the Street Team’s professionalism, service and hospitality,” said **Macy’s Vice President of External Affairs Ralph Hughes**.

“We at Walgreens support the CLA’s Street Team initiative. We feel the Street Team Ambassadors will play a pivotal role by offering hospitality and supporting retailers in providing their customers with an enhanced shopping experience. We are also excited that these folks will have a background in social service so they can help to provide assistance to those in need,” said **Walgreen Co. District Manager Rob Ewing**.

Chicago Loop Alliance (CLA) is a member-based business organization that represents Chicago’s most dynamic mixed-use district—the Loop—and advocates for the rapidly growing central business area. CLA is focused on promoting and uniting Loop businesses and organizations to support one another in creating a vibrant, flourishing Loop where people live, work and play.

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