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Chicago Loop Alliance generates nearly \$400,000 in estimated economic impact to Loop businesses with *ACTIVATE* alley event series

**More than 14,000 people in attendance across seven events;
expanded *ACTIVATE* series planned for 2015**

CHICAGO (Dec. 12, 2014) — **Chicago Loop Alliance** (CLA) announced today that its ***ACTIVATE*** event series generated an estimated **\$393,120 in economic impact** to Loop businesses to date. More than **14,000 people** attended seven *ACTIVATE* events from September 2013 to October 2014, each of which transformed an iconic downtown alley into a pop-up urban celebration with art, music and interactive experiences. Over 140 Chicago artists were engaged for the series, with seven legacy murals remaining in Loop alleys. CLA plans to expand *ACTIVATE* in 2015 with additional spaces and programming.

ACTIVATE is part of CLA's Loop Placemaking Initiative—an expansive series of innovative public space activations throughout the Loop that continue the organization's commitment to create, manage and promote high-performing urban experiences in downtown Chicago. Additional placemaking programs include The Gateway, a vibrant public plaza located on the State Street median between Wacker Drive and Lake Street, and #CitySeats, rotating tables and chairs that bring pop-up seating to underutilized public spaces in the Loop.

Additional findings from CLA's surveying of hundreds of *ACTIVATE* guests include:

- 78% of attendees patronized Loop businesses before, during or after *ACTIVATE* events, with the majority visiting Loop restaurants and bars. The average amount of money spent by each person was \$35 at these establishments.
- 79% of attendees indicated *ACTIVATE* positively affected their feelings about the Loop.
- 97% of attendees are likely to attend a future *ACTIVATE* event.
- 50% of attendees are 25 – 34 years old.
- 52% of attendees work in the Loop.

“These findings indicate our placemaking efforts have tangible economic impact, and they are positively affecting the way people look at the Loop,” says CLA President and CEO **Michael Edwards**. “We’re excited about the results of our work this year. Placemaking and place management are key priorities for Chicago Loop Alliance, and we look forward to continuing to develop underutilized public space downtown. Vibrant spaces attract people and investment.”

Loop businesses such as Palmer House Hilton and Vapiano are in support of the positive impact *ACTIVATE* events have on the downtown district.

“This is exactly the kind of initiative the area needs,” says Palmer House Hilton General Manager **Dean Lane**. “The *ACTIVATE* event series is resulting in a significant impact to the Loop by exposing a new, important demographic to it, as well as showing those already in the area its vibrancy. This exposure is absolutely essential to the growth of downtown Chicago.”

“Vapiano was thrilled with the response we got from our involvement in *ACTIVATE*,” says Vapiano Chicago Loop General Manager **Guy DeFazio**. “During the event, particularly when it was held in the Sullivan Center behind our restaurant, we saw a tremendous bump in foot traffic, both from new guests and from returning guests who'd come here for lunch but didn't know we were open for dinner and late-night. Capturing the after-work crowd has been one of our biggest challenges, but *ACTIVATE* gave us exposure to that exact audience. Overall we've seen an increase in guests coming in for happy hours, dinner and post-theater, and we feel that *ACTIVATE* had a lot to do with that.”

Chicago Loop Alliance (CLA) creates, manages and promotes high-performing urban experiences, attracting people and investment to the Loop. For more information, please visit www.LoopChicago.com.

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