

BLUE SKY



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THE HUB

Inspiring content from around the Web

'I will get through this. I know I can do this.'

These two phrases have served me well my whole life. They have protected me, reassured me and given me confidence. These phrases were first my solace when I'd go to school with bruises and cuts, administered by an angry, raging alcoholic mother. They were my inspiration when, as a little girl, I'd be in skating competitions, look to the stands, and once again see that I was alone.

They made me believe that I could provide a decent life for my three kids. Even if I was a single mother in the mid-1970s whose most marketable skill was in a field dominated by men.

— Barbara Williams, *LeanIn.org*. To read the entire article, go to www.blueskyinnovation.com.

EVENTS

Networking, digital classes and more

5:30 p.m. Wednesday

Smart Scaling for Startups: A panel featuring CEOs and founders of Chicago startups who have recently experienced explosive growth talk about shared challenges, how they overcame them and some of the lessons they're still learning. Several companies and experts address specific growth-stage pain points such as staffing, real estate, construction and fundraising. *ContextMedia, Chicago*

8 a.m. Thursday

Work-life Balance Breakfast Panel Discussion: The Women for Women committee hosts a panel discussion that will explore the concept of work-life balance from a generational perspective and in the context of panelists' personal and professional experiences. Panelists will discuss the strategies, tactics and choices they have made in order to find the optimal balance or fusion between work, home, community and self. \$35-\$45. *Mesirow Financial, James Tyree Auditorium, Chicago*



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Blue Sky is Chicago's gathering place for news, analysis and events related to innovation and entrepreneurship. Contact the Blue Sky staff at the address above or editor Andrea Hanis at ahanis@tribpub.com

Array of Things sensor network to be installed in Loop this summer

BY AMINA ELAHI
Blue Sky Innovation

Sensors collecting temperature, light, traffic and other data will start rolling out in Chicago this summer, Chicago's chief information officer said Thursday at a Chicago Loop Alliance event.

Part of a project called Array of Things, the sensors are designed to track information that can be used by citizens and scientists to examine and improve city life. Fifty devices embedded with multiple sensors will be mounted on traffic poles and buildings in the Loop and another neighborhood that is yet to be chosen.

CIO Brenna Berman said installation of those first sensors will begin in late June or early July. The remaining 450 sensors will be installed throughout the city by the end of 2018, she said.

The project — a collaboration among the University of Chicago, Argonne National Laboratory and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago — has been delayed since 2014 by financing and planning complications.

In September, the group got a boost in the form of a \$3.1 million grant from the National Science Foundation after not winning the money in the fall of 2014.

"We're a little bit behind where we wanted to be when we got the grant," said Berman, who oversees the project.

She said the city had been planning the rollout for mid-April but decided to push it back to try to do "better engagement" with



ANTHONY SOUFFLE/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

One of two data sensors in the city, used to collect the atmospheric and movement of people, hangs on the University of Chicago's Logan Center. More will be installed by summer.

the public.

The group will release its privacy policy in mid-May, Berman said. What data would be collected from the sensors — and whether it would identify passers-by — was an early concern that led researchers to abandon plans to track people using cellphone traffic.

"We want to be very proactive and open in terms of engaging with the public" about privacy, Berman said.

An advisory group with representatives from the Electronic Frontier Foundation, the American Civil Liberties Union, Indiana University and West Point Academy helped develop the policy, she said. In early May, project leaders will hold three public sessions to collect feedback on the policy.

Berman said the group is narrowing the choices for the second neighborhood that will receive the sensors. That decision also will require engagement from the community and aldermen, she said.

She said the group will start releasing the data on Chicago's Open Data platform a month or two after the first sensors are installed, instead of right away, to ensure they're working properly. The data will help answer researchers' questions and also guide them toward questions they hadn't considered, she believes.

The 500 sensors "will not be blanketed evenly across the city, because they'll be clustered around problems we want to understand," Berman said during her

remark at the "Big City, Big Data" event. High concentrations of asthma cases and areas of the city that for unknown reasons are cooler than other areas could be explored, she said.

Berman said that when the sensors begin rolling out in Chicago this summer, project partners will install five to 10 devices each in three other cities: Seattle, Glasgow, Scotland; and Newcastle, England. Over time, sensors will be installed in 10 more international cities, she said.

"It will allow us to test some things we can't test here: different weather patterns, our ability to benchmark at long distance, things like that."

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