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**WHAT'S ON THE TABLE?
 THE CHICAGO COMMUNITY TRUST COUNTS DOWN TO
 99TH ANNIVERSARY REGION-WIDE CONVERSATIONS**

More than 700 hosts have already signed on to facilitate mealtime gatherings focused on building and maintaining strong, safe and dynamic communities

CHICAGO – April 1, 2014 – On Monday, May 12, 2014 thousands of Chicagoland citizens from all walks of life will come together to share meals and have conversations designed to generate new ideas, inspire bold solutions and cultivate collaborations to improve communities region-wide as part of The Chicago Community Trust's [On the Table](#) initiative to mark its 99th anniversary. In just a month since the launch of the initiative, more than 700 hosts have signed on to participate in these thought-provoking, small-group mealtime conversations.

Hosts and guests are registering across the entire region – from Waukegan to Palos Hills and Park Forest to Downers Grove – and include everyday citizens, corporate executives, elected officials, community organizations and non-profits, news media organizations, schools and universities, students and faith-based communities. **More than halfway to its goal of securing 1,000 hosts to facilitate these mealtime conversations, the Trust encourages those who have yet to commit to sign up today at www.onthetable2014.com and bring their ideas and perspectives to the table on May 12.**

“Since announcing *On the Table* last month, the Trust has been inspired by the enthusiasm, creativity and ownership Chicagoans have shown in planning these mealtime conversations meant to promote meaningful discussion about the collective future of our communities,” said Terry Mazany, president and CEO of The Chicago Community Trust. “But there’s room for more and we look forward to engaging even more individuals and organizations from across the Chicagoland region to reach our goal of at least 10,000 participants.”

A variety of voices are already committed and engaged in *On the Table*, including:

- The Trust is working with Chicago Public Schools (CPS), Mikva Challenge, City Year, Chicago Cares and other organizations to host a dinner for 300 “Student Ambassadors” from CPS high schools at the Chicago Cultural Center.
- South Suburban PADS (Public Action to Deliver Shelter) is coordinating an *On the Table* lunch event for 60 guests in Country Club Hills – connecting residents of their housing development with local community influencers.
- The Community Foundation of Will County, the Lake County Community Foundation and the McHenry County Community Foundation are working to enhance the reach of *On the Table* to even more residents, community leaders, businesses and organizations throughout the suburbs.



- Numerous community leaders are acting as hosts and *On the Table* ambassadors, including [Sol Flores](#) from La Casa Norté and [Chef Julius Russell](#) from A Tale of Two Chefs. [Meet more On the Table ambassadors here.](#)
- Chicago Ideas Week and Chicago-based MealSharing are two examples of organizations collaborating with *On the Table* to expand the reach of the initiative, in addition to each hosting their own May 12 events. [Hear from Chicago Ideas Week's Brad Keywell about it here.](#)

These are just a few examples of the *On the Table* participants and conversations that will take place across the city and suburbs in private residences, backyards, local restaurants, schools, community centers, places of worship, offices – literally anywhere a host chooses. The topics, issues and ideas discussed during each *On the Table* conversation will be driven by the interests and perspectives of the participants, as well as the opportunities and challenges within their specific communities.

At the conclusion of the events on May 12, The Chicago Community Trust will send every participant a simple email survey, compiled by the University of Illinois at Chicago Institute for Policy and Civic Engagement, to learn more about their participation in this project, the interesting ideas they discussed and how this experience may impact their civic engagement moving forward. A phone survey option will be provided as well. The Trust will publicly share these outcomes, including trends, common themes and new collaborations developed to advance some of the ideas and solutions generated.

On the Table is made possible through the financial support of corporate sponsors, including Allstate Insurance Company, Bandon Dunes Golf Resort, Bank of America, Comcast NBCUniversal, ComEd, Holland Capital Management LLC, JMB Realty Corporation and PNC Bank. The project Steering Committee is co-chaired by Leslie Bluhm, founder of Chicago Cares, and Carole Brown, managing director at Barclays, who are both also members of the Trust's governing board.

There is still time to participate in this exciting initiative! For more information or to sign up to participate as a host or a guest, visit www.onthetable2014.com or call 866-737-6951. Join in the conversation via social media by using the hashtag **#OnTheTable2014** and engage with the Trust on [Facebook](#) and on [Twitter](#).

For additional media resources and downloads, visit: www.onthetable2014.com/media-room

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About The Chicago Community Trust

[The Chicago Community Trust](#), our region's community foundation, partners with donors to leverage their philanthropy in ways that transform lives and communities. The Trust, together with its donors, grants more than \$100 million annually to nonprofits working to develop new audiences to sustain the region's vibrant arts organizations, protect the human services safety net for those hardest hit by the recession, stem the devastating effects of foreclosures on our neighborhoods, elevate teaching to meet world-class standards and improve conditions for healthy and active lifestyles. By connecting the generosity of donors with the needs of the community, the Trust ensures that our region thrives today and for future generations.