



**Media Contact:**  
Katelyn Yoshimoto  
312.573.5492

[katelyn\\_yoshimoto@jtpr.com](mailto:katelyn_yoshimoto@jtpr.com)

## THE CHICAGO COMMUNITY TRUST UNVEILS *ON THE TABLE* SURVEY RESULTS

*Report demonstrates the region-wide initiative's participation, themes and impact*

**CHICAGO – October 7, 2014** – In the wake of the successful *On the Table* initiative, The Chicago Community Trust today released a report from the University of Illinois at Chicago's (UIC) Institute for Policy and Civic Engagement (IPCE) assessing the initiative's impact. The report outlines who participated in *On the Table* gatherings on May 12, key discussion themes, as well as outcomes and impacts on the region's future civic engagement.

On May 12, 2014, in every Chicago neighborhood and many suburban communities, thousands of residents came together to break bread and discuss how to collaboratively build and maintain strong, safe and dynamic communities. This imaginative public square, an initiative The Chicago Community Trust called *On the Table*, was designed to commemorate the Trust's 99th anniversary and to generate new ideas, inspire bold solutions, and cultivate relationships and collaborations to improve communities region-wide.

More than 11,500 participants took place in 1,100 mealtime conversations to discuss the region's future. Participants represented every Chicagoland neighborhood and every residential zip code, as well as 11 area counties. All registered participants were invited to take part in IPCE's study, with an overwhelming 30.6 percent response rate.

Numerous themes and ideas materialized during the May 12th discussions. The IPCE analysis showed that four top themes emerged during *On the Table* conversations – education, community engagement, equity and social inclusion, and collaboration.

"The key themes that came out of these conversations say a lot about the insights of our fellow residents," said Terry Mazany, chief executive officer, The Chicago Community Trust. "*On the Table* participants understood that much of what ails our community can be solved by people coming together – and working together for the common good."

Other highlights from the IPCE study include:

- 75 percent participated because they want to **work with others** to improve their community
- 80 percent indicated an **improved understanding** of specific community and city issues
- 57 percent exchanged contact info with other attendees for **future collaboration**
- 97 percent believe they have an influence in **achieving change in their community**



In addition to the survey results, the Trust received nearly 1,000 ideas from the day's participants. Trust staff and an external committee reviewed and identified a number of ideas for further consideration, refinement and development.

Last month, [the Trust announced a new project](#) – “collaboratories” – that will help move six of these promising ideas heard through *On the Table* into action. The Trust will continue to support the six collaboratory working groups in their efforts to develop a sustainable plan and begin to put their ideas into action. In April 2015, each team will have the opportunity to pitch their proposals to a panel of potential investors and influencers in the hopes of securing support for the implementation of their ideas moving forward.

“Through *On the Table*, we learned that even in today’s virtual world, there is no substitute for human interactions and getting things done by working together,” said Mazany. “The Trust was inspired by what we heard from participants and are committed to do all that we can – through the collaboratories and our upcoming Centennial celebration activities – to propel these conversations into real solutions benefiting real people across the region.”

To learn more, visit [www.onthetable2014.com](http://www.onthetable2014.com) where you can view highlights and download the complete report.

###

### **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.