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Four years ago World Business Chicago was a key partner in developing the Plan for Economic Growth and Jobs, our forward-looking strategy to chart Chicago's economic future. Since launching the Plan, 32 businesses have located their headquarters in Chicago, more than 73,000 new jobs have been created, and for the second year in a row our city was named number one for corporate relocations and expansions. This is a testament to the strength of Chicago’s economy and our continuing efforts to enhance the city’s competitiveness in the 21st century economy.

World Business Chicago has been critical in bringing new businesses to Chicago and driving programs that create jobs for residents in neighborhoods across the city. Over the last year, WBC has helped push forward a number of successful projects that are creating jobs and stimulating economic growth in our city; encouraging Chicago’s leading institutions to support small business growth in their neighborhoods; and managing an unprecedented regional collaboration to help small and medium businesses capture new export opportunities in markets around the world. Several of those companies’ stories are on the following pages.

I invite you to read about the impact WBC is making and join in as we continue to grow Chicago’s economy, bringing new businesses and new jobs to this great city.

Sincerely,

Rahm Emanuel
Mayor, City of Chicago

For World Business Chicago, 2014 was filled with significant milestones that will impact the city’s economy for years to come. We saw an increase in companies choosing to locate or expand in Chicago, bringing thousands of jobs to the city. Under the framework of Chicago’s Plan for Economic Growth and Jobs, WBC continued to drive growth across the city’s neighborhoods. On the global front, WBC helped strengthen international relationships including unique partnerships with business and government leaders in China and Mexico. And Chicago Sister Cities International (CSCI) welcomed 27 international delegation visits and hosted 118 events, exchanges and programs.

In the innovation sphere, we hosted more than 100 of the nation’s most influential venture capitalists at the first annual Chicago Venture Summit. We also invited 250 students of technology, innovation and entrepreneurship from the country’s top universities to explore the city’s vibrant innovation ecosystem for ThinkChicago. And, we showcased the city’s technology, music, and film industries, demonstrating that Chicago is an ideal location to start a business, during South by Southwest in Austin, TX with our ChicagoMade initiative.

WBC achieved many milestones in 2014, with initiatives that are truly impacting the region, including the Digital Manufacturing and Design Innovation Institute, Supply Chain Innovation Network of Chicago, Metro Chicago Exports, 1000 Jobs for Chicagoland Manufacturing, Chicago Anchors for a Strong Economy, and Capital Access Centers.

You’ll find these highlights and more in the pages ahead, which showcase how WBC’s Plan for Economic Growth and Jobs is driving development throughout the region. Our efforts would not be possible were it not for Mayor Emanuel’s commitment, and our board’s dedication, to the city’s growth. We will continue to advance Chicago’s position as a premier location for business in the years to come.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Sacks
VICE CHAIRMAN

Jeff Malehorn
President & CEO
Chicago was ranked “Top Metro” for corporate investment in 2014, with more new or expanded facilities than any other metropolitan area in the nation. Contributing to this increase in development was World Business Chicago’s enhanced effort to strategically leverage Chicago’s competitive advantages for business attraction.

WBC’s Plan for Economic Growth and Jobs provides a rigorous analysis of the levers that drive the region’s growth, with clear goals, a framework for analysis, and strategies based upon Chicago’s unique assets. While the first two years of the Plan implementation were focused on staffing and ramp-up, 2014 saw the launch of a number of exciting initiatives.

Increasing the city’s attractiveness as a location for business growth is a priority strategy of the Plan. WBC recorded more projects in 2014 than ever before in a single year. In a year of continued economic recovery, Chicago posted the biggest year-over-year drop in unemployment rate of the largest U.S. cities in 6 out of 12 months.
WBC’s outreach in 2014 helped contribute to an increase in companies choosing to expand and locate in Chicago. In 2014, WBC:

- Worked with more than 1,500 firms
- Grew staff to 35 full-time employees
- Added 13 new board members from a diverse mix of sectors
- Responded to more than 200 requests for information
- Presented to more than 10,000 people
- Launched a series of major initiatives in strategic alignment with the Plan for Economic Growth and Jobs

WBC continued its presence at key trade shows and special events with an estimated total attendance of over 150,000, including:

- AdvaMed
- IMTS
- World Routes Show
- BIO2014
- South by Southwest (SXSW)
- Forbes Reinventing America Summit
- WEF Water Summit, and many more
Recent Wins
“When we considered where to locate our new global headquarters, we looked at several cities, and Chicago represented the best opportunity for ADM to continue our growth.”
Patricia Woertz - Chairman and CEO, ADM

The nearly 45,000-square-foot space located on the 46th and 47th floors at 77 W. Wacker Drive will house approximately 70 employees with room for growth and a state-of-the-art customer center that includes a culinary showroom for ADM’s innovative food ingredients. ADM is one of 31 Fortune 500 headquarters in the Chicago area.

“Mayor Emanuel has been an incredible supporter of Braintree and the Chicago tech community ... Together with PayPal, we’re building the future of commerce and we couldn’t be more proud to be doing that from our hometown here in Chicago.”
Bill Ready - Chief Executive, Braintree
“Our aggressive and strategic investments in Door to Door Organics’ local operations further our commitment to remaining a trusted business in the community and allows us to better meet the unique needs of both downtown and suburban customers.”

Chad Arnold - CEO, Door to Door Organics

Door to Door Organics, a leading natural and organic online grocer, announced its expanded service from a new warehouse and office in Bridgeport, which houses more than 3,500 local, organic and natural grocery products. Chicago’s food industry is robust, one of many thriving sectors in the country’s most diversified economy.

“Chicago has long been a destination in the United States which Emirates has wished to serve. Like Dubai, Chicago is a major global trade and transportation hub with great cultural diversity that is an economic engine for its region.”

Tim Clark - President, Emirates Airline

Emirates Airline launched non-stop, daily service from Dubai to O’Hare. The service adds to the city’s global connectivity and contributes to its goal to host 55 million visitors by 2020. With more than 120 daily departures to nearly 60 international destinations, Chicago’s O’Hare is the best connected airport in the U.S.
"We are excited to be setting down roots in Chicago. The city presents fantastic opportunities to pursue our mission – transforming the health of the community, one person at a time. With a diverse workforce base and such great neighborhoods and community partners, Chicago offers us an unprecedented opportunity to succeed."

Jeff Joy - President and CEO, IlliniCare Health

IlliniCare announced it will add an additional 300 jobs in a new office at 77 W. Wacker Drive. IlliniCare has projected to grow to more than 500 employees throughout the city in positions ranging from management to nurses and social workers. Healthcare is a focus of MATTER, the startup center for next-generation healthcare technology companies.

"This new office gives us the space we need to expand our team with talented professionals in the region... its prime location in the city enables us to benefit from all the amenities Chicago has to offer."

Adam Robinson - Co-founder and CEO, Hireology

Hireology, a leading tech-based human resources company, announced that it is expanding to a new office located at 303 E. Wacker Drive. The new facility will provide space to accommodate its expanding team. Chicago is one of the fastest growing cities for tech jobs.
MEADE ELECTRIC

“We are excited to join the vast number of businesses that have chosen Chicago’s thriving business community as the home for their corporate headquarters.”
Frank Lizzadro - CEO, Meade Electric

Meade Electric will consolidate its operations, bringing approximately 2,000 people to the area. The announcement coincided with a $13.7 million project to rehabilitate a formerly vacant industrial building and outdoor storage areas at 6850 W. 62nd St. in Southwest Chicago.

PECO PALLET

“We are proud to celebrate the grand opening of our Chicago depot, which marks a milestone in our company’s growth and partnership with the community of Chicago.”
David Lee - President and CEO, PECO Pallet

PECO Pallet opened its flagship pallet depot in the Hegewisch neighborhood of South Chicago. The new depot can process up to 500,000 pallets per month and store up to 250,000 pallets, making it the company’s largest location. The company plans to grow to more than 100 employees over the next two years. With 95 expansions, Chicago saw substantial neighborhood growth in 2014.
WANDA GROUP

“The successful establishment of the joint venture with Magellan Development Group is Wanda’s first step into the U.S. real estate market...the unique design and high quality of the Wanda Tower will provide the Chicago skyline with a new landmark befitting the city known worldwide as the birthplace of the modern skyscraper.”

Wang Jianlin - Chairman, Wanda Group

Wanda, the Beijing-based investment group, signed an architectural agreement with Magellan Development Group to build a 93-story mixed-use building on Upper Wacker Drive. The project will create more than 2,000 construction and 500 permanent jobs. It will be the largest real estate investment by a Chinese company in Chicago. The Wanda development is the first project that falls within the Gateway Cities MOU, facilitated by WBC.

YELP

“Chicago’s history as a leader in innovation and supporter of small business and tech industry growth fits seamlessly with Yelp’s initiatives, and we are excited to build a home here with Yelp’s seventh office.”

Jeremy Stoppelman - Co-founder and CEO, Yelp

Yelp signed a lease for over 50,000 square feet of space at the Merchandise Mart, where it expects to hire up to 300 people. The company chose Chicago to tap into the city’s extensive talent pipeline, because of its strength in local businesses and its thriving technology community. Chicago’s dynamic tech industry was responsible for 77,000 jobs in 2014.
Global Reach

Chicago has long been a hub of international business activity. Home to more than 1,800 foreign companies, and with more than $100 billion in foreign direct investment, Chicago is among the most globally-connected cities. In 2014, A.T. Kearney’s Global Cities Index ranked Chicago among the top 10 cities in the world. The index provides a view of current performance and future potential based around business activity, human capital, information exchange, cultural experience, and political engagement.

WBC focuses on raising Chicago's global footprint, meeting with international business and government leaders in Chicago and abroad to enhance the city's position and make it top of mind as a destination for foreign direct investment.
Chicago served as the backdrop for the 25th U.S.-China Joint Commission on Commerce and Trade (JCCT). The forum provided a unique opportunity for the city and the nation to strengthen their partnerships with China. During the session, Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel presided over the signing of an agreement between Beijing-based Wanda Group and Magellan Development Group to build the Wanda Vista project—the first result of the Gateway Cities Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This agreement fortifies Chicago’s place as a gateway for Chinese investment in partnership with eight Chinese cities; Beijing, Chengdu, Hangzhou, Qingdao, Shanghai, Shenyang, Tianjin and Wuhan.

The MOU was highlighted at a JCCT luncheon hosted by Mayor Emanuel and WBC, with speakers including U.S. Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker, U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman, and Wang Yang, Vice Premier, State Council, People’s Republic of China.

In addition, WBC hosted breakout sessions during the JCCT including discussions on manufacturing, real estate, infrastructure, and tourism. This was just the second time in its history that the U.S.-China JCCT talks were held outside of Washington, DC, when held in the U.S.

“Chicago is a true hub of domestic commerce...Over the years, Chicago has drawn more than $100 billion in foreign direct investment and has a clear strategy to attract more. The city has been strengthened because of its deep connection to China, to Chinese businesses and to China’s people. This city has become a proverbial bridge between our countries, which is why we elected to hold the 2014 JCCT here.”

Penny Pritzker - U.S. Secretary of Commerce

China is one of the Chicago area’s largest trading partners, with total trade between Illinois and China amounting to $34.1 billion in 2014. There are 60+ mainland Chinese-owned companies in greater Chicago and an estimated 160+ Chicago-area companies have locations in mainland China. Chicago has sister relationships with Shanghai and Shenyang, China.
WBC continued to bolster ties with Mexico, welcoming a group of nearly 50 business and government leaders from Mexico City as part of the Global Cities Economic Partnership, a program developed through Brookings’ and JPMorgan Chase’s Global Cities Initiative, and aimed at helping city and metropolitan leaders become more globally fluent.

The Global Cities Economic Partnership is designed to foster trade, an exchange of ideas, and sharing of business best practices, while also helping to develop new global trade and investment strategies. During the visit, the group, including Secretary of Economic Development Salomón Chertorivski Woldenberg, Vice Secretary of Economic Development Ricardo Becerra Laguna, Secretary of Tourism Miguel Torruco Marqués, business chambers/representatives and industry executives from the pharma/bioscience, restaurant and digital start-up sectors met with economic development and business leaders from across the region, learning about Chicago’s Plan for Economic Growth and Jobs and its implementation.

With more than 1.5 million residents of Mexican descent, Chicago has the fifth largest Mexican population in the world and the second largest in the United States. Currently, more than 120 Chicago and Chicago-area companies have a presence in Mexico. Chicago has a sister relationship with Mexico City, Mexico.

This delegation and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) serve as a template for how Chicago will continue to use its sister city relationships to accelerate growth and drive its position in the global economy.
Chicago Sister Cities International (CSCI) promotes Chicago as a global city by developing programs with Chicago's sister cities in the areas of culture, education, business, tourism, and immigration for the benefit of the residents of the City of Chicago and its sister cities.

In 2014, CSCI received the “2014 Best Overall Program” award for a city with a population over 500,001 from Sister Cities International. The Chicago-Shanghai sister city partnership was also recognized as 2014 Best Overall U.S.-China Sister City Partnership.

Last year alone, CSCI welcomed 27 international delegations, hosted 56 committee meetings and presented 118 events, exchanges, and programs. This included playing an integral role in the planning and execution of events related to delegation visits from Mexico City and China in support of the respective MOUs.
The 2014 Chicago Consular Corps Gala paid tribute to the city’s global partners, with an international guest list of more than 600 attendees that included members of the 84 foreign and honorary consulates in Chicago. More than $800,000 was raised to support the work of WBC and CSCI and to fund Chicago Consular Corps scholarships to students attending the University of Illinois at Chicago.

The Gala, held at the Radisson Blu Aqua Hotel, showed a significant increase in attendance and doubled its funds raised in 2014. As a result, CSCI and WBC doubled their contribution to the Chicago Consular Corps scholarship fund.

The evening contained numerous highlights, including the attendance of U.S. Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker who gave the evening’s keynote address.

HONOREES

Global Citizen Award
Glenn Tilton
Retired Chairman of the Board, United Continental Holdings, Inc.

Corporate Ambassador Award
Exelon and ComEd

Global Innovator Award
Signal

Chicago Sister Cities International Volunteer of the Year
Yoko Noge Dean
Chair of the Osaka Committee of CSCI
Innovation

Chicago’s vast tech ecosystem is maturing as a number of elements converge. Established and emerging tech companies, prominent universities and entrepreneurship facilities, and incubators and early-stage growth accelerators (including 1871, TechNexus and BLUE1647) are all coming together to create a global technology hub.

Supporting innovation and entrepreneurship is an integral part of Chicago’s Plan for Economic Growth and Jobs. WBC’s ChicagoNEXT is a dedicated effort to drive growth and opportunity in science, technology, and innovation and entrepreneurship to impact new venture formation and accelerate business growth.

300 Corporate R&D Centers

70+ Incubators, Accelerators and Co-Working Spaces

$1.6b Venture Capital Invested in Chicago Start-Ups

$8b Acquisitions and IPOs

Source: Built in Chicago
49,000+
Tech jobs in Chicago

270+
Digital startups launched per year on average 2012-2014

+50%
Increase in tech jobs since 2012

2,100+
Tech companies in Chicago

SOME OF THE FASTEST GROWING DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES IN CHICAGO IN 2014

Source: Built In Chicago

WBC hosted more than 100 of the nation’s most influential venture capitalists, who connected with the region’s most promising early- and growth-stage technology companies at the first annual Chicago Venture Summit. The summit provided investors substantial one-on-one access to high-potential startups, along with access to Midwest-based LPs and Chicago’s Fortune 500 leadership.

Led by J.B. Pritzker, chairman of ChicagoNEXT and co-founder and managing partner of Pritzker Group, the summit featured Uber CEO and co-founder Travis Kalanick. The long-time entrepreneur and angel investor discussed the powerful impact of innovation and disruption on consumers and cities.

In addition to Kalanick, summit speakers included investor and PayPal founder Peter Thiel, Cisco Systems chief technology and strategy officer Padmasree Warrior, and investor and former AOL executive Ted Leonsis.

“The reason we chose Chicago is we believe this is where digital technology has to merge with physical, industrial companies.”

Padmasree Warrior - Chief Technology & Strategy Officer, Cisco
ThinkChicago hosted 250 technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship students from top universities throughout the country to explore the city’s vibrant innovation ecosystem. The program invited the students to meet with Chicago technology leaders, explore innovative companies, and attend various events including the Lollapalooza music festival and Chicago Ideas Week programming.

More than 80% of participating companies said they plan to interview and/or hire ThinkChicago students.

“I absolutely love ThinkChicago and really owe a lot to it. I wouldn’t have started my company if it weren’t for the program. I was going to move to California.”
Matt Unger - Founder, Roompact & ThinkChicago Participant

“We’re proud to partner with the City of Chicago, the University of Illinois, World Business Chicago and 1871 to bring our nation’s most talented students to Chicago... By showcasing Chicago as a hub of technological and entrepreneurial innovation, ThinkChicago draws graduates to our vibrant city to kick off their careers and build new ventures.”
Brad Keywell - Founder and Co-Chairman, Chicago Ideas Week; Managing Partner, Lightbank

STUDENTS MORE THAN 40 TOP UNIVERSITIES INCLUDING

- Carnegie Mellon University
- Columbia University
- Georgia Institute of Technology
- Harvard University
- Illinois Institute of Technology
- London School of Economics
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- Northwestern University
- Princeton University
- Purdue University
- Stanford University
- The University of Chicago
- The University of Texas at Austin
- University of Illinois
- University of Michigan
- University of Wisconsin

PARTICIPANTS
- Mayor Rahm Emanuel
- Harper Reed (Modest Inc. CEO, 2012 Obama campaign CTO, and former Threadless CTO)
- Charles Adler (Kickstarter Co-Founder)
- Zach Kaplan (Inventables CEO)
- Adrian Holovaty (Django web framework creator; Soundslice & Everyblock Founder)
- Google
- Groupon
- Microsoft
- Orbitz
- 1871
- Motorola
- C3 - Lollapalooza 2014
- Chicago Ideas Week
- Gogo
- Groupon
- Morningstar
- Motorola
WBC, along with Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Choose Chicago, and the City’s Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE), showcased Chicago’s technology, music, and film industries at South by Southwest (SXSW) in Austin, TX with ChicagoMade. The effort focused on Chicagoans who have made an indelible mark on their respective industries, and demonstrated that Chicago is an ideal location to start a business or career.

“... We saw that the Mayor wanted to show artists that it was a friendly town for them, and that he was willing to cultivate that culture ... well, we would do anything we could to get behind that ... I think the city is taking the right steps.”

Eric Sheinkop - CEO, Music Dealers in Crain’s Chicago

“Inventables, a Chicago company helping put the city at the epicenter of the next generation of manufacturing, unveiled its Carvey 3D printer and Easel software platform. Chicago leaders met companies such as Dom & Tom, which ended up expanding in Chicago.

“From music to movies to the next generation of tech companies, Chicago is home to the best and brightest in the industry...ChicagoMade brings local artists, executives and influencers to South by Southwest to showcase our city’s creative, home-grown talent, and show the world that Chicago is a place where new industries and new talent can thrive.”

Mayor Rahm Emanuel
MATTER

MATTER is a community of healthcare entrepreneurs and industry leaders working together in a shared space to individually and collectively fuel the future of healthcare innovation. Located in the Merchandise Mart, MATTER was a key starter project of ChicagoNEXT.

In 2014, MATTER raised $8 million in funding for operations, 50 companies committed as MATTER members, and a prominent board of directors was established. In addition, MATTER’s leadership team was put in place to prepare for its official launch in early 2015.

CLEANTECH INNOVATION BRIDGE

The Cleantech Innovation Bridge (CIB) matches clean energy researchers and early-stage ventures with corporations seeking innovative energy technologies and solutions. The program is accelerating the pace of clean energy innovation in the Midwest region and beyond through real business opportunities between corporations and startups.

In 2014, the program secured corporate participants including Invenergy, Exelon, and Schneider Electric. In addition, it secured partnerships with Accenture, Deloitte, and Ernst & Young. Partners who contribute will help vet participating startups.
Since the Plan for Economic Growth and Jobs’ launch in 2012, WBC has established approximately 1,000 relationships with key partners, launched more than 15 initiatives, and impacted 48 communities with more than 40,000 jobs created and retained.
The Plan fostered neighborhood development through programs like Chicago Anchors for a Strong Economy (CASE), which trained nearly 100 small businesses in the region to grow their ability to supply large institutions with locally sourced products and services. The network of 11 anchor institutions is committed to putting its purchasing power to work in order to drive economic growth across Chicago’s neighborhoods.

“The CASE program is revolutionary in that it gives our local businesses an opportunity to work with each other. We may not be national in scope or have fancy marketing, but local businesses can provide even better service to our anchor institutions.”

Jackie Dyess - Inner City Supply, CASE Program Participant

2014 ANCHORS

- Advocate Health Care
- BMO Harris Bank
- City of Chicago
- Commonwealth Edison
- Cook County
- Illinois Institute of Technology
- Northwestern Memorial Healthcare
- Rush University Medical Center
- University of Chicago
- University of Chicago Medical Center
- University of Illinois at Chicago

In 2014, the Digital Manufacturing and Design Innovation Institute (DMDII) broke ground. DMDII is the nation’s flagship research institute for applying cutting-edge digital technologies to reduce the time and cost of manufacturing, strengthening the capabilities of the U.S. supply chain, and reducing acquisition costs. WBC was instrumental in convening the Chicago consortium led by UI LABS, which was the recipient of a $70 million Department of Defense grant (matched by $250 million of private sector, academic, and local government funding).

Small and medium-enterprise (SME) manufacturers across all industries attended three open forums to learn how they can capture the benefits of Chicago’s new Digital Lab for Manufacturing. Attendees also learned about the City of Chicago’s effort to support manufacturing, and the global resource network available to assist manufacturers’ planning and operations. There are approximately 2,700 SMEs in Chicago alone.
Metro Chicago Exports (MCE), the unprecedented collaboration between the City of Chicago and Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will counties, helps small and medium enterprises capture expanding global opportunities and strengthens the region’s network of export service providers.

Launched in 2014, Metro Chicago Exports will assist manufacturers and business service companies to reach new international markets. In January 2015, Thomas Hulseman was appointed founding managing director of MCE.

This pilot program focuses on three initial strategies:

– Build the pipeline of export-ready firms
– Strengthen the export ecosystem
– Reduce the initial business costs to reach new markets

Metro Chicago Exports builds on the Global Cities Initiative, a joint project of the Brookings Institution and JPMorgan Chase.

“Metropolitan areas like northeastern Illinois are the engines for economic growth in this country. And regions that work together perform better. By increasing the export capacity of small and medium-sized businesses, we will enhance global competitiveness, foster innovative activity within firms, and positively impact the economy of our region.”

Toni Preckwinkle - President, Cook County Board

**83%** Of economic growth is occurring outside the U.S. 2013-2018*

*Source: World Economic Outlook, International Monetary Fund, 2013

WBC advanced the Supply Chain Innovation Network of Chicago (SINC) by appointing Doug Whitley as the Interim Executive Director. SINC is a leadership council developed to improve the movement of goods to stimulate regional economic and business growth, and the first-ever private sector and executive-led, end-to-end supply chain organization in greater Chicago. The organization is growing Chicago’s national leadership as a supply chain hub by developing talent, improving infrastructure, advancing technology, and attracting capital.

**SINC INITIATIVES INCLUDE**

– Streamlined truck permitting for oversized trucks throughout Chicagoland
– Off-peak delivery coordination for shipping of goods during periods of less congestion
– Workforce development
– Fostering innovation within the industry

**INCREASE GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS** by helping grow Chicago’s regional economy

**ENHANCE LOCAL SUPPLY CHAIN** efficiency while increasing talent attraction and academic strength in the field

**STRENGTHENS BUSINESS’** exposure to thought leadership and industry trends, while increasing access to talent, tools, and best-practices for growth

**SUPPLY CHAIN INNOVATION NETWORK OF CHICAGO - SINC**
The 1000 Jobs for Chicagoland Manufacturing initiative was announced in 2014 by Mayor Emanuel, WBC, and the Chicago Federation of Labor. The initiative will match 1,000 qualified job seekers to open manufacturing jobs and link residents who need additional skills to training and apprenticeship programs that can result in full-time employment.

The 1000 Jobs initiative focuses on three areas of need:

– Raising awareness of manufacturing jobs in the city and the region’s manufacturing sector
– Increasing capacity at existing workforce organizations to help them to match job seekers to jobs and training programs that meet the needs of area manufacturing businesses
– Facilitating coordination through a web portal that will connect job seekers with training and employment opportunities

“When you strengthen the manufacturing sector, you strengthen the middle class. This initiative will connect job seekers with the training programs and manufacturing employment opportunities that will help build our community.”

Karin Norington-Reaves - CEO, Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership, 1000 Jobs Steering Committee Member

The Capital Access Centers (CACs), now called Small Business Opportunity Centers, pilot program launched at three locations in 2014. The program helps small businesses assess their needs and access capital to grow. The CACs primarily work with small businesses seeking loans up to $250,000 for their next stage of development.

Capital Access Centers will help banks, microlenders, and other financial institutions fill their lending pipelines, while providing the expert guidance business owners seek when they are looking for financing to improve or expand their business.

The program launched with three neighborhood-based agencies: the Chatham Business Association, the Resurrection Project, and the Greater Englewood Community Development Corporation.

CACs build on the success of WBC’s Seed Chicago initiative, which cultivates and accelerates small business growth under the leadership of Accion.

“Accessing capital is one of the most important needs for small businesses and is also one of the most challenging. Often, small businesses don’t know where to go for capital and currently there are limited institutions providing support to them in the marketplace. This program will provide funding and training to create centers that have both the capacity and the capability to triage client needs and steer them to the most appropriate financial partners.”

Roxanne Nava - Chief Small Business Officer, City of Chicago
As a part of its Plan strategy to invest in next-generation infrastructure, WBC is a key partner in the development of Chicago’s Riverwalk. In 2014, the City of Chicago issued a request for proposals (RFP) to advance commercial development around the Riverwalk. According to a study commissioned by the City, investing in the Riverwalk has the potential to drive roughly $3 billion in net new spending in the Chicago economy over the next 35 years.

The Chicago Riverwalk extension is part of the larger Wacker Drive Reconstruction Project. The Riverwalk will complement the new roadway, bringing residents and visitors down to the river level. The project will provide an alternative, continuous pedestrian pathway with recreational, educational and retail opportunities. With more than 100,000 square feet of commercial development opportunity, the Chicago Riverwalk is a transformative investment.

WBC’s Fellowship Program offers prominent professional development opportunities for mid-level executives throughout the Chicago area to drive World Business Chicago’s Plan for Economic Growth and Jobs strategies.

Nominated by their employers, Fellows work at WBC for a select amount of time and lead initiatives to drive growth in Chicago and the region. This professional development experience provides the Fellows with tremendous leadership opportunities as they build lasting relationships with leaders in the public and private sectors and directly impact Chicago’s future.


“The Fellowship is an enriching experience that ignites one’s civic spirit, develops and flexes next generation leadership and entrepreneurial skills, and provides unparalleled access to Chicago’s dynamic business and civic ecosystem. WBC provides all the essential ingredients that allow Fellows to be creative in how they make an impact and get a taste of Chicago’s economic development priorities.”

Anil Harjani - Director, Hyatt Hotels Corporation, Former WBC Fellow
FINANCIALS
AUDITED FINANCIAL REPORT AVAILABLE AT WORLDBUSINESSCHICAGO.COM/ANNUAL-REPORT

REVENUE
2013: $4.6MM
2014: $8.1MM
Excludes: Contributed Service Income

EXPENSES
2013: $5.0MM
2014: $7.6MM
Excludes: NATO, Contributed Service Expense, Depreciation

PRIVATE FUNDING

$1 - 49,999
Karen Murphy Roseman Foundation, Inc.

$50,000 - 99,999
Chicago Community Trust Foundation

$1,000,000
Illinois Technology Association

$100,000
Chicago Community Trust Foundation

$1 - 49,999 Cont.

$50,000 - 99,999
Chicago Community Trust Foundation

CONTRIBUTED SERVICES

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United Airlines, Inc.

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Chaired by Mayor Rahm Emanuel, World Business Chicago drives regional economic growth. WBC collaborates to create jobs, cultivate talent, and put Chicago at the forefront of the global economy. A unique public-private partnership, WBC engages business and community leaders to advance Chicago's Plan for Economic Growth and Jobs.