



Press Release

FROM THE OFFICE OF STATE REPRESENTATIVE LA SHAWN K. FORD

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Packing Food for Haiti, Ford Honors Dr. King's Dream with 4th Annual HEALTH CHALLENGE

CHICAGO, IL – State Representative La Shawn K. Ford (D-Chicago) and a coalition of community-based organizations hosted the 4th Annual HEALTH CHALLENGE, honoring the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his contributions to tolerance, equality, and justice.

Held at Oak Park and River Forest High School, the HEALTH CHALLENGE hosted activities for all ages, beginning with an introductory speech on Dr. King's legacy and his relevance for a young generation of "Drum Majors for Justice". It included fun physical activities like Hula-Hoops, Jump Rope, Wheelchair Basketball, Aerobics, Yoga, and free Massages for Adults, as well as nutrition education for students and adults. In addition, many attendees participated in the National Day of Service, volunteering with AmeriCorps to help pack food for the victims of the 2010 earthquake in Haiti.

"Many organizations came together for the HEALTH CHALLENGE, dedicated to the lifelong goals of Dr. King's commitment to service," said Ford. "Students and parents increased their awareness of the importance of physical activity and good nutrition by participating in many fun activities. An event new to the HEALTH CHALLENGE this year, we worked with Kids Around the World and AmeriCorps at a service project packing food to assist our Haitian sisters and brothers who continue to recover from last year's devastating earthquake."

"The PCC Community Wellness Center AmeriCorps Program was again delighted to celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., with 'a day on, not a day off' by organizing a service opportunity at the Fourth Annual HEALTH CHALLENGE," said Toni Bush of PCC Wellness. "More than 40 volunteers worked with 'Kids Around the World' to pack 7000 nutritionally complete meals that will be sent to Haiti. PCC would like to thank the Evanston Mennonite Church, the First Congregational Church of Wilmette and 'Kids Around the World' for donations that covered the cost of the meals, and Trader Joe's for providing healthy snacks for volunteers. As Dr. King said, 'Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane.' Together, PCC's service project and the HEALTH CHALLENGE inspired the community to work toward equality in health."

"The West Cook Y supports healthy living, youth development and social responsibility," said Jan Pate, President and CEO of the West Cook Y. "Therefore, the opportunity to participate with Representative Ford in the HEALTH CHALLENGE aligned completely with our goal of strengthening the foundations of community. We were also pleased to have many of our Y youth at the event, allowing them to have a day filled with meaning rather than just a day away from school. We look forward to more collaboration with Representative Ford on issues and activities of mutual interest in the months ahead."

Below: Representative Ford and HEALTH CHALLENGE volunteers pack food to send to Haiti.

