



**WOODS
FUND**
CHICAGO

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
MONDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2014

MEDIA ALERT

**WOODS FUND CHICAGO LAUNCHES *RIGHT ON JUSTICE* INITIATIVE WITH
NORTHERN IRELAND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE LEADER
Youth Justice Agency CEO Paula Jack & Hon. Toni Preckwinkle
*Explore Int'l Lessons To Stop Growing Prison Pipeline***

WHAT:

As the U.S. prison system continues to be vastly over-represented by youth of color and costs of incarceration continue to skyrocket, The Woods Fund Chicago launches its ***Right On Justice Initiative*** with an international symposium featuring **Paula Jack, Northern Ireland's CEO of its Youth Justice Agency, Department of Justice.**

Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle and other regional leaders will examine "lessons learned" from Northern Ireland, a formerly war-torn nation that has fundamentally embraced the underlying concept of restorative justice as a way to deliver justice. The half-day symposium will explore the impact of Restorative Justice in Northern Ireland and its potential implications for the Chicago region's juvenile justice and educational systems to stop the school-to-prison pipeline and reduce juvenile incarceration.

Restorative Justice is an international movement with growing national and local initiatives that offers an alternative to punitive justice systems and engages the victims of crimes in seeking ways to reduce harm that leads to reduced incarceration and increased school engagement.

WHO:

Symposium speakers include:

- **Emmanuel Andre, Northwestern Children and Family Justice Center**
- **Jenny Arwade, Executive Director, Albany Park Neighborhood Council**
- **The Honorable Justice Anne Burke**
- **Grace Hou, President, The Woods Fund of Chicago**

- **The Honorable Sophia Hall, Judge, Circuit Court**
- **Paula Jack, CEO, Youth Justice Agency, Department of Justice, Northern Ireland**
- **Candice Jones, Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice**
- **Elena Quintana, Executive Director, Institute on Public Safety and Social Justice, Adler School of Professional Psychology**
- **The Honorable Toni Preckwinkle, President Cook County Board of Commissioners**
- **Richard Steele, Talk Show Host, WBEZ Radio (moderator)**
- **Ethan Viets-Van Lear, Circles and Ciphers**
- **Laura Washington, Chicago Sun-Times Columnist & ABC-TV News Political Commentator (moderator)**

WHEN:

**8:30 A.M. - 1:30 P.M.
Wednesday, October 22, 2014**

WHERE:

**The University Club of Chicago
76 E. Monroe, Chicago, Illinois**

WHY:

Illinois suspends proportionally more African-American students than any other state in the country, including 42% of all African-American students with disabilities. In Chicago, African American students are five times more likely to get an out of school suspension than white students. Although whites make up more than 50% of the Cook County population, 97% of youth detained at the Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center (CCJTDC) are youth of color (86% are African American).

In 2012, African American youth were arrested at a much higher rate than white youth. Of the 46,800 juvenile arrests across Illinois, 59% of arrests involved African American youth, and 40% involved white youth. African American youth were over represented at the point of arrests at a level triple their representation in the general Illinois youth population while white youth were under-represented and arrested at a level about 45 percent less than their representation.

ABOUT:

Right On Justice is a two-year initiative funded by the Woods Fund Chicago and led by Chicago's Albany Park Neighborhood Council (APNC) and the Institute on Public Safety and Social Justice at the Adler School of Professional Psychology (IPSSJ).

The initiative will develop a regional coalition to: advocate for policies and support resources that identify and dismantle punitive policies at the school and community level; advance restorative justice alternatives to school push out and criminalization of communities of color; reform the Cook County justice system; and, build capacity for restorative justice solutions. For more information please go to www.woodsfund.org.

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