

MEDIA ADVISORY

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Chicago, IL (May 21, 2018)— **Sustainability, Efficiency and Collaboration: The Puerto Rican Agenda of Chicago continues Rebuilding Puerto Rico 8 months after Hurricanes Maria and Irma.**

Members of the Puerto Rican Agenda of Chicago, (The Agenda) have returned from a four-day summit in Puerto Rico this week. The delegation included a team of housing manufactures, developers, planners, engineers and community economic develop professionals. Participants joined a Strategy Summit, planned and coordinated by The Agenda with the goal of exploring opportunities to identify partnerships for building the most energy efficient and hurricane proof model homes as part of The Agenda's *Relief, Rescue, and Rebuild Puerto Rico* campaign (3R's4PR).

The Agenda concluded its Pallets and Planes campaign and commenced the 3R's4PR campaign earlier this year with the goal of developing economically sustainable projects for the rebuilding of Puerto Rico with local Puerto Rican leadership. The Agenda's activities continue to include providing grants to local non-for-profit organizations, identifying economic development and sustainable projects that will create jobs and make use of the island natural resources.

The Agenda's priorities are to develop sustainable agriculture projects and create self-sufficiency in the island. Furthermore, The Agenda seeks to promote long term solutions, directly impact the need to increase small businesses, and stimulate local participation in the islands economy.

In February 2018, The Chicago Community Trust awarded a \$100,000 grant to support The Agenda's track record of employing immediate, meaningful, and transparent strategies resulting in micro-grants for emergency supplies, solar panels, generators, medicine, and construction materials in over 30 towns on the island. A portion of the grant will seed the *Adopt a Pueblo* project under the umbrella of the 3R's4PR campaign. The mountainous town of Comerío and coastal town of Loiza, have been selected for deeper investments because they represent two hard hit towns on the island. The Strategy Summit last week began the planning for sustainable construction and community-led rebuilding brigades.

BACKGROUND: The Puerto Rican Agenda of Chicago was the first organization of the Puerto Rican Diaspora to land an airplane filled with emergency cargo to the island, and to have that same plane return with 300 people stranded in the airport on the island. Since Hurricane Maria, the Puerto Rican Agenda has raised over \$400,000 and directed funds for aid and micro-grants to over 30 municipalities and organizations in Puerto Rico. This grassroots all-volunteer effort has been bolstered by the intervention of Congressman Luis V. Gutiérrez, Mayor Rahm Emanuel, United Airlines CEO Oscar Muñoz, and Governor Bruce Rauner.

The Puerto Rican Agenda is non-profit organization of local Puerto Rican leaders that influences policy for the advancement of the Puerto Rican community in Chicago. Over the past two decades, the Agenda continues to develop and execute a community-driven vision for the Humboldt Park Area, where most Puerto Ricans in Chicago live, and Paseo Boricua, a business and entertainment district on Division Street between California and Western.

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Additionally, the Agenda has worked closely with the City of Chicago's Office of Emergency Management and Communication and 26th Ward Alderman Roberto Maldonado to establish the first full-service Hurricane Resource Center in Humboldt Park through May 1, 2018. To date over 2,000 evacuees from Puerto Rico have been connected to local, state, and federal resources.

For over 100 years, The Chicago Community Trust, our region's community foundation, has connected the generosity of donors with community needs by making grants to nonprofit organizations working to improve metropolitan Chicago. Since 1915, the Trust has awarded over \$2 billion in grant funding to more than 11,000 local nonprofit organizations- including more than \$236 million in 2016. From strengthening schools to assisting local art programs, from building health centers to protecting the safety net for those hardest hit by the recession, the Trust continues to enhance our region. To learn more, please visit the Trust online at www.cct.org.

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