

CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS
NEWS RELEASE
CHICAGO OFFICE OF TOURISM

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May 8, 2009

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NEW HYDE PARK INSTAGREETER SERVICE LAUNCHES JUNE 6
Chicago Greeter Program Adds First Neighborhood Outpost

This summer, Chicago visitors can explore President Obama's Hyde Park neighborhood through the new Hyde Park InstaGreeter program, a free visitor service offered by the Chicago Office of Tourism. Located at the Hyde Park Art Center (5020 South Cornell Avenue), the InstaGreeter Outpost is the first neighborhood offshoot of the popular Chicago Greeter and downtown InstaGreeter programs.

Every Saturday from June 6 - August 29, visitors can drop by anytime between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. for a free one-hour walkabout of Hyde Park guided by a friendly, knowledgeable volunteer Chicagoan. Visits are given on a first-come, first-served basis with no reservations needed. Chicago Greeters will provide "insider orientations" to Hyde Park through the informal walking tours, which are limited to groups of six or less.

Most recently recognized for being home to President Obama, Hyde Park boasts historic landmarks such as the University of Chicago and Frank Lloyd Wright's Robie House. The Museum of Science and Industry, the Oriental Institute and the DuSable Museum of African American History add to the cultural highlights of the neighborhood.

"Chicago is known for its diverse and charming neighborhoods," said Chicago Office of Tourism Director Dorothy Coyle. "The Hyde Park InstaGreeter service is a great way for visitors to discover one of our most historic neighborhoods through the eyes of a Chicagoan."

The Hyde Park InstaGreeter Outpost is part of the Chicago Office of Tourism's 2009 summer tourism campaign, *Explore Chicago: Take a Neighborhood Vacation*. Running from June 1 - September 30, campaign highlights include Family Day Camps, Neighborhood Scavenger Hunts, outdoor festivals and other free or budget-friendly events throughout the city.

Since April 2002, Chicago Greeter has been a resource for both visitors and locals entertaining visiting family and friends. In September 2003, Chicago Greeter launched its InstaGreeter program, an "on-the-spot" greeter service offering visitors the opportunity to see downtown Chicago in an hour with a Greeter leading free walking visits of the Chicago Loop. There have been over 7,000 Greeter visits and 2,000 InstaGreeter visits to date, servicing visitors from more than 80 different countries. Chicago Greeter and InstaGreeter visits originate at the Chicago Cultural Center Visitor Information Center, 77 E. Randolph Street. More information about the Hyde Park InstaGreeter and Chicago Greeter programs can be found at www.ExploreChicago.org.

Visitors and Chicagoans planning to entertain out-of-town guests can receive Chicago brochures, reserve hotel accommodations and receive trip-planning assistance by calling toll-

free 1.877.CHICAGO (1.877.244.2246), or visiting www.ExploreChicago.org. Brochures and information on Chicago's exciting events and activities are also available at the Visitor Information Centers. The centers are located at Chicago Water Works, 163 East Pearson Street at Michigan Avenue and the Chicago Cultural Center, 77 East Randolph Street. For those calling from outside the United States, Mexico and Canada, please call 1.312.201.8847. The TTY toll-free number for the hearing impaired is 1.866.710.0294.

The Chicago Office of Tourism, a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs, is the official City agency dedicated to promoting Chicago to domestic and international visitors and to providing innovative visitor programs and services.

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