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Governor Quinn Breaks Ground on Salvation Army's Ray and Joan Kroc Community Center

Joins Community Leaders and Elected Officials to Start Construction of Chicago's Largest Community Center

CHICAGO – October 7, 2010. Governor Pat Quinn today joined community leaders and elected officials to break ground on the Salvation Army's new Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center in Chicago's Pullman neighborhood. Construction is beginning following clean-up of the abandoned industrial site, which was supported by a $5 million grant to the city of Chicago from Governor Quinn's *Illinois Jobs Now!* capital program.

"The Salvation Army's Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center represents a historic investment in the Far South Side of Chicago," said Governor Quinn. "This center will provide a positive alternative to violence for our youth, and will continue to strengthen the economy by putting hundreds of people to work and giving the entire community access to critical job training programs."

Construction of the $160 million Kroc Center is expected to create more than 200 construction jobs. The completed facility is expected to create 100 permanent full-time jobs, 100 part-time jobs, 50 summer jobs and many internship opportunities.

The 32-acre Kroc Center will offer the city's largest variety of educational, sports, arts and community support programs under one roof. The center's state-of-the-art recreational facilities will include baseball and softball diamonds, fully-equipped gymnasiums, an aquatic center, a water park, running tracks, tennis courts, a golf training area and a fitness center.

The center will offer classes and educational workshops for people of all ages, including job training, GED preparation, computer literacy, financial planning, parenting and nutrition. After-school programs will also be available. The center will house a performing arts center; an outdoor amphitheater; a media center with recording video production studios; as well as studios for instrument, vocal and art instruction. More information is available at www.kroccenterchicago.org.

Construction of the facility will be primarily funded by a $110 million award from the Kroc estate and other private donations. Upon her death in 2003, Joan Kroc, widow of McDonald's Corp. founder Ray A. Kroc, passed on to the Salvation Army the largest gift ever made to a private charity for the specific purpose of constructing state-of-the-art facilities in underserved areas around the country.

Today's groundbreaking follows Governor Quinn's announcement yesterday of a comprehensive new effort to strengthen and revitalize Illinois' urban communities. Based largely on feedback from the Governor's Anti-Violence Commission, the Neighborhood Recovery Initiative will focus on rebuilding Illinois' most vulnerable neighborhoods and protecting young people by offering more job and education opportunities. It will also provide small businesses with access to capital and technical expertise, which will help them expand and create new jobs.

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