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**PLAYERS COALITION HOSTS CHICAGO VIOLENCE PREVENTION  
CONVENING WORKSHOP AND ANNOUNCES \$200,000 COMMITMENT  
TO SUPPORT VIOLENCE PREVENTION INITIATIVES IN CHICAGO**

*Activations Focus on the Role of Sport and Athlete Influence to Help Build Community Safety*

**CHICAGO, IL//MAY 21, 2025**//Members of Players Coalition today announced their continued support for grassroots and legislative efforts aimed at proactively advancing violence prevention initiatives in Chicago, with a \$200,000 commitment to support community-led solutions and interventions. Through strategic partnerships, financial investments, and public advocacy, Players Coalition is committed to addressing systemic inequities and promoting fair, accountable, and community-centered justice.

Players Coalition, founded by former NFL players Anquan Boldin and Malcolm Jenkins, is an athlete-led nonprofit organization committed to advocating social justice and racial equity and driving advocacy, grantmaking, and player engagement in communities across the country. This additional investment in violence prevention grants builds upon the \$1M commitment Players Coalition contributed to community-led organizations across the country in 2024. Grants will be awarded to partners meeting a set of criteria that includes addressing gun violence through a public health lens with attention on increasing protective factors for youth and strengthening communities, has long focused on racial justice and criminal justice reform and has committed to expanding efforts and support in Chicago and reflects the organization's dedication to uplifting communities impacted by mass incarceration, police violence, and outdated justice policies.

"Chicago has a long history of activism and resilience," said Track and Field Olympian and Players Coalition Advocate, Tori Franklin, "Our mission is to support the people and the organizations already doing the work – amplifying their voices, advocating for both community violence intervention (CVI) and preventative approaches addressing the root causes of violence, to create real opportunities for healing and progress."

Players Coalition's work in Chicago included a walking tour of Garfield Park led by Jackie Hoffman, CEO and Founder of Peace Runners 773, in partnership with the Center for Healing and Justice Through Sport. Following the walking tour, members of the Players Coalition delegation participated in a violence prevention workshop at the Institute for Nonviolence Chicago. The focus of the community discussion was centered around *the role of athlete voice and Sport in Violence Prevention*. Participating in the day's activities were 10 student collegiate athletes sponsored by Players Coalition who joined the walking tour and engaged in the community discussion in advance of their participation in the Black Student Athlete Summit.

The violence prevention workshop entitled “Building Community Safety & Violence Prevention” focused on violence as a public health crisis, the importance of integrating interventions, strengthening protective factors for youth, and identifying the unique role that sports, and athlete influence can play in helping to advance community safety through policy, advocacy, and player engagement. Attendees had an opportunity to hear and learn from leaders across the community violence intervention (CVI) setting and hear from players about issues and solutions driving violence prevention both nationally and locally.

“I am excited to have participated in today’s violence prevention workshop and to have joined the Peace Runners 773 walking tour of Garfield Park,” said Anquan Boldin Jr. “Athletes have a platform, and with this platform comes a responsibility to use our voices to advocate to make systemic change – in this instance, I’m using my voice to uplift the importance of violence prevention and CVI.”

In 2024, Players Coalition contributed over \$1 million to organizations directly addressing violence prevention and intervention. In Chicago, they will continue to build on this investment and collaborate with local leaders, including community organizers, lawmakers, and impacted members of the community to help build a safer community through preventative and intervention strategies to end the cycle of violence.

Participants attending the Chicago Violence Prevention Convening Workshop included: The Institute for Nonviolence Chicago, Cure Violence Global, Laureus Sport for Good Chicago, CORNERS at Northwestern, Metropolitan Peace Initiatives, and the One City Basketball League.

Key objectives of the workshop included a commitment to violence prevention and building community safety; convening key stakeholders and advocates to address issues related to gun violence, educating student-athletes about the power of their voice and platform to elevate community issues, and to share opportunities for athlete engagement and the unique role sports can play in amplifying the work and priorities of organizations and partners actively engaged on these issues in Chicago.

Key outcomes after the convening included the commitment by participants to develop an action plan of sports-led engagement supporting Chicago violence prevention initiatives and advocacy throughout 2025 and beyond.

### **About Players Coalition**

Players Coalition is an independent 501(c)(3) (charity) and 501(c)(4) (advocacy) organization, working with more than 1,400 professional athletes, coaches and owners across professional sports leagues to improve social justice and racial equality in our country. For additional information please visit: [www.players-coalitionl.org](http://www.players-coalitionl.org).

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