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Mayor Ali Announces Peoria Role Model Project

With support from PNC Foundation, 150 young people will be connected with local Black professionals

August 18, 2023 (PEORIA, IL) Mayor Rita Ali will host a launch event for the new Peoria Role Model Project from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m., Thursday, Aug. 24, at the Peoria Civic Center, Ballroom A. The initiative, funded through a grant by PNC Foundation, is intended to help inspire and empower 150 local youth by connecting them with local Black professionals who will serve as role models year-round. The inaugural cohort of 50 participants was selected from the Mayor’s Summer Youth and Internship Program.

“It is critical that we connect young people living in distressed areas of the city with role models who can positively influence their decision-making processes, their outlook and access to opportunities, and how they carve out a path for future success. This connection is not only vital to the future of the young people involved but the future success of our city,” said Peoria Mayor Rita Ali.

Through the Peoria Role Model Project, the City will expose 150 aspiring youth from economically impacted areas of Peoria to accomplished and inspiring professionals from diverse fields such as business, education, arts, technology, healthcare, and more. The project will also engage other community partners, including Peoria Public Schools.

“PNC’s support for The Peoria Role Model Project reflects our longstanding commitment to invest in initiatives that help drive real change for Peoria’s future workforce and economic success, particularly in our underserved neighborhoods,” said Brian Ray, PNC regional president of central Illinois. “We hope that the connections made will foster pathways and opportunities for our youth to grow, learn and network. Most importantly, we want these students to be empowered knowing there are people willing to be a meaningful part of their journey through school and life.”

The PNC Foundation, which receives its principal funding from The PNC Financial Services Group (www.pnc.com), actively supports organizations that provide services for the benefit of communities in which it has a significant presence. The foundation focuses its philanthropic mission on early childhood education and community and economic development, which includes the arts and culture. Through PNC Grow Up Great®, its signature cause that began in 2004, PNC has created a bilingual \$500 million, multi-year initiative to help prepare children from birth to age 5 for success in school and life.

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