



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Jim Bray or Tracey B. Fleming
Chicago Metropolis 2020
312/332-8131 phone

ADELE SIMMONS JOINS CHICAGO METROPOLIS 2020 LEADERSHIP Dialogue begun with community leaders. DuPage mayors open the discussions.

CHICAGO (September 9, 1999) -- Adele Simmons, who recently stepped down after a decade of distinguished service as president of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, has joined Chicago Metropolis 2020 as vice chair and senior executive.

Simmons will take a lead role in advising the day-to-day work of Chicago Metropolis 2020, and she will devote much of her attention to the policy issues of early childhood development, workforce development and the social service delivery system in the region, according to George A. Ranney, Jr., who is president and CEO of Chicago Metropolis 2020.

"Adele Simmons is a terrific addition to Chicago Metropolis 2020," Ranney said. "Adele is highly regarded throughout the community and for good reason. A strategic thinker, she has developed innovative programs aimed at improving life for everyone in the community, especially those in poor neighborhoods.

"I've often seen her bring diverse groups of people together -- corporate executives, community activists and public servants -- in search of answers to questions that have eluded them in the past," Ranney said. "But Adele's talent is much greater than simply gathering people with differing viewpoints and experiences in the same room. She helps them understand and learn from each other, and she is skilled at helping them create sensible and workable solutions to what once seemed like insurmountable problems."

Under Simmons' leadership, the MacArthur Foundation was an early supporter of regionalism, helping the public understand how the successes and challenges of each community impact the health of the entire region and everyone in it. Although the foundation is international in scope, the Chicago region has been a major beneficiary. The MacArthur Foundation has devoted about \$25 million annually to several Chicago area projects that have included reforming Chicago schools, strengthening communities and improving cultural institutions.

In addition to her work at the MacArthur Foundation, Simmons has served on several national and international boards and commissions, including appointments to presidential commissions

- more -

in the Carter and Bush administrations. She serves on the board of the Marsh & McLennan Companies. She also served as chair of Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley's Task Force on Youth Development.

Before joining the MacArthur Foundation, Simmons was president of Hampshire College in Amherst, Mass.

"Chicago and the surrounding communities have been the birthplace of an enormous number of important advances and discoveries in medicine, research, technology and other fields," said Simmons, who serves on the Advisory Committee to the World Bank Institute. "Too often, we fail to understand how we are linked together, not just as a region, but with other leading world population centers, and we haven't done enough to showcase our talent, our accomplishments and our capabilities to the world. I'm confident the Chicago Metropolis 2020 project can help all of us think strategically about how this region contributes to the global economy and how our economic future is intertwined with the rest of the world."

Chicago Metropolis 2020 was created earlier this year to foster collaboration across the six-county region and take actions that will strengthen the economic vitality and quality of life in the region. The independent, non-profit organization intends to help to make the region one of the places in the world where people most want to live and work.

Simmons' new role was announced at a recent day-long meeting of the Executive Committee, which met at Cantigny in Wheaton.

DuPage Mayors meet with Executive Council

The Executive Council meeting was preceded by an informal discussion session and working lunch with members of the DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference. Ronald S. Ghilardi, who is President of the Village of Lisle, is President of the Conference as well as a member of the Executive Council of Chicago Metropolis 2020.

"I'm delighted we could hear from some of the local officials in DuPage, and we certainly intend to continue this dialogue with community leaders elsewhere in the region," Ranney said. "This gave them a chance to tell us about some of the most important issues they face, including transportation and development, and I believe we learned from each other. We are all involved in a major effort to prepare this region for the challenges of the next century, and we absolutely must work on this together."

Executive Council Leadership

In other action, Andrew J. McKenna, who chairs the Executive Council and is Chairman of Schwarz Paper Company of Morton Grove, named three of the 40-member Executive Council to serve as Vice Chairs. The three are Simmons; Valerie Jarrett, Executive Vice President of The Habitat Company of Chicago and Chairman of the Chicago Transit Authority; and Richard C. Notebaert, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Ameritech Corporation.

The Executive Council elected the following officers: McKenna as Chair, Ranney as President; Frank H. Beal, former President of Ryerson International, Inc., as Vice President and Secretary; and William M. Goodyear, former Chairman of Bank of America, Illinois, as Treasurer.

Policy Initiatives

Ranney said work is underway on many of the issues that were raised in the 120-page report "Chicago Metropolis 2020: Preparing Metropolitan Chicago for the 21st Century." The report, which was commissioned by The Commercial Club of Chicago, provides a vision of where the metropolitan region should be in the year 2020. One of the report's recommendations was the creation of the Chicago Metropolis 2020 organization, and it will set goals and help implement the changes needed to achieve that vision.

Working with other community leaders and recognized experts, members of the Executive Council have begun to tackle several subject areas beginning with development and transportation; property tax reform; social infrastructure; early childhood development; workforce development; health care; a "Regional Learning System," which will collect, develop and make information available on a wide range of policy issues in the region; and the "Metropolis Principles," a guide for businesses making decisions on where to develop and for communities deciding how to encourage development.

New Team Member

In addition, James C. LaBelle of Zion has joined Chicago Metropolis 2020 as a senior advisor. A member of the Lake County Board since 1980, LaBelle now is serving his third term as Board Chairman and will work part-time with Chicago Metropolis 2020. From 1987 to 1989, he was an assistant to Governor James R. Thompson and was responsible for local government, transportation and economic development issues. LaBelle has a master's degree in public administration from Northern Illinois University and has previous experience in marketing, management, local government and economic development.

#