



Morten Group, LLC Celebrates 20th Anniversary by Awarding a Year of READI Services to Chicago Debates

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – After reviewing a robust application pool, Morten Group, LLC has selected **Chicago Debates** as the recipient of their Forging Innovation in Racial Equity Grant. Work will begin on this engagement in late June and will continue through next summer. Morten Group is thrilled to be sharing its expertise with one of Chicago’s vital, Black-led organizations and looks forward to the opportunity to explore this work with them.

Introduced in tandem with its 20th anniversary year, Morten Group’s Forging Innovation in Racial Equity (FIRE) Grant is focused on advancing racial equity, access, diversity, and inclusion (READI) through internal organizational assessment, racial equity training, and action plan development. Chicago Debates was chosen as Morten Group’s grantee organization after a rich application and interview process spanning over two months with applications from across the country and will receive one year of pro bono READI services, including an assessment, training, and READI action planning.

“The timing of Morten Group’s FIRE Grant was perfectly aligned with the roll-out of our new strategic plan - the need to imbed diversity, equity, and inclusion principles more deeply across our organization is a must, and the FIRE grant will provide us with the assessment, training, and planning we need to better lead and inform our work to bridge the educational opportunity gap and provide a more equitable future for more of Chicago’s most marginalized youth,” said Chicago Debates Executive Director Dr. Toinette Gunn. “We are thrilled to be the recipient of this competitive grant and are honored to partner with Morten Group on this journey!”

“We were incredibly impressed with the slate of applications for the FIRE Grant, and are very pleased with our decision to engage in this work with Chicago Debates,” said Morten Group President Mary Morten, “Dr. Gunn and her team understand the importance of READI work in this moment in our history. Throughout the application process, they expressed a commitment of creating a welcoming space for all of their debaters, as well as working to make academic

debate a more inclusive and equitable space overall. We look forward to working with Dr. Gunn and Chicago Debates, and can't wait to see what we accomplish together.”

Updates on Morten Group's year-long journey with Chicago Debates will be made periodically in email communications and social media – visit <http://www.mortengroup.com/sign-up> to join Morten Group's mailing list to receive updates.

Morten Group, LLC is a multi-racial, cross-generational firm which has consciously and thoughtfully built a team of diverse perspectives and experiences - an intentional component of its business model. The company has worked with numerous community organizations, foundations, and universities in Chicago and across the country in the areas of organizational assessment, executive searches, research, and racial equity, access, diversity, and inclusion. For more information on Morten Group, LLC, visit www.mortengroup.com.

Chicago Debates is bridging the educational opportunity gap for Chicago Public School students by providing them with an after-school program that supports their academic, career, and leadership success. Their mission is to advance the educational achievement, community contributions, and life success of Chicago's youth through the transformative power of academic debate. For more information on Chicago Debates, visit www.chicagodebates.org.

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