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Four Cleveland Recreation Centers to Have Summer Evening Hours

Cleveland Foundation grant extends hours and adds special programs

CLEVELAND – A \$200,000 grant from the Cleveland Foundation will allow four City of Cleveland recreation centers to keep their doors open until 11 p.m. four nights a week throughout the summer and will fund a “midnight” basketball program and other life skills workshops for young people.

The grant was the idea of the Cleveland Foundation Board of Directors, which allocated \$500,000 in March for the Youth Opportunities Unlimited (YOU) program to support summer jobs for Cleveland teens. In discussing that grant, the board suggested exploring expanded hours at city rec centers to help keep more young people engaged this summer.

The Cleveland Foundation’s staff met with City of Cleveland officials and the result was this “Cleveland Nights” program, which includes summer evening basketball programs, as well as workshops on topics including money management, job interviewing, conflict management, and HIV/AIDS education.

The four city rec centers that will be part of the “Cleveland Nights” program will be: Cudell (1910 West Blvd.), Glenville (680 E. 113 St.), Lonnie Burten (2511 E. 46 St.) and Zelma George (3155 MLK Jr. Blvd.). The centers will be open Wednesday through Friday from 8 p.m. to 11 p.m. and Saturday from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m. The program kicks off June 13 and will run 11 weeks throughout the summer.

“Although summer signals the end of the school year, it does not mean that the learning process should stop,” said Mayor Frank G. Jackson. “This grant from the Cleveland Foundation will provide programming that will give the City’s youth organized activities and educational opportunities that will ensure development and learning continues during their summer break.”

“Youth development is one of the key areas of focus for the Cleveland Foundation,” says Robert Eckardt, executive vice president of the Cleveland Foundation. “Research has shown that most cities that operate a midnight basketball program have a decrease in crime rate as well as a higher high school graduation rate. We’re thrilled that our board not only supported this grant, but suggested it. We look forward to seeing active rec centers this summer.”