

Chris Paul Starts New Season Reaffirming Priority To New Orleans Youth

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New Orleans, LA –

After an extended off-season during NBA labor negotiations that delayed the start of the basketball season to later this month, New Orleans Hornets star Chris Paul is back in New Orleans to begin training.

But before that starts, CP3 has another priority: to check on the progress of “his” kids in the *CP3 Afterschool Zone Presented by Chase* program, **Friday, December 2, at 4:00 pm at the Mahalia Jackson Center** in Central City.

Last year, Paul teamed up with business leader Chase to fund the multi-year, innovative *CP3 Afterschool Zone Presented by Chase* program, which is administered by local youth advocacy leader, Partnership *For* Youth Development. The program provides a number of enriching, high quality after school activities to 140 youngsters in K-3rd grades enrolled at KIPP Central City Primary School.

Modeled after the nationally recognized AfterZone Youth Program that began in Rhode Island, the *CP3* New Orleans program version offers well organized and challenging after school activities ranging from martial arts and yoga to international cooking and French or Spanish language lessons.

Paul said his strong commitment to the program is based on personal experiences with such opportunities he had as a youngster himself.

“Sure I played a lot of basketball growing up, but I was also very involved in other organized after school activities with friends that helped my overall development in those impressionable years,” he said. “So I really understand and appreciate how a range of diverse and high quality programs like these for kids is so important in their young lives.”

Partnership *For* Youth Development CEO Gina Warner said the program added about 40 additional youngsters when it began its second year this fall. She also said that program assessments have consistently shown strong and positive relationship development between youth and instructors.

“The response from families and kids has been tremendous,” Warner observed. “Our community is so grateful and fortunate to have people like Chris Paul and companies like Chase make this kind of commitment to our youth.”

“Now, more than ever, community leaders must leverage the power of innovative collaborations to solve complex problems,” said Kimberly Davis, President of the JPMorgan Chase Foundation. “The profile, influence, expertise, and generosity at work in the *CP3 Afterschool Zone Presented by Chase* is a strong, national model and the Partnership for Youth Development’s leadership has been key to its success.”

While visiting the students Friday afternoon, CP3 will take time to observe and interact with them as they engage in their various program activities, and even enjoy some student-prepared food. He will also speak to all students in a brief assembly where he expects to answer some of their questions about his own after school activities when he was a youngster.

“This is very important to me,” he said. “Few things make me as happy as seeing the impact of great programs like this on young kids as they develop their own interests and personal strengths.”

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