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On December 11, 2009 the Confucius Institute in Chicago was awarded “2009 Confucius Institute of the Year” in Beijing, China. This award was granted by the Office of Chinese Language Council International, commonly known as the Hanban, at the opening ceremony of the World Confucius Institute meeting at the Beijing International Convention Center. The award was presented by Madame Liu Yandong, State Councilor and Vice-Chairman of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). Also present at the ceremony was China’s new Minister of Education, Mr. Yuan Guiren. The award was accepted

by Robert Davis, Manager of World Language and International Studies Programs for Chicago Public Schools and Director of the Confucius Institute in Chicago. This is the third consecutive year that the Confucius Institute in Chicago has received this honor.

There are currently 317 Confucius Institutes throughout the world, with 72 in the United States. Housed at CPS’ Walter Payton College Preparatory High School, the Confucius Institute in Chicago is one of only a handful international Confucius Institutes which are housed outside of a university setting and which focus on Chinese language instruction in K-12 schools. The CIC serves many functions in the CPS world language community. It is a resource library and professional development center as well as a classroom for adult education, an organizational entity for cultural activities and summer study programs and is a center for advocacy on the promotion of Chinese world language programs in the United States. With the exception of adult education courses, all services at the CIC are provided for free and it is open to the general public. In addition, the CIC is used as a location to host professional development activities for other languages and subject areas and hosts student and teacher groups who are interested in learning more about Chinese language and culture. In 2008 the CIC hosted UN Secretary Ban Ki-Moon during his visit to Walter Payton College Preparatory High School, which was his first visit to any CI in the world.

