

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Date: July 28, 2014

Contact: Mrs. Berna Kovuk-Sozen, Festival Organizing Committee Member
(312) 391-4864 | nbkovuk@gmail.com



Chicago Goes Turkish at Pioneer Court

CHICAGO – After a decade long success at Daley Plaza, the 12th annual Chicago Turkish Festival reaches a larger audience at one of downtown Chicago's busiest landmark locations along the lively Magnificent Mile. For the second year in a row, **Pioneer Court** --where the first Chicagoan settled-- hosts a cultural exchange of this scope with the captivating sights, sounds, touches, and tastes of one of Chicago's most popular ethnic cultural events: **The Chicago Turkish Festival**, being held between September 4th and 6th this year.

To commence the festivities and raise funding for **ALS (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis or Lou Gehrig's disease)** research, the Turkish Consulate General in Chicago and the Festival Organizing Committee will host an outdoor, private, black tie optional **Opening Gala Dinner** at Pioneer Court on the evening of Thursday, September 4th between 7:00-10:00 pm. Proceeds from Silent and Live Auction will benefit **the Les Turner ALS Foundation**. Turkish Airlines supports the live auction with two business class tickets to any city in Turkey.

The festival will open to the public free of charge from **10am to 9pm on September 5th and 6th**, with live stage performances both at noon and in the evenings of vibrant folk dances and musical performances, a fashion show with Ottoman era flair, world famous Turkish cuisine and delicacies, arts and crafts exhibits. The guest city this year will be **Izmir** (aka Smyrna), and visitors will enjoy the hospitality and breathtaking sights of Izmir and one of the most historic regions of Turkey: **Aegean Region**, home to the world-famous, spectacular ruins of **Ephesus**.

Izmir, hometown of Homer, is located alongside the Aegean shores, and as the third largest city and a major hub for business leading the way for new trends and fashion in Turkey, it provides just as much fun and intrigue as Istanbul. Izmir gives visitors a wonderful insight to Turkish living, cuisine, culture and traditions, and is a delight to history lovers and archaeologists with its wealth of historical sites. The world-renowned ruins of Ephesus and Library of Celsus --where you can really get a feel for what life was like 2000 years ago during the glory-days of Greece and Rome; the House of the Virgin --a sacred site for both Christians and Muslims, believed to be the last residence of the Virgin Mary and visited by millions of tourists and pilgrims; the ruins of Pergamon (Bergama), Apollo Temple, Temple of Dionysus, Athena Temple and the city of Troy are all located in this fascinating region..

Besides the captivating sights, sounds, and touches of the Aegean region, festival visitors will again have the opportunity to taste delicious grilled Turkish kebab and döner varieties; crunchy Turkish bagels "Simit," best enjoyed with a cup of traditionally brewed Turkish tea; Turkish delights, best enjoyed with a cup of Turkish coffee from Kurukahveci Mehmet Efendi; the legendary *Mado* orchid ice cream from Maras; and Happy Hour favorite Turkish *Efes Beer*.

You don't need a passport to attend this historic Pioneer Court event organized by the Turkish-American community in collaboration with the City of Chicago. "This is a unique opportunity for Chicagoans to experience Turkish culture and cuisine without leaving town. Turkish culture and cuisine are

largely recognized as one of the richest and most colorful in the world,” said Fatih Yildiz, the Consul General of Turkey in Chicago.

The Festival Committee invites all Chicagoans to attend the Opening Gala and visit the Festival and the ALS stand with your generous donations to support this great cause. For further information please visit event site at www.ChicagoTurkishFestival.org or contact info@chicagoturkishfestival.org.

###