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MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES THE EXPANSION OF THE THINKCHICAGO: IDEAS WEEK PROGRAM

Mayor Emanuel, University of Illinois, Chicago Ideas Week and World Business Chicago invite technology students from Midwestern universities to apply for 150 slots in the ThinkChicago: Ideas Week 2013 program; By October more than 400 Students will Have Participated in Innovative Program

Mayor Rahm Emanuel, University of Illinois, Chicago Ideas Week, and World Business Chicago are teaming up to launch the 3rd annual ThinkChicago: Ideas Week program, which will give 150 elite technology students from Midwestern universities the opportunity to take a tour of Chicago's fast-growing tech scene, meet with the leaders of Chicago's most innovative tech companies, and gain free admission to select programming at Chicago Ideas Week, where some of the world's brightest thought leaders will inspire, connect and activate the city of Chicago and beyond. The program will expand to serve 150 students, up from 100 students in 2012 and 50 students in 2011, and take place October 17-19, 2013. This will bring to more than 400 the total number of students who have participated in the program.

"ThinkChicago has proved to be an essential tool in connecting the country's top student talent to leaders in technology and entrepreneurship who call Chicago home," said Mayor Emanuel. "I look forward to continuing our successful partnership with the University of Illinois and Chicago Ideas Week to attract the best and brightest to Chicago and continue the excitement around our thriving technology economy."

"We're proud to partner with the City of Chicago and the University of Illinois to make ThinkChicago an even more powerful platform as we head into its third year," said Brad Keywell, founder and co-chairman of Chicago Ideas Week. "By showcasing Chicago as a hub of innovation

and ideas, we're working to draw incredibly talented graduates to our vibrant city to kick off their careers and build new ventures."

ThinkChicago is seeking students with an exceptional academic track record who have demonstrated a commitment to innovation and technology. It is preferred that applicants be a junior, senior, or graduate student at an academic institution in one of the following states: Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Students can apply by visiting www.thinkchicago.net. Applications must be submitted online by 11:59 pm on Sunday, September 15th.

"ThinkChicago connects the next generation of top talent directly with Chicago innovators," said World Business Chicago President and CEO Jeff Malehorn. "Students have a chance to experience the vibrancy of what Chicago has to offer after college, and meet with some of the city's entrepreneurial leadership, and in turn those leaders are able to meet face-to-face with potential future employees."

Chicago is home to a rapidly growing start-up community and technology industry. Last year alone, 197 new startups received \$391 million in funding - more than ever before - and Chicago has climbed from 15th to 10th place in the rankings of the world's best cities for startups. To continue this pattern of growth and position Chicago for tomorrow's economy, the leaders behind ThinkChicago are taking action now to attract, retain, and engage an energetic, educated, and highly mobile workforce. A steady flow of talented graduates will draw businesses to the city, which will in turn attract more students and generate economic growth and innovation.

"The University of Illinois is proud to once again partner with Mayor Emanuel, Chicago Ideas Week, and World Business Chicago on this exciting opportunity to showcase the great talent and activity happening here in Chicago," said Robert A. Easter, President of the University of Illinois. "We look forward to a bigger and more robust program this year."

To meet this opportunity head-on, Mayor Emanuel and Chicago Ideas Week launched the ThinkChicago program within the Mayor's first 100 days in office, which brought 50 students from 13 universities in the Midwest to Chicago to tour local companies. In 2012, Mayor Emanuel doubled the size of the program and partnered with the University of Illinois and increased its emphasis on connecting Midwestern students with job and networking opportunities in the city.

This past August, Mayor Emanuel launched a Lollapalooza edition of the program, which brought 100 students from across the country to Chicago for two days of exploration in the city's vibrant innovation ecosystem and three days of music at Lollapalooza. Each admitted student attended all three days of the Lollapalooza 2013 music festival, plus a walk-through of the artist compound and production areas, and a Q&A session with the Lollapalooza producers and founders.

ThinkChicago will now operate two annual programs - one during Ideas Week with a focus on retaining the best talent from the Midwest's top-ranked universities, and one during Lollapalooza with a national focus on attracting talent from top universities across the country.

Past attendees of the Ideas Week and Lollapalooza programs have heard from leaders in the tech, business, and civic worlds – including Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Harper Reed (Obama for America 2012 CTO), Brian Fitzpatrick (Google Engineering Manager), Matt Maloney (GrubHub CEO), Zach Kaplan (Inventables.com CEO) and have met with nearly 30 tech companies, including Belly, Braintree, Brighttag, Built In Chicago, Catamaran, Centro, Civis Analytics, Cleversafe, Google Groupon, GrubHub, IBM, Nokia: HERE, HireBrite, kCura, Morningstar, Microsoft, Motorola, Narrative Science, Nielsen, Orbitz, Power2Switch, Sears, Spot Hero, Sprout Social, Threadless, and Vibes.

By demonstrating why Chicago is a top destination for the country's top tech talent, ThinkChicago is delivering on World Business Chicago's Plan for Economic Growth and Jobs, which called for leveraging core Chicago assets like ease of transportation, business climate, and cultural amenities to attract entrepreneurs and emerging industries.

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