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MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES THINKCHICAGO: LOLLAPALOOZA 2018

200 of the Nation's Top Technology and Engineering Students in Chicago To Learn About Chicago's Growing Technology Industry and Vibrant Urban Culture

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today announced the launch of ThinkChicago: Lollapalooza 2018, a three-day event that will introduce the city's fast-growing technology industry and one of the country's most popular musical festivals to 200 of the nation's top STEM, business and design students from across the country. ThinkChicago immerses future tech leaders within Chicago's innovation ecosystem, giving them an opportunity to meet Chicago icons and pitch their own ideas.

"These students reflect the growing nationwide interest in being a part of Chicago's global tech hub, and we welcome them to explore our city's limitless opportunities to innovate," Mayor Emanuel said. "Chicago's booming tech sector is fueled by emerging talent, and we look forward to these students exploring our unmatched technological and cultural landscape as they consider their future opportunities."

"The University of Illinois System is proud to continue our long and successful partnership with Mayor Emanuel, World Business Chicago and Lollapalooza to support Chicago's vibrant technology ecosystem," said Tim Killeen, president of the University of Illinois System. "This important annual event reflects our commitment to serve both our students and the needs of our state, steering graduates toward the wide-ranging technological and entrepreneurial opportunities that will keep them right here at home to share their world-class talents."

ThinkChicago comes at a time when Chicago is attracting more bright young talent than any other city of its size across the country, and has recently surpassed New York to become the nation's best educated big city. As a top 10 global tech innovation hub, according to KPMG, many companies have been moving to and expanding within Chicago over the last few years.

"ThinkChicago inspires students to unleash their career potential by exploring opportunities with Chicago startups and leading tech companies," Mark Tebbe, chairman of ChicagoNEXT said. "By connecting this top talent to Chicago and its leading businesses, it's a win-win-win for our city, companies and students who are ready to start their careers."

This year, ThinkChicago received a record-breaking 1,073 applications. The final class is the most diverse to date, including more underrepresented minorities than ever before. Students from 27 states and 79 schools were selected to participate, including homegrown talent from the University

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of Illinois System, City Colleges of Chicago, and other major universities in the Chicago area, as well as nationally ranked institutions such as Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Stanford University, Princeton University and Harvard University. It also includes more students than ever before from Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Hispanic Serving Institutions, including top-rated Spelman College and Howard University.

“ThinkChicago is committed to creating inclusive access to Chicago’s innovation and tech community,” Andrea Zopp, President and CEO of World Business Chicago said. “The students who participate will have unrivaled exposure to our burgeoning technology ecosystem, while Chicago companies will have the opportunity to engage top talent from across the country.”

This summer’s program is the eighth installment of ThinkChicago and the sixth year that it is being held during Lollapalooza. Participants will attend a variety of programs, including:

- Visits to more than 20 tech companies, including Relativity, CCC Information Services, tastytrade, McKinsey & Company, JPMorgan Chase & Co., Echo Global Logistics and Capgemini
- A Civic Tech Panel with Carleton Nolan, Chief Technology Officer & First Deputy Commissioner, City of Chicago; Katie Olson, Director of Operations & Services, City Tech Collaborative; Adam Hecktman, Director of Technology & Civic Innovation for Chicago, Microsoft; Aviva Rosman, Co-Founder and COO, BallotReady; and Thomas K.R. Stovall, Founder, ImBlackInTech
- A Diversity in Tech and Entrepreneurship Panel with Mark McFarland, Manager of Technical Recruitment, Relativity; Tom Alexander, Founding Partner, Holistic; Shaniqua Davis, Founder and CEO, Noirefy; and Alida Miranda-Wolff, Founder, Ethos
- Access to all four days of Lollapalooza, including a backstage tour

“We are honored to partner with ThinkChicago each year and look forward to hosting some of the nation’s brightest minds at this year’s Lollapalooza,” Charlie Jones, Partner at C3 Presents, the promoter behind Lollapalooza said.

ThinkChicago has an alumni base of more than 1400 talented students and professionals, many of whom now work for startups, leading tech companies, innovation spaces, and venture capital firms in Chicago.

ThinkChicago is organized by the Mayor’s Office, ChicagoNEXT of World Business Chicago, the University of Illinois System and Lollapalooza.

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