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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 10, 2019

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MAYOR LIGHTFOOT AND ACCENTURE ANNOUNCE EXPANSION OF COMPANY'S INNOVATION HUB CREATING NEW JOBS AND OPPORTUNITY FOR CHICAGO

Global Company Will Add 600 Tech Jobs in Accenture Tower & Continue to Grow its Apprenticeship Program with City Colleges of Chicago

CHICAGO – Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot today joined Governor J.B. Pritzker, City Colleges of Chicago and Accenture executives in announcing an expansion of the global company, which will create 600 new tech jobs and create additional economic opportunity for Chicago. As part of its investment in Chicago, Accenture will expand its workforce by bringing together its 6,200 people to the newly named Accenture Tower at 500 W. Madison and will create new pathways for aspiring talent by growing its apprenticeship program to 180 students completing the program by the end of 2022.

“The City of Chicago is committed to inclusive growth that ensures the success of a thriving downtown extends across all of our city’s neighborhoods and communities,” said Mayor Lightfoot. “We thank Accenture for their continued investment in the City of Chicago, and for their partnership with the City Colleges of Chicago to expand apprenticeships that will unlock new career opportunities for our city’s students.”

Created in partnership with the City Colleges of Chicago, Accenture’s professional apprentice program unlocks career opportunities for individuals who haven’t had the opportunity to work in the technology industry as well as those returning to the workforce, or whose jobs have been disrupted by technology. The combination of post-secondary education with paid work-based learning in a professional services career has become a national model for creating new career opportunities for broader pools of talent.

“Professional apprenticeships can play an important role in closing the skills gap and creating new career paths for underserved groups of individuals,” said Pallavi Verma, senior managing director responsible for Accenture’s business in the Midwest. “Together with the City of Chicago and City Colleges of Chicago, we will accelerate the creation of these opportunities for the extremely talented individuals



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who might not otherwise participate in the digital economy--a win-win for Chicago employers and its residents.”

Apprentices work across a variety of areas within Accenture, from the internal IT group to client facing work, taking on many high-demand roles in evolving industries, such as: cybersecurity, digital, data analytics and cloud migration, to name a few.

“Because of Accenture’s leadership on apprenticeships, City Colleges of Chicago is increasingly an important source of entry-level talent for the firm’s growing Midwest office,” said Chancellor Juan Salgado of City Colleges of Chicago, who set a bold goal that half of all City Colleges graduates would gain a work-based learning experience, such as an apprenticeship. “With this expansion, Accenture continues to help create a more inclusive Chicago economy.”

Accenture’s apprenticeships in Chicago are twelve months long and include formal learning, on-the-job training, coaching, and paid work on average of 36-40 hours per week. Upon completing the program, apprentices have the opportunity to convert to full-time employment with Accenture.

The apprentices include Ahmad Aladawi, who came to Chicago from Syria in 2014, not knowing English, having to hustle multiple jobs seven days a week to support himself and contribute to his family. Ahmad juggled work with learning English and earning his associate degree at Wright College, one of the seven City Colleges of Chicago. At Wright, Ahmad learned about the Accenture apprenticeship partnership, and successfully applied. The company has since hired Ahmad into a full-time Security Analyst role.

In Chicago, Aon and Accenture co-founded the Chicago Apprentice Network, which convenes companies from across the Chicagoland area to help advance professional apprenticeship programs. Accenture, in partnership with The Chicago Apprentice Network, created a national apprenticeship program playbook, [“Bridging the Gap Between Talent and Opportunity.”](#) to help other local Chicago employers jumpstart similar programs and incorporate apprentices into their workforces.

As part of her focus on growing economic opportunity for all communities, Mayor Lightfoot is committed to building new opportunities for the City’s youth to engage in apprenticeship programming. Working with the City’s corporate, philanthropic and education partners, the administration will expand meaningful youth apprenticeship opportunities across Chicago’s evolving industries, and create new pathways to economic stability for communities.



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