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MAYOR RAHM EMANUEL ANNOUNCES THINKCHICAGO: LOLLAPALOOZA 2017

Chicago Welcomes 200-Member Cohort of Technology and Engineering Students to Learn and Engage with City's Technology Industry

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today announced the kickoff of ThinkChicago: Lollapalooza 2017, a three-day event for 200 of the nation's top engineering, computer science, design and business students to immerse themselves in Chicago's tech scene and attend one of the nation's most popular music festivals, Lollapalooza. ThinkChicago received more than 800 applications for 200 available slots, and selected students hail from 24 states and 45 universities. This year, ThinkChicago proactively identified and accepted students from the City Colleges of Chicago who are pursuing careers around technology and innovation.

"ThinkChicago gives the next generation of innovators and entrepreneurs the opportunity to learn everything Chicago has to offer," Mayor Emanuel said. "Chicago's status as a global tech hub, the top city for venture capital ROI, and one of the most economically diverse cities in the country is why Chicago is the best place for young talent to start their ventures."

"Chicago fosters cutting-edge technology and research in a variety of industries," Mark Tebbe, chairman of ChicagoNEXT, WBC's council of tech leaders said. "ThinkChicago is an excellent program to introduce Chicago's innovative employment opportunities to our nation's top talent while allowing us to focus on minority or underserved backgrounds."

Because innovation cuts across professions, this year's program brings together students studying accounting, advertising, biochemistry, business, data science, design, engineering, global studies, information systems, medicine, public policy and statistics. Entering its seventh year, ThinkChicago has an alumni base of more than 1,100 students, many of whom have gone on to work for startups, leading tech companies, innovation spaces and venture capital firms in Chicago.

"As Chicago's technology community continues to grow, programs like ThinkChicago are vital to ensure we are attracting and retaining top talent right here in Illinois," University of Illinois President Tim Killeen said. "The University of Illinois System looks forward to partnering with Mayor Emanuel, World Business Chicago and Lollapalooza to highlight the many wonderful opportunities available to students and recent graduates in Chicago."

"Think Chicago is not only a brilliant program to introduce talented young tech leaders to our vibrant city, but it is also a way of retaining budding IT professionals, like our students at City Colleges of Chicago," Chancellor Juan Salgado said. "Participating in Think Chicago is yet another way City Colleges students are making connections with leading Chicago employers to build their skills and launch their careers."

Each year, ThinkChicago students engage with Chicago pioneers in technology, manufacturing, science and finance. This year's programming includes:

- A return of the Civic Tech Panel with Danielle DuMerer, CIO & Commissioner of the City of Chicago Department of Innovation and Technology; Katie Olson, Director of Program Design, City Digital at UI Labs; Charlie Catlett, Co-chair, Array of Things; Kenneth Watkins, CSO, Blue1647, moderated by Shelly Stern Grach, Director of Civic Engagement, Microsoft. The Civic Tech Challenge is sponsored by the National Data Service Consortium, of which the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign's National Center for Supercomputing Applications is a founding member;
- Tours of company offices and innovation hubs, including Civis Analytics, Enova, Gogo, GrubHub, kCura, MATTER, Microsoft, Morningstar, Outcome Health, Raise, Sprout Social and tastytrade;
- Evening networking with makers at Charles Adler's Center for the Lost Arts;
- Breakout sessions for career advice from leading Chicago tech companies, including Motorola Mobility, Microsoft, 1871, and Avant;
- All four days of the Lollapalooza 2017 music festival, plus a walkthrough of the event venue including a tour of Perry's Stage and a Q&A session with Lollapalooza producers.

Students will also take part in ThinkChicago's Civic Tech Challenge, a competition where students generate proposals for the City of Chicago to use innovative, technological ways to address challenges related to urban sustainability, transportation and civic engagement. Students will engage Lollapalooza executives and present their Civic Tech Challenge proposals to leaders from Chicago's tech community and Lollapalooza staff. Motorola Mobility and Lollapalooza will provide prizes for the winning team.

"We look forward to hosting ThinkChicago's brightest minds at Lollapalooza this weekend. Collaboration and innovation are at the heart of what we do, and we are excited to share what we've learned and engage in discussions about new ideas with this year's group of top students," said Charlie Jones, partner, C3 Presents.

ThinkChicago is organized by the Mayor's Office, World Business Chicago (WBC), the University of Illinois System and Lollapalooza.

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