



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 19, 2015

CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

**MAYOR RAHM EMANUEL ANNOUNCES OPEN APPLICATIONS FOR THINKCHICAGO:
CHICAGO IDEAS WEEK**

Annual Program Will Host 150 of the Midwest's Top Technology and Engineering Students in Chicago

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today announced ThinkChicago: Chicago Ideas Week is now accepting applications for participation in the fifth annual installment of the successful ThinkChicago: Chicago Ideas Week program. Mayor Emanuel, Chicago Ideas Week, World Business Chicago, University of Illinois, and 1871 are once again teaming up to welcome 150 elite engineering and computer science students from Midwestern universities to Chicago with the opportunity to learn about Chicago's fast-growing tech scene, meet Chicago innovators, technologists, and business leaders, attend Chicago Ideas Week, and more.

"ThinkChicago continues to be a draw for today's engineering and technology students that will become the business and technology leaders of tomorrow," said Mayor Emanuel. "As the program grows, we are able to showcase Chicago's thriving technology industry and attract the innovators and entrepreneurs that will grow our city's economy into the future."

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. Candidates should be interested in learning more about Chicago or considering Chicago for potential employment as part of a tech company or to start a new tech endeavor upon graduation. Candidates with work, internship, leadership, and entrepreneurial experience are especially encouraged to apply. Students can apply by visiting www.thinkchicago.net. Applications must be submitted online by 11:59 pm on Monday, September 7, 2015.

The program will take place October 15-17, 2015 and serve 150 students, a number which has steadily increased since its launch in 2011, when 50 students from 13 Midwest universities participated. This year's installment will bring the total number of students who have participated in the ThinkChicago: Chicago Ideas Week program to 600 over the last four years, and a total 725 students when combined with its sister program, ThinkChicago: Lollapalooza, which launched in 2013. While the Lollapalooza program focuses on attracting young talent nationwide, the Chicago Ideas Week program focuses on those close to home across the Midwest.

"ThinkChicago invites the Midwest's most talented students to see Chicago's commitment to technological and entrepreneurial innovation first-hand," said Brad Keywell, Chicago Ideas Week Founder and Co-Chairman. "Through our partnership with the City of Chicago, the University of Illinois, World Business Chicago and 1871, ThinkChicago: Chicago Ideas Week encourages college graduates to pursue careers in technology, entrepreneurship and more in Chicago."

"ThinkChicago: Chicago Ideas Week is a great opportunity to bring together the region's top students and connect them with tech firms in Chicago looking for the next generation of engineers, designers, and entrepreneurs," said Jeff Malehorn, President & CEO at World Business Chicago.

Past attendees of the Chicago Ideas Week and Lollapalooza programs have heard from leaders across 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), Adrian Holovaty (Django Web Framework Creator), and have met with many of Chicago's leading tech companies, including Belly, Braintree, Brighttag, Built In Chicago, Catamaran, Centro, Civis Analytics, Cleversafe, Gogo, Google, Groupon, GrubHub, IBM, HireBrite, kCura, Morningstar, Microsoft, Motorola, Narrative Science, Nielsen, Orbitz, Power2Switch, Spot Hero, Sprout Social, Threadless, and Vibes.

"As the state's largest educator, the University of Illinois shares ThinkChicago's mission of keeping our students in Illinois after they graduate and harnessing their talent to foster progress and economic growth. Programs such as ThinkChicago are critical to retain top talent by exposing students to the technological and entrepreneurial opportunities available both in Chicago and across the state," said University of Illinois President Timothy Killeen.

"Programs like ThinkChicago: Chicago Ideas Week and ThinkChicago: Lollapalooza position Chicago as a top location for recent graduates to live and work," said 1871 CEO Howard A. Tullman. "These initiatives are crucial to attracting top talent to create and develop new businesses, and we look forward to continuing our support of the ThinkChicago programs."

This past August, Mayor Emanuel held the third installment of the Lollapalooza edition of the program, which brought 125 students from across the country to Chicago for three days of ThinkChicago programming and the Lollapalooza music festival. The program

hosted a Civic Tech Challenge, a pitch competition among ThinkChicago participants to propose ways in which the City of Chicago can use technology to encourage civic engagement among its constituents. Proposals addressed increasing volunteer involvement among residents, how to better connect community members with services, and how to catalyze the thousands of Lollapalooza attendees for social good. The winning proposal suggested tackling food deserts by offering food-subscription services through CPS schools. The winning team, consisting of students from Loyola, Northwestern, Case Western Reserve, Princeton, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and University of Chicago, will receive VIP passes for Lollapalooza 2016 and automatic acceptance to ThinkChicago: Chicago Ideas Week 2015.

For one week each October, Chicago Ideas Week brings together some of the world's most outstanding speakers to present their ideas and inspire the innovations of tomorrow at more than 80 sessions across the city of Chicago. Chicago Ideas Week is an asset that belongs uniquely to Chicago, and reflects our great city in its inclusiveness, diversity and excellence of intellectual discourse. It is a platform that continues to be shaped by the people, organizations and institutions that care about the future of Chicago as well as communities around the globe. For more information on Chicago Ideas Week visit www.chicagoideas.com.

#