MAYOR EMANUEL AND CHICAGO COOK WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIP ANNOUNCE TECH SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAM

Chicago Codes Designed to Provide Skills Needed for In-Demand Occupations;
Made Possible with $500,000 from The Rockefeller Foundation and Major City Investment

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership today announced Chicago Codes, a new program designed to meet the growing need for computer programmers and strengthen the city's growing tech sector.

"Chicago Codes will give residents access to the skills to thrive in the 21st-century economy while building a new pipeline of talent for our growing tech sector," Mayor Emanuel said. "By investing in Chicago's growing tech sector, we will create opportunities in every corner of Chicago."

Launching this year, Chicago Codes is a tuition-free technology development and coding academy. Students will complete rigorous industry-approved curriculum, secure software development internships with local firms and ultimately move on to permanent employment.

"Chicago Codes furthers our mission of providing Chicagoans economic empowerment through employment in the region's most high demand and high growth sectors," Karin Norington-Reaves, CEO of the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership said. "We are excited about the opportunity to bring these skills and jobs directly to diverse communities."

The program was made possible through a $500,000 grant from The Rockefeller Foundation and a $250,000 investment from the Mayor's 2018 budget to offer employer-driven tech boot camps at no cost and expand employer outreach, education, and services to promote hiring based on individual skills rather than degree attainment. Programs would last 12 to 32 weeks and include four to 12 weeks paid work experience.

"As the job market, economy, and workplace change, cities should ensure that every person has the opportunity to compete and advance.," Dr. Rajiv J. Shah, president of The Rockefeller Foundation said. "Chicago Codes can help to ensure more working people have access to a good job and career advancement in the new economy."

The program will leverage the expertise and support of the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership, with input from the business community, including Microsoft, the Illinois Technology Association, and World

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Business Chicago's ChicagoNEXT council. As part of today's announcement, the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership released a request for information (RFI) from Chicago firms that employ coders, computer programmers and developers regarding hiring practices and skills needs that will inform the Chicago Codes curriculum and program design. The program will invite the business community to deliver guest lectures, and offer work-based learning experiences for program graduates and ultimately consider program graduates for employment.

A 2017 KPMG report lists Chicago among the top 10 tech innovation hubs in the world, and roughly 5,000 new openings in IT-related jobs are projected annually over the next few years. Tech employers face challenges attracting and retaining a diverse workforce, particularly concerning programmers. Across industries, various companies are 35 percent more likely to outperform their respective industry medians, but at the same time female, black and Hispanic individuals make up a smaller proportion of the US technology workforce than they do the workforce at large. To this end, Chicago Codes will identify and recruit untapped tech talent from underserved communities and create a well-trained, diverse pipeline of programmers for local tech employers.

This investment is another example of the Mayor's ongoing commitment to workforce and economic development, notably expanding access to in-demand IT skills. In the Mayor's 2017 Budget, the City invested $1 million of the funds generated by the digital lease tax in training and resources to support CPS's new computer science graduation requirement.

In 2017, Mayor Emanuel and the Department of Defense launched a cutting-edge, $1.5 million cybersecurity training and pathway program at Wilbur Wright College, CCC's Center of Excellence for IT education. Additionally, nearly 300 CPS students have participated in summer programs providing certifications and workplace skills in high-growth, high-demand industry sectors since 2015 through a partnership between CPS and JPMorgan Chase.

About The Rockefeller Foundation
For more than 100 years, The Rockefeller Foundation's mission has been to promote the well-being of humanity throughout the world. Together with partners and grantees, The Rockefeller Foundation strives to catalyze and scale transformative innovations, create unlikely partnerships that span sectors, and take risks others cannot – or will not. For more information, please visit www.rockefellerfoundation.org.

About The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership
In its sixth year of operation, The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership (The Partnership) has helped place more than 60,000 job seekers and administered more than $60 million to provide job training and placement services throughout the Chicagoland region, assisting companies to find talent while preparing job seekers for employment. For more information about The Partnership visit workforceboard.org or call 1 (312) 603-0200.

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