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MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES THINKCHICAGO: CHICAGO IDEAS WEEK 2017
Sixth Annual Program Welcomes 200 Top Technology, Business and Design Students to Chicago

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today announced the start of ThinkChicago: Chicago Ideas Week 2017. For three days, 200 of the nation's top technology, business and design students will experience all that Chicago has to offer as a global tech hub and attend one of the country's most diverse and innovative ideas festivals, Chicago Ideas Week. ThinkChicago received applications from students hailing from twelve states and 31 universities.

"Chicago welcomes these talented students for a once in a lifetime opportunity to network, hear from leaders in industry and see what a world class city Chicago is," Mayor Emanuel said. "Student interest in Chicago's tech sector continues to grow because our tech community is one of the most diverse, creative and ground-breaking in the world."

"Millennials have identified Chicago as an exceptional hub for technology and innovation," ChicagoNEXT chairman Mark Tebbe said. "Students involved in this year's ThinkChicago: Chicago Ideas Week will experience the best of what our city offers while attending one of the leading thought-leadership festivals in the country."

Applicants were selected based on their academic record, passion for innovation and particular interest in exploring Chicago's tech sector. ThinkChicago: Chicago Ideas Week attracts emerging talent from all over the United States to Chicago. Of the 200 students attending this year, 86 percent study STEM, business, arts or design disciplines.

"We've established an innovation community in Chicago that rivals some of the world's best-known technology hubs," said Brad Keywell, Chicago Ideas Week Founder and Co-chairman. "Just as investors are looking more closely beyond the coasts for promising opportunity, we want young talent to see the Midwest as a place that's ripe for jobs, entrepreneurship and growth. Chicago Ideas lets them experience that first hand."

"The University of Illinois System is delighted to continue our partnership with Mayor Emanuel, World Business Chicago, and Chicago Ideas Week to showcase the city and all it has to offer to talented students from across the county," said University of Illinois President Tim Killeen. "ThinkChicago gives these emerging young leaders unprecedented access to the people and companies that are shaping Chicago's tech community."

As part of the program, ThinkChicago students will also attend a range of events, including:

- Keynote addresses by Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Brad Keywell, Chicago Ideas Week Founder and Co-Chairman;
- A civic tech panel discussion with Danielle DuMerer, First Deputy Commissioner & CTO, City of Chicago – Department of Innovation and Technology; Katie Olson, Director of Program Design, UI Labs; Shelley Stern Grach, Director of Civic Engagement, Microsoft; and Josh Goldstein, Vice President of Product at Citybase Inc;
- Attendance at Chicago Ideas Week talks;
- "Story of Self" discussion with Jeremy Bird, Founding Partner and CEO of 270 Strategies;
- Tours of company offices and innovation hub spaces and a showcase career fair, including, Sage Corp, ChangED, Civis Analytics, ITA, mHub, TechNexus, Trustwave, 1871, Motorola Mobility, Uptake, tastytrade and more.

Students will also participate in a ThinkChicago Civic Tech Challenge, a pitch competition among the attendees to propose ways in which the city can use technology to solve problems related to DACA, student loan debt, youth civic engagement, access to healthcare and education. Students will have the opportunity to work closely with industry leaders, who will act as mentors for the duration of the challenge. The team with the best proposal will win phones and accessories from Motorola.

Chicago Ideas Week is a week-long ideas festival that attracts 30,000 attendees and features 200 speakers across 150 programs. Chicago Ideas Week events include stage programs featuring globally recognized speakers, and labs offering hands-on experiences. The organization's mission is to provide affordable programming to engage a diverse audience in order to spark positive change in the world.

ThinkChicago: Chicago Ideas Week is organized by the Mayor's Office, World Business Chicago, University of Illinois System and Chicago Ideas Week. For more information visit www.chicagoideas.com and www.thinkchicago.net.

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