



Top U.S.-Based Companies Launch the “100,000 Opportunities Initiative” to Create Pathways to Economic Opportunity for Young Americans

Alaska Airlines, Cintas, CVS Health, Hilton Worldwide, HMSHost, JCPenney, JPMorgan Chase, Lyft, Macy’s, Microsoft, Porch.com, Potbelly Sandwich Shop, Starbucks, Taco Bell, Target, Walgreens and Walmart Come Together With the Goal to Create the Nation’s Largest Employer-Led Coalition to Hire or Train 100,000 Opportunity Youth

First Opportunity Fair & Forum Coming to Chicago on Aug. 13, Hosted by Common

Chicago (July 13, 2015) – More than a dozen leading, U.S.-based companies today announced the formation of the 100,000 Opportunities Initiative, which has the goal of being the nation’s largest employer-led coalition committed to creating pathways to meaningful employment for America’s young people. The coalition has the collective goal of engaging at least 100,000 Opportunity Youth – 16-24 year olds who face systemic barriers to jobs and education – by 2018 through apprenticeships, internships, training programs, and both part-time and full-time jobs. Additionally, the coalition will leverage existing collaborative efforts on the ground in a handful of cities to partner in building these pathways. The founding companies include Alaska Airlines, Cintas, CVS Health, Hilton Worldwide, HMSHost, JCPenney, JPMorgan Chase, Lyft, Macy’s, Microsoft, Porch.com, Potbelly Sandwich Shop, Starbucks, Taco Bell, Target, Walgreens and Walmart.

Chicago to Host First Opportunity Fair & Forum

The 100,000 Opportunities Initiative will accelerate the coalition’s hiring commitment with an employer initiated Opportunity Fair & Forum for Opportunity Youth in Chicago on Aug. 13, where the participating companies expect to collectively train more than 2,000 youth and make at least 200 on-the-spot job offers, delivering immediate impact for their businesses, the Chicago community and many participating candidates. By partnering with local workforce leaders, the 100,000 Opportunities Initiative expects to hire at least 1,000 youth in the Chicago area over the next 18 months. Over the next 30 days, the growing coalition will continue to welcome the participation of new companies who share a commitment to hiring Opportunity Youth. This initial event will serve as a catalyst for hiring and training efforts across the nation with the collective goal of engaging 100,000 Opportunity Youth by 2018.

The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership, working with LeadersUp, will serve as an aggregator and intermediary for the initial event in Chicago. The 100,000 Opportunities Initiative will also engage a broad collaboration of community based organizations to provide resources including on-the-spot mentorship and feedback, mock-interviews and skills training for job readiness, college prep, volunteer opportunities and internships.

“The 100,000 Opportunities Initiative is creating a meaningful pathway to opportunity for thousands of young people – starting here in Chicago. With the right tools and resources, the next generation of Chicagoans can make a measurable impact in our community through civic engagement and strengthen our City’s economy. I am pleased that Chicago was selected to host the first hiring event, and I look forward to working with these companies to help solve a critical issue facing our neighborhoods and the young people who live there today,” said Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel.

The Opportunity Forum will be hosted by Grammy and Academy Award winning performing artist and actor Common who will lead an open discussion with more than 2,000 young people and their support networks focused on economic opportunity in America. Joining Common on stage will be special guests, entertainers and speakers.

"I believe in the talent that lies within our young people, and I know that when we give them a real chance, they will achieve and soar. I am excited to be a part of bringing jobs and opportunities to our great city," said Common.

The Opportunity Ahead

In the U.S. alone, there are currently 5.6 million youth between the ages of 16 and 24 who are out of school and not working. At the same time, there are 3.5 million unfilled jobs in the U.S. Jobs that do not require a four-year degree – sometimes called middle-skill jobs – make up the largest part of the labor market in the United States. For employers looking to fill these jobs, young, motivated workers are a vital and untapped resource. However, young people are often unaware that these opportunities are available, nor are they aware of the steps they need to take to pursue and secure these jobs. At the same time, employers often do not have clear strategies to effectively recruit, train and retain young workers.

In response, the 100,000 Opportunities Initiative is committing to create the pathways young workers need to build skills, attain credentials and ultimately secure a job. Companies engaged in the coalition will help to launch careers for young people who are just entering the workforce through internships, apprenticeships and on the job training, as well as to develop the potential of youth who have some work experience but are looking to gain new skills that will lead to a successful career. These companies have joined together and are operating with the belief that with the right skills and training, Opportunity Youth represent an unrealized pipeline of talent and an economic engine that can be ignited.

“In America, your ZIP code should never determine your destiny. Breaking down barriers to employment for young people doesn’t just help the individual workers – it benefits entire communities and the economy at large. The corporate leaders championing the 100,000 Opportunities Initiative recognize that promoting career opportunities for youth is a win-win, and I hope more employers will follow their lead. I’m pleased to see the Chicago Cook Workforce Board leveraging public workforce system capacity to connect young people with employers, training, and good jobs,” said U.S. Secretary of Labor Thomas E. Perez.

Leadership and Commitment to Hiring Opportunity Youth

The Aspen Institute’s Forum for Community Solutions will act as an intermediary for the initiative, building upon the existing work of its national Opportunity Youth Incentive Fund (OYIF). The OYIF currently supports collaborative efforts focused on Opportunity Youth in 21 communities around the country. The Aspen Institute will provide direct leadership, technical assistance, and programmatic support to launch the 100,000 Opportunities Initiative in a handful of those cities. Funders participating in the initiative include: Joyce Foundation, JPMorgan Chase Foundation, MacArthur Foundation, The Rockefeller Foundation, Schultz Family Foundation, Starbucks, Walmart Foundation and W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

Alaska Airlines: Commitment to Opportunity Youth

Alaska Airlines, a subsidiary of Alaska Air Group (NYSE: ALK), has a singular focus on youth and education, and is committed to building education and career pathways for youth in the communities it serves. By focusing on ways to expose youth to science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) careers through targeted giving, mentorship and other programs, Alaska is engaging the leaders of tomorrow and developing talent for the aviation industry. In its home state of Washington, Alaska has given \$2.5 million to fund the Alaska Airlines Aerospace Education Center at the Museum of Flight to inspire the next generation of aerospace leaders, \$1.5 million to Port Jobs for career development for airport workers, and \$236,000 to the Highline School District for grants to teachers who help students excel in technical training. In the state of Alaska, Alaska Airlines has made a 3-year, \$1 million commitment to the Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program, an organization with the mission of providing native Alaskan students with the support they need to be successful in higher education and in science and engineering careers.

CVS Health: Commitment to Opportunity Youth

CVS Health (NYSE: CVS), the largest pharmacy health care provider in the United States with more than 200,000 colleagues nationwide, has an ongoing commitment to train and hire young people. The company has longstanding partnerships with the U.S. Department of Labor and White House's Summer Jobs+ initiative and was the first employer to launch a U.S. Department of Labor Registered Apprenticeship program for pharmacy technicians. Through that program, CVS Health has placed more than 1,500 colleagues in Registered Apprenticeship career tracks in retail pharmacy and management and has committed to doubling that number over the next five years. Another notable program is Pathways to Health Care. More than one million young people have participated in the program since it began in 2000. Serving students in more than 40 cities across the United States, the program has awarded over \$4 million in summer internship wages and continues to be a valuable tool for high-school and college-aged students.

Hilton: Commitment to Opportunity Youth

As one of the largest global hospitality companies in the world, Hilton Worldwide (NYSE: HLT) has committed to impacting one million young people by 2019. Through a series of apprenticeships, internships and job opportunities, Hilton is supporting the 100,000 Opportunities Initiative in the U.S. by committing to hire at least 15,000 young people in its offices and owned and managed hotels over the next three years, providing them with a wealth of skills and training to be successful in the world of hospitality and beyond. Visit jobs.hiltonworldwide.com and youth.hiltonworldwide.com for more information.

Microsoft: Commitment to Opportunity Youth

Microsoft YouthSpark, through partnerships with nonprofit organizations, including Boys & Girls Clubs of America, City Year, Junior Achievement, Year Up, and Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship, annually connects approximately one million youth in the United States with greater opportunities for education, employment, and entrepreneurship. Through YouthSpark, Microsoft is committed to supporting even more young people in the future, providing opportunities to learn computer science — one of the most in-demand fields—through programs such as Technology, Education and Literacy in Schools (TEALS), which placed technology professionals as volunteer teachers into more than 130 high schools across the country during the past school year.

Starbucks: Commitment to Opportunity Youth

As one of the world's leading youth employers with nearly 80 percent of its workforce being millennials, Starbucks (NASDAQ: SBUX) has committed to hiring at least 10,000 Opportunity Youth in the U.S. over the next three years, many of whom will be eligible to participate in the company's full slate of benefits including the

Starbucks College Achievement Plan, which provides full tuition reimbursement for an online bachelor's degree from Arizona State University. By hiring these purpose-driven young people, Starbucks believes it can create real pathways to opportunity for these new hires while driving its business forward and strengthening the communities it serves. Starbucks, the Schultz Family Foundation and YouthBuild USA have also launched the Customer Service Excellence Training (CSET) program, which gives students an opportunity to learn customer service skills - based on the same training Starbucks store partners (employees) receive - through classroom and on-the-job experience in retail or café settings.

Taco Bell: Commitment to Opportunity Youth

Taco Bell changes lives and makes a positive impact on the communities it serves. As the employer of more than 1MM teens since its founding, Taco Bell sees today's youth as the heart and soul of its brand. They are the reason why Taco Bell, the Taco Bell Foundation and Taco Bell franchisees have invested \$75 million in scholarships, programming and grants to develop the next generation of leaders. Education and skills development are one of the most powerful ways Taco Bell is building communities, and the brand is committed to creating more jobs that are compatible with going to school. Between now and 2022, the brand expects to create more than 50,000 new jobs of which one in four will go to hiring teens, adding to the 175,000 jobs held by team members today. Taco Bell's vision of seeing 100 percent of high school students graduate is supported in part by programs such as Taco Bell's Career Online High School, which the brand launched to provide team members the opportunity to earn a high school diploma and career certificate through the nation's only accredited online school district. Taco Bell team members also have access to a variety of online options, including fully accredited GEDs through the National GED Testing Service; Associate's, Bachelor's or graduate degrees offered at a 40 percent discount through a partnership with Excelsior College; and programs where associates can earn nearly 50 percent of the credits needed to earn a college degree just by working at Taco Bell.

Target: Commitment to Opportunity Youth

Target has always worked to create shared value—doing what is good both for its business and for broader society. Since 1946, Target has given five percent of its profits back to communities, which today equals more than \$4 million a week. One of the cornerstones of the company's commitments has long been education. In 2015, Target will achieve its goal of giving \$1 billion to education, helping kids reach their full potential while creating an educated workforce and leaders for the future. Target's team is a source of pride for the company, and leaders focus on creating a diverse and engaged workforce supported by an inclusive culture. Target strives to be locally relevant to the guests and communities it serves, which includes creating jobs and inspiring team members to give back. In 2014, Target team members donated more than a million volunteer hours to projects they're passionate about and with organizations that make an impact in the communities where they live and work – and are on track to do the same in 2015.

Walgreens: Commitment to Opportunity Youth

Since its founding as a single store in Chicago in 1901 to its presence today in virtually every demographic community in the country, Walgreens (www.walgreens.com) has understood the importance of developing our nation's youth by creating employment opportunities. Through its robust job shadow, internship and employment opportunities for local youth around the country, Walgreens provides exposure to a variety of careers from store management to supply chain to corporate careers, including more than 100,000 hours of training and mentorship to thousands of young people annually. Each year, the company donates more than \$1 million to the nation's pharmacy schools to improve diversity among pharmacy students. In addition, high school students can gain Walgreens pharmacy experience through its job shadow program. The company's pharmacy technician training program, which focuses on young people, is accredited by the American Society of Health System Pharmacists (ASHP). In recent years, Walgreens formalized programs aimed at hiring those in underserved employment populations. Hundreds of young Americans with mental or physical disabilities have

found employment at Walgreens in distribution centers and stores through its Retail Employees with Disabilities Initiative (REDI) program. Walgreens also works with a New York youth agency to create internships for those in the foster care system. For more information, visit careers.walgreens.com.

Walmart and Walmart Foundation Retail: Commitment to Opportunity Youth

Walmart and the Walmart Foundation will provide support to this initiative through their Retail Opportunity Initiative, announced in February, 2015, which includes a \$100 million investment over the next five years to create meaningful pathways for advancing people – including youth – in the retail sector overall. In addition to helping to support the Aspen Institute in the 100,000 Opportunities Initiative, Walmart and the Walmart Foundation will work with local organizations in Chicago and other cities to remove barriers to advancement. The ongoing work includes philanthropic investments in career path mapping, pre-employment training, placement programs, upskilling, and credentialing, along with engagement in cross-sector partnerships such as this one.

How to Engage

For companies interested in joining the effort, please visit www.100kOpportunities.org for more information. For young people interested in participating in the Opportunity Fair & Forum, please visit www.100kOpportunities.org for information about participating agencies.

About the 100,000 Opportunities Initiative

The 100,000 Opportunities Initiative has the goal of creating the nation’s largest employer-led private sector coalition committed to creating pathways to employment for young people. Companies engaged in the coalition will help to launch careers for young people that are just entering the workforce, including internships, apprenticeships and on the job training, in addition to developing potential in youth that have some work experience but are looking to gain new skills that lead to a successful career. For more information, please visit www.100kOpportunities.org.

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Leaders Quotes:

“At Alaska, we are committed to creating valuable career path opportunities in the communities we serve, through our support of education and job training initiatives for youth,” **said Brad Tilden, CEO of Alaska Airlines.** “An example in Washington State is our support for career advancement through initiatives like Port Jobs, that provide training and tools for workers at early stages of their career.”

“Expanding access to the American Dream is one of the most important issues confronting our democracy. The Aspen Institute is proud to partner with so many major companies to create greater access to opportunity for low income youth and young adults in America's cities. Thanks to this coalition, thousands more young people will have a chance to fully participate in civil society,” **said Walter Isaacson, President and CEO of the Aspen Institute**

“By bringing together the energy of world-class organizations, we can make meaningful progress toward improving the training and employment options for Opportunity Youth across America,” **said Scott Farmer, CEO of Cintas Corporation.** “With 5.6 million youth between the ages of 16 and 24 who are out of school and not working, we need to join hands and take action across industries. The Initiative is exciting and important for the future of Opportunity Youth and our Nation.”

“This is a key investment we can make for the success of our youth,” **said Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle.** “We need to continue investing in programs and initiatives such as 100,000 Opportunities to strengthen our youth workforce, especially for our low-income and disadvantaged youth. I am again calling upon employers, large and small, across the region to join us in supporting the future of our young people by creating meaningful employment opportunities for our youth.”

“CVS Health is pleased to join the 100,000 Opportunities Initiative as part of our company’s ongoing commitment to connecting talented young people with meaningful apprenticeships, internships and jobs,” **said Larry Merlo, President and CEO of CVS Health.** “At CVS Health, we know that today’s youth are the business leaders, pharmacists, nurse practitioners and health care professionals of tomorrow. That’s why we’re focused on introducing young people to careers in health care and pharmacy, two significantly expanding fields, and ensuring that they are armed with the skills they need to achieve success in not only their careers, but also in life. By training and hiring young people, we are not only building a strong workforce, but also stronger communities.”

“As one of the largest hospitality companies in the world, we are in a unique position to leverage our size, scale and expertise to close the opportunity gap for young people in a meaningful way,” **said Christopher J. Nassetta, President and CEO of Hilton Worldwide.** “The life skills and on-the-job training offered in hospitality create a strong foundation for young people to build lifelong careers at Hilton and throughout our industry. By participating in the 100,000 Opportunities Initiative, we continue to work toward our global commitment to prepare, connect and employ one million young people by 2019.”

“We are very excited to be part of this 100,000 Opportunities Initiative to hire Opportunity Youth. While this initiative will help young Chicagoans find valuable employment, it will also be a great opportunity for us to identify and hire talented youth that will enrich our workforce and ultimately the customer experience we strive to deliver,” **said Steve Johnson, President and CEO of HMSHost.** “We look forward to working alongside our fellow employers to bring the goal of 100,000 Opportunities to reality.”

“As one of America’s largest department stores, we’re honored to be a founding partner of this important initiative,” **said Marvin Ellison, President and CEO-designee of JCPenney.** “A job in retail can be the start of an exciting career path with a variety of opportunities for anyone who is passionate about delivering great products and exceptional customer service. We look forward to helping the 100,000 Opportunities Initiative achieve its goal by placing young people in positions at JCPenney stores where the possibilities for growth are endless.”

“At Microsoft we are passionate about empowering every person on the planet to achieve more and that means supporting strong pathways for education and employment for youth,” **said Satya Nadella, Chief Executive Officer, Microsoft Corporation.** “We are honored to be a part of The 100,000 Opportunities Initiative to help empower thousands of young people across America.”

“We are excited and honored to be working alongside other successful companies that are committed to empowering America’s youth,” **said Matt Ehrlichman, Chief Executive Officer of Porch.com.** “As a startup, I can attribute a lot of our early success to the smart, ambitious, and young talent base we have. At the heart of every durable company and community is empowerment. When you combine that with opportunity, you can literally change the world. We look forward to the road ahead and the opportunities we will provide as our business and the home service industry grows.”

“We simply hire nice people and teach them the Potbelly way.” Aylwin Lewis – Chairman, CEO and President of Potbelly Sandwich Shop

“The Rockefeller Foundation is thrilled to be a founding funder in the 100,000 Opportunity Initiative,” said Judith Rodin, President of The Rockefeller Foundation. “Years of research have showed us time and again what works and what doesn't work when tackling youth unemployment, and solutions with an explicit and defined commitment from employers is the way we will achieve sustained impact. Getting young people into new jobs is just the beginning. We all must work together to ensure they enter the right jobs, retain them, and ultimately grow from them. Today's effort is an important first step, and I commend the corporations that are on the front lines of hiring thousands of these qualified young people.”

“By using our scale to create pathways to affordable education and meaningful employment for these young men and women, we're strengthening both our workforce and our economy” said Howard Schultz, Chairman and CEO of Starbucks and co-founder of the Schultz Family Foundation. “As business leaders, I believe we have a critical role to play in hiring more Opportunity Youth and offering these young people excellent training, and the chance to dream big and reach their aspirations. The rules of engagement for philanthropy are changing. It's not just about writing a check; rather, our approach is focused on creating a coalition of like minds with local knowledge, expertise on-the-ground and the ability to scale the social impact of an initiative like this to create pathways of opportunity for the literally millions of young people who can benefit from this program.”

“As a company that gives many young Americans their very first job, Taco Bell proudly invests in developing its next generation of leaders through education, job and life skills, and a culture that promotes growth,” said Brian Niccol, CEO of Taco Bell Corp. “Taco Bell is a workplace where today's driven youth can flourish. We empower our team members with practical skills that set them up for success on the job and beyond, and provide the resources and encouragement to stay in school and earn a degree so they can follow their passions. For over 20 years we have paved the way for teens to gain the confidence they need to tackle challenges, make an impact on the world and reach their full potential. We are honored to extend support for this impressive generation by participating in the 100,000 Opportunities Initiative.”

“At Target, we seek innovative ways to fuel our growth, improve people's lives, and make a sustainable difference in the world. Our team members are our greatest asset, and it is through their contributions that we continue to surpass our guests' expectations every time they shop with us. Being a founding member of the 100,000 Opportunities Initiative will connect Target with motivated, high potential young people that help ensure our workforce is as diverse as the guests we serve,” said Brian Cornell, Chairman and CEO of Target Corp.

“For more than a century, Walgreens has grown its business on a tradition of recruiting young talent and building professional career paths that can take them to the company's highest ranks,” said Alex Gourlay, President of Walgreens. “We are proud to join with other great American brands to broaden opportunity for young men and women and provide access to the training, skills development and experience needed to build a strong workforce and growing economy.”

“Walmart and the Walmart Foundation work to improve the lives of millions of people through creating economic mobility and strengthening communities,” said Doug McMillon, Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. President and CEO. “Through our Opportunity initiative, we are working in partnership with others to address the fundamental challenges facing the retail and related industry workforces and create opportunities through job training that will allow for clear career advancement. We are pleased to join the 100,000 Opportunities Initiative to prepare youth for successful and rewarding careers in retail.”

“We are pleased to support the 100,000 Opportunities Initiative to put more young people on a promising road toward economic security,” **said La June Montgomery Tabron, President and CEO of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.** “Partnering with employers to build strong pathways to quality jobs and important supports like employment training and employee wellbeing policies is essential. We believe this will help more young people — especially those disconnected from opportunity who have been continuously and structurally left out of the economic engine — move up the career ladder and provide a better future for their families.”

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