



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**MAYOR EMANUEL APPOINTS CHICAGO'S FIRST EVER TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY  
DIVERSITY COUNCIL**

*Proven Leaders in Chicago Technology Economy Will Bring Experience and Networks as  
Committee Will Help Generate Ideas to Promote Technology Economy for Minorities*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today announced that, for the first time in the City's history, a council has been appointed for the sole purpose of creating opportunity for minorities in Chicago's technology economy.

"Chicago's technology economy is thriving, creating thousands of jobs and generating interest from around the world," said Mayor Emanuel. "As we experience this unprecedented growth in this key sector, it is incumbent that the opportunities that are being developed are available for all Chicagoans and that the city's technology community reflects the diversity and vitality of the city itself. These talented leaders will work directly with the technology community and my office to create innovative programs and new ideas that will help expand the diversity and vibrancy of the technology economy throughout the City."

The Technology Industry Diversity Council will have three main goals:

- Increasing the percentage of minority employees for technology firms.
- Increasing the percentage of minority-owned and operated technology firms.
- Helping to create a pipeline through which Chicago Public Schools and City Colleges of Chicago students can transition into the technology economy.

The council will be given an initial four-month timeline to make its first set of recommendations to Mayor Emanuel for specific things that can be undertaken by the Mayor's administration to foster this sort of growth.

The members of the Council were chosen from the technology community based on proven leadership and success in fostering diversity in the technology community.

The members of the council are:

Josh Hernandez, Walk.by

Eddie Lou, Shiftgig

David Zapata, Zapwater

Roger Martinez, Quantum Crossings

Ian Hood, CGN Blackwell Global Consulting

Neal Sales-Griffin, Starter League

Emile Cambry, Cibola

Talia Mashiach, Eved

Darrell Higueros, Next Generation

Seyi Fabode, Power2Switch

Nancy Joseph-Ridge, Takeda

Daniel Salcedo, Mobcart

(Bios are attached to this release)

The City of Chicago has, under Mayor Emanuel's leadership, made great strides in fostering diversity in other areas of the City's business community, through innovative programs in the department of procurement, such as the diversity business initiative. These programs allow the government of Chicago to encourage private sector adoption of important public policy objectives, and have resulted in strong growth and positive outcomes for minority business owners throughout the City, as well as the business community as a whole.

The Council on Diversity in Technology will work closely with Chicago's Office of New Americans, as well as ChicagoNEXT, to ensure that their recommendations dovetail closely with the ongoing efforts to make Chicago a welcoming city, as well as ChicagoNEXT's efforts to attract technology businesses to the city.

Mayor Emanuel has made the growth of the Chicago technology economy a key priority, attracting thousands of technology jobs to the City and working directly with dozens of companies to promote growth. From large technology firms such as Google and Nokia, each

of which have expanded their presence, to incubators such as 1871, Mayor Emanuel has focused on building an environment in which technology companies can come to Chicago and thrive.

"Chicago's diversity that long given us industrial strength," said John Tolva. "Our thriving technology sector will continue to differentiate itself with robust inclusion of all Chicagoans, and I look forward to helping realize Mayor Emanuel's vision of a thriving, diverse technology community," said John Tolva, Chicago's Chief Technology Officer.

The Council is expected to begin work immediately. Those who are interested in interacting with the council should email [techdiversitycouncil@cityofchicago.org](mailto:techdiversitycouncil@cityofchicago.org).

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## **Council on Diversity in Technology Bios**

### **Josh Hernandez, Walk.by**



Joshua Hernandez joined Lightbank in June 2012 as a Founder-in-Residence and recently founded walk.by, a company that is bringing mobile and social commerce directly to Chicago's retail community. Joshua's career has spanned multiple industries, from real estate and healthcare to mobile games and electronica music. In 2009, Joshua founded Tap.Me, a mobile in-game advertising platform that has raised \$4.6 million to date and is currently serving up mobile ads from advertising heavyweights such as U.S. Cellular and Proctor & Gamble. Prior to Tap.Me, Joshua served over 2.5 million users with a gamer identification platform called TripleTags.com, which enabled users to tout gameplaying accomplishments. In 2006, Joshua led a team of developers to create the first instant results real estate search service in Illinois, which has been used by dozens of brokerages in the Chicagoland area, including @properties. Joshua's entrepreneurial streak ultimately began with SectionZ.com, a peer-learning platform that he created for electronica musicians in 1999--this online music community nurtured and launched the budding talent of current superstar DJ Deadmau5.

### **Eddie Lou, Shiftgig**



Eddie is the CEO and one of the founders of Shiftgig, a LinkedIn-style online community that helps service industry workers connect with each other and with businesses such as restaurants, hotels, nightclubs and retail find workers, for different types of employment. Prior to that, he was a general partner with OCA Ventures, where he led ten technology investments. Previously, he was the founder of PlanetHVAC, a business-to-business software and service provider to HVAC companies, and started a manufacturing facility in China. He also co-founded and is an executive board member of a non-profit, One Goal Graduation and was recognized in 2010 as one of Crain's Chicago Business's "40 Under 40", in 2011 as Chicago United's "Business Leader of Color", and in 2012 as a Forbes "Up and Comers."

### **David Zapata, Zapwater Communications**



David Zapata is the President of Zapwater Communications, Inc., a Chicago-based public relations agency. Throughout his career he has advised high profile clients from Fortune 500 companies to government agencies, global retail brands to Internet startups. In 2012, Zapata's agency won 19 major industry awards including Bulldog Reporter's Consumer Campaign of the Year and a Gold Sabre Award, one of the most prestigious awards in the public relations industry. He is a graduate of Gettysburg College.

### **Roger J. Martinez, Quantum Crossings, LLC**



Roger J. Martinez is the President and CEO Quantum Crossings, LLC, a technology and telecommunications company. Martinez has also served as the Vice President of Telecommunications for the Chicago Board of Trade (CBOT). Roger started his career as an engineer with Southwestern Bell, now AT&T. He also served as the director of network engineering for the Continental Airlines family of carriers.

### **Ian M. Hood, CGN Blackwell Global Consulting**



Ian Hood serves as the Managing Principal at CGN Blackwell Global Consulting. Founded in 1992, CGN Blackwell is a Chicago-based, minority owned business performance and information technology consulting firm developing enterprise solutions by taking a scientific systems approach in helping transform organizations. Hood oversees their Consumer Packaged Goods and Energy vertical and is also an active member of Chicago's entrepreneurial technology community belonging to Built in Chicago, 1871, CEC, and participated in last year's Lean Startup Challenge.

### **Neal Sales-Griffin, Starter League**



Neal Sales-Griffin is currently the founder and CEO of The Starter League, a beginner web design and development school in Chicago. Neal has worked and consulted with numerous startups and not-for-profits across Chicago. He has also worked with OCA Ventures and Sandbox Industries, two prominent venture firms in Chicago. Neal also serves as a board member of the Chicago chapter of International Game Developers Association.

### **Emile Cambry, Cibola**



Emile Cambry Jr co-launched Cibola, a Chicago Start-Up Technology Incubator catalyzing entrepreneurship for under-represented minorities in tech. Emile Cambry, Jr. received his Bachelor's degree in Economics from the University of Chicago and his MBA on Merit Scholarship from Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management. Emile is a Professor at North Park University and was recognized as one of the Top 50 Business School Professors. Emile has experience in Investment Banking for J.P. Morgan Chase. Emile is the founder of the 21st Century Youth Project and The Chicago International Social Change Film Festival and is a Board member of Depaul University's Social Enterprise Collaborative. Emile is an Ideas Award Fellow as well as a Gold Medal Edison Awards winner.

### **Talia Mashiach, Eved**



Talia Mashiach is the CEO and Founder of Eved, an Event Commerce company that automates the buying and selling for meetings and events. Prior to launching Eved in 2010, Talia's entrepreneurial instincts led her to build several successful technology companies. Talia was inducted into the Chicago Entrepreneurship Hall of Fame in 2009 and named one of The Winning Women by Ernst and Young. Crain's Chicago has listed Talia in their 40 under 40 Class of 2010 and Tech 50 list in 2012. Also, Chicago Techweek named Talia to their 100 Most Innovative Names in Chicago Technology. Talia is a member of the Young Presidents' Organization and a board member for the Chicagoland Entrepreneurial Center. Talia lives in Chicago with her husband and five children.

### **Darrell Higueros, President & CEO, Next Generation Inc.**



Darrell Higueros is the President and CEO of Next Generation Inc., a Technology Management and Consulting firm. Mr. Higueros has previously served as the Co-Chair of the Technology Committee of the Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Darrell is a currently a member of HITEC (Hispanic IT Executive Council), a premier global executive leadership organization of senior business and IT executives who have built outstanding careers in information technology. HITEC's premiere network spans the Americas and is focused on building stronger technology and executive leaders, leadership teams, corporations, and role models in a rapidly changing, flatter, and information technology centric world.

### **Seyi Fabode, Power2Switch**



Seyi Fabode is the CEO/Co-founder of Power2Switch, a website that enables residential consumers to make responsible decisions about their energy usage and expenses. Prior to earning his MBA at the University of Chicago, Booth School of Business, Seyi was an operations analyst at EnergyQuote, an energy brokerage and management firm in London and commercial analyst for a Thames Power Services a privately owned power plant in London. He is also a graduate of Warwick University UK where he earned his MSc in Manufacturing Systems Engineering.

### **Nancy Joseph-Ridge, Takeda**



Nancy Joseph-Ridge, M.D., is general manager of the Pharmaceutical Development Division for Takeda. She is a member of Takeda's Research & Development Executive Committee and a corporate officer. With the Takeda family of companies since 2002, Dr. Joseph-Ridge was formerly President of Takeda Global Research & Development Center, Inc., U.S. In this capacity, Dr. Joseph-Ridge was responsible for overseeing the organization's U.S. clinical development activities. Dr. Joseph-Ridge previously worked at TAP Pharmaceutical Products Inc., Takeda's then-joint venture with Abbott, where she was Vice President of R&D. Dr. Joseph-Ridge earned her medical degree from the University of Illinois at Chicago. She completed her internship and residency in internal medicine at Rush Hospital, where she later became chief resident, and completed her fellowship in Rheumatology at the University of Chicago.

### **Daniel Salcedo, Mobcart**



Dan Salcedo is the founder and chairman of ecommerce firm Mobcart and fashion-tech firm Everpulse, both of which are housed at 1871. He is also the Marketing Director of prototyping robotics firm, Maxnc. Salcedo was the former Director of Communications at SingleHop, Inc. and previously worked as a consultant for JPMorgan Chase and as the Director of Communications for a Congressional Campaign in IL. He studied Business and Economics at Wheaton College.