FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 18, 2018

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MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES THINKCHICAGO: CHICAGO IDEAS WEEK
150 of the Nation's Top Technology and Engineering Students in Chicago To Learn About Chicago's Growing Technology Industry and Vibrant Urban Culture

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today announced the launch of ThinkChicago: Chicago Ideas Week 2018, a three-day event from October 18–20 that will introduce the city's fast-growing technology industry and Chicago's leading ideas festival to 150 of the nation's top STEM, business and design students from across the country. ThinkChicago immerses future tech leaders within Chicago's innovation ecosystem, giving them an opportunity to meet Chicago icons and pitch their own ideas.

"Chicago has a thriving technology and innovation community that uses collaboration to help strengthen our overall local economy," said Mayor Emanuel. "ThinkChicago provides an opportunity to foster continued growth by showcasing emerging talent, and I look forward to seeing the unique ideas that have the potential to shape the future of the tech industry."

"Our graduates are among the world's best, and we are committed to keeping them right here at home to make Chicago's innovation network the world's best," Tim Killeen, president of the University of Illinois System, said. "We are proud to be part of an annual event that fits hand-in-glove with our mission to serve students and the needs of our state."

Tech continues to be Chicago's fastest growing industry sector, with one of the largest tech talent pools in the United States. Chicago had 14,014 tech businesses in 2017 and 341,600 tech workers across all industries – an increase of 4,000, according to CompTIA. Chicago's home state of Illinois is the second largest producer of computer science degrees and the fourth largest producer of MBA degrees in the United States.

"Through ThinkChicago, we are inviting students to become a part of Chicago's vibrant tech and innovation scene," Mark Tebbe, chairman of ChicagoNEXT said. "We are introducing

the country's top talent with innovative businesses in Chicago to help ensure that these businesses have the opportunity to expand their talent pool."

Students from 17 states and 45 schools were selected to participate, including homegrown talent from the University of Illinois System, City Colleges of Chicago, and other major universities in the Chicago area, as well as nationally ranked institutions such as Dartmouth College, Stanford University, Princeton University, and Harvard University.

"ThinkChicago is committed to creating inclusive access to Chicago's tech community," Andrea Zopp, president and CEO of World Business Chicago said. "By partnering with Chicago Ideas Week, ThinkChicago students not only will have unrivaled exposure to our burgeoning innovation ecosystem, but also participate in thought-provoking discussions on today's most important issues."

This fall's program is the eighth installment of ThinkChicago: Chicago Ideas Week. Participants will attend a variety of programs, including:

- Visits to 14 tech companies, including Relativity, Avant, CCC Information Services, Echo Global Logistics, JPMorgan Chase & Co, Sprout Social, and tastytrade
- A Civic Tech Panel with Jeremy Agulnek, Vice President of Connected Car, HAAS Alert; Mike Chiapetta, Director, Midwest Regional Operations and Chicago Market Development, Accenture; Danielle DuMerer, Chief Information Officer & Commissioner, City of Chicago Department of Innovation and Technology; Katie Olson, Director of Operations & Services, City Tech Collaborative; and Thomas K.R. Stovall, Founder, ImBlackInTech
- Keynote Address and Q&A with Brad Keywell, Founder & Chairman, Chicago Ideas, and Founder & CEO, Uptake Technologies
- Access to Chicago Ideas Week programming including Thursday evening's talk "Doing Well to Do Good in Business: The Economic Case for Altruism" and Friday' Chicago Ideas Day

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ThinkChicago has an alumni base of more than 1,600 talented students and professionals, many of whom now work for startups, leading tech companies, innovation spaces, and venture capital firms in Chicago.

ThinkChicago Chicago Ideas Week is organized by the Mayor's Office, ChicagoNEXT of World Business Chicago, the University of Illinois System and Chicago Ideas Week.