# The Iron Yard launches fund to award $100M in code school diversity scholarships

The Iron Yard, the largest immersive code school in the U.S., today launched the Tech Opportunity Fund in collaboration with with Code Fellows and Operation HOPE. By unifying the efforts of code schools, government, civic organizations and employers, the goal of the Tech Opportunity Fund is to increase diversity in the tech industry by removing financial barriers and increasing access to tech education for all. In addition to technical skills training, the initiative will include core financial literacy education and entrepreneurship training through programming partner Operation HOPE. The Tech Opportunity Fund was mentioned this morning in a speech by Vice President Joe Biden in St. Louis.

"To maximize the potential of the tech industry, we must maximize the potential of a diverse tech workforce," said Peter Barth, CEO of The Iron Yard. "The Tech Opportunity Fund builds off of the momentum generated by innovative initiatives like TechHire to ensure Americans of all backgrounds have access to tech training programs that can open the door to a career in tech. There is a true need in the industry for an organization to unite the many groups that are working toward this goal and by coordinating our efforts, we can truly change the industry for the better."

Over the next five years, the Tech Opportunity Fund aims to award $100 million in diversity scholarships to in-need students from groups that are currently underrepresented in the tech workforce including women and minorities. The Iron Yard has committed $40 million in full-tuition scholarships to the school's immersive programs over the next five years, Code Fellows has committed $5 million in full-tuition scholarships, and Operation HOPE will serve as the Fund's financial literacy and entrepreneur training partner. To reach the goal of awarding $100 million in scholarships, the Tech Opportunity Fund is calling on employers, code schools and civic organizations across the country to join the Fund by providing funding for scholarships and contributing resources that will support for scholarship recipients.

"The creation of the Tech Opportunity Fund is unprecedented," said Rodney Sampson, a partner of the Tech Opportunity Fund and partner at TechSquare Labs. "By far, it is the largest tangible strategic financial commitment to diversify the technical talent and workforce that will drive our

nation toward an inclusive innovation economy for all. I look forward to working with all of the stakeholders to ensure that these scholarships are distributed with integrity and authenticity."

In addition to providing full-tuition scholarships to code school programs, the Tech Opportunity Fund will work to remove other barriers that can prevent people from pursuing a code school education. Partnerships with city-level government bodies and civic organizations will assist scholarship recipients by addressing needs such as affordable housing, financial literacy, counseling and transportation as needed.

"There is no one-size-fits-all solution that will increase access to tech education and improve diversity in the workforce," said Barth. "The Tech Opportunity Fund approaches these issues holistically and coordinates local and national resources to provide students with both academic opportunity and the support system they need to be successful."

"Access to opportunity is the hallmark of an inclusive global economy, and access to digital opportunity and jobs in the digital space is the door to the future," said John Hope Bryant, Operation HOPE Founder, Chairman and CEO. "This extraordinary collaborative will help develop life skills in deserving students, many, in underserved communities throughout the nation—creating a generation of tech leaders and job creators to power us forward."

Applications for Tech Opportunity Fund scholarships will open by January 2017. To receive a scholarship, applicants will need to first be accepted into a participating code school through that program's standard admissions process. After their acceptance, students will apply for a Tech Opportunity Fund scholarship through the website, www.techopportunityfund.org. Scholarships will be awarded to qualified students on a first come, first served basis.

"Over the last 12 months, we've provided over $600,000 in scholarships, from direct funds and from great partners like Expedia and Zillow Group. These funds have given over a hundred students the chance to learn relevant, highly desirable skills, and continue on to join great companies in the local tech markets," said Dave Parker, Code Fellows CEO. "The Tech Opportunity Fund program helps us expand that impact."

Scholarships will be available on all of The Iron Yard and Code Fellows' campuses:

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| Atlanta, GA | Durham, NC | Orlando, FL |
| Austin, TX | **Greenville, SC** | Portland, OR |

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| **Charleston, SC** | Houston, TX | Raleigh, NC |
| Charlotte, NC | Indianapolis, IN | Salt Lake City, UT |
| Cincinnati, OH | Las Vegas, NV | San Antonio, TX |
| **Columbia, SC** | Minneapolis, MN | Seattle, WA |
| Dallas, TX | Nashville, TN | Tampa, FL |
| Detroit, MI | New York, NY | Washington, DC |

For more information and to learn more about how your organization or code school can be involved, visit: www.techopportunityfund.org.