NEWS RELEASE

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Hack & Hustle Announces Pilot Run of the Tech + Social Entrepreneurship Academy

The Hack & Hustle Social Entrepreneurship Academy is a workforce development program created through an equal partnership between Jecha Networks, Informative Technologies, and Hip Hop University. The program will increase economic mobility for underserved youth by placing scholars in technology training while providing them with face-to-face mentorship. The foundational concept for the Hack & Hustle Social Entrepreneurship Academy was conceived by Mr. Mahdi Chambers, President of Jecha Networks, Inc.

On July 10, the Hack & Hustle Leadership team will launch a two-week pilot program at the UNCC Portal Building, with approximately five to ten scholars. These Hack & Hustle scholars will learn to refurbish and transform eWaste computers into in-demand technology for community organizations. To accomplish this, Hack & Hustle will administer a mission-driven technology, entrepreneurship, & wellness training curriculum taught through the lens of Hip Hop Culture.

Scholars will learn critical technology skills such as computer hardware repair, software programming, solar energy, and digital literacy. They will also learn the value of mental wellness in connection to work-productivity through meditation and mindfulness training. Hack & Hustle will enable scholars to begin planning their own technology-based businesses with an underlying focus on engaging with and providing benefits to the community. With their newfound technical knowledge, scholars will help bridge the digital divide identified within their own neighborhoods.

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Teaching the Art of the Hip Hop Mindset through Hardware Recycling

Much like Hip Hop Culture is a mindset of resourcefulness and making something out of nothing, so too is recycling computer hardware. This is one skill Hack & Hustle scholars will take away from the first week of the pilot program.

This first week of the Hack & Hustle program will be led by James Walker, Founder and CEO of Informative Technologies Inc., and Gurtej Singh, Technology Director of the non-profit Hip Hop University. Informative Technologies, Inc. is a social enterprise that has researched and developed scalable, market-driven solutions to the digital divide and electronic waste since 2014. Utilizing Informative Technologies' refurbishing process, Hack & Hustle scholars will revive "obsolete" computers, allowing them to run better than ever; thus breaking the cycle of planned obsolescence so commonly built into competing operating systems today.

Hack & Hustle will follow the lessons of early Hip Hop pioneers, who revived old sounds and samples to create something new, vibrant, and long-lasting despite the systemic pressures compounded against them. Hack & Hustle scholars will harness technology to accomplish similar goals, uplifting and empowering themselves in the process.

To learn more about the Hack & Hustle scholars' hands-on challenge of refurbishing eWaste, contact James Walker, 704-996-7209, jwalker@informativeinc.com

Blending the Code of Hip Hop with Software Programming

The code of Hip Hop Culture is often rehashed in rap lyrics over and over again-- "Make a way out of no way." Through an understanding of software programming, scholars will build upon their revived computers via Hip Hop-inspired technical programming projects.

These scholars will be coding with in-demand programming languages such as Python will bring further value to computers once viewed as eWaste, while learning skills beneficial to them in the modern economy. Just as many rappers enabled themselves to ascend beyond their hardships by mastering the use of the English language, rhyme, and poetry, we will teach our scholars to understand that learning programming languages and technology skills can do the same for them.

The software coding portion of the Hack & Hustle Academy will be led by Hip Hop University Technology Director Gurtej Singh. Hip Hop University, Inc. is a 501 (c)3 non-profit organization that exists to uplift communities by creating opportunities for educational outreach and community engagement with diverse and underserved communities. The goal is to influence, educate, and empower the community through the vehicle of Hip Hop Culture. To learn more contact Gurtej Singh, 864-415-4224, tech4hiphopuniversity@gmail.com

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Building Tech + Social Entrepreneurs with Hip Hop Culture

In Hip Hop Culture, understanding how to run your lifestyle brand with top-notch business acumen brings much respect and credibility. During week two, Hack & Hustle scholars are

placed in entrepreneurship training that pushes them to respect their history, their community, and their own intelligence.

Hack & Hustle Academy focuses on inspiring the next generation of social entrepreneurs. Scholars will learn how to develop an entrepreneurial mindset, create business plans, understand the lean startup method, and learn about business legal structure. They will learn about solar energy and build several different projects. These solar projects will be used by the scholars to develop the first of several business plans in order to allow them to understand what it takes to plan, build and market a product.

Scholars will take all they have learned during the program and participate in the "Social Entrepreneurship Challenge." Small teams (startups) will be formed and tasked with creating innovative products and services that will address the digital divide in their communities. Scholars will hone their business pitches and build a marketing campaign around their technology business ideas.

The social entrepreneurship portion will be led by Founder & President of Jecha Networks, Mahdi Chambers. Jecha Networks, Inc. has over 30 years of management, technology, entrepreneurial, and consulting industry experience. Mr. Chambers has been mentoring underserved youth for many years but realized that while mentoring is very helpful, more can be done to develop technology and entrepreneurial skills, encouraging students to develop a mindset of creating their own opportunities.

Just like the respected business acumen of the Hip Hop moguls that rose up in the music industry, Hack & Hustle Academy is planting the seeds of greatness in the emerging tech moguls of tomorrow with a heart to serve their community. To learn more contact Mahdi Chambers, (732) 995-0958, mchambers@jecha-networks.com.

For assistance setting up interviews with Hack & Hustle Academy team members, please contact Kia O. Moore, Creative Director of Hip Hop University at hackhustleacademy@gmail.com or text 704-759-6146.

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