

America's Urban Campus®

1 East Jackson Blvd. Ste. 2006, Chicago, IL 60604 | www.americasurbancampus.org

Memorandum: To the Lori Lightfoot Mayoral Transition

Date: April 24, 2019

Name: America's Urban Campus®

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Transition Committee: Economic, Business and Neighborhood Development

A potential initiative:

Chicago's higher education institutions seek to work with the Lightfoot Administration in building a diverse and inclusive talent pipeline, serving existing firms and supporting the attraction of additional companies.

How the new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in that initiative:

The Lightfoot Administration's overall commitment to energizing the economies of the South and West sides, while at the same time promoting overall growth of the city's economy, will rely in large measure on one of Chicago's strongest assets--its talent. Many of Chicago's universities have made a strong commitment to educating students of color and first generation students, and the Lightfoot administration can address the values of equity, diversity and inclusion through a close working relationship with these institutions.

To advance this initiative, what is happening today that we need to keep?

America's Urban Campus® (AUC) was established in 2011 by Chicago's universities and colleges with a mission to promote Chicago as a global destination for higher education and leverage the institutions' resources for the benefit of its citizens. AUC has 22 institutions, including the City Colleges of Chicago, educating 96% of Chicago's post-secondary students and graduating 60,000 students annually. The universities' presidents have agreed to both financially support this collaboration and to meet annually to set the agenda and priorities.

In February 2018, AUC established the Chicago Higher Education Career Services Executives Collaborative, consisting of the directors from 18 of the AUC members. This group has now worked closely together to set the foundation for implementing this initiative:

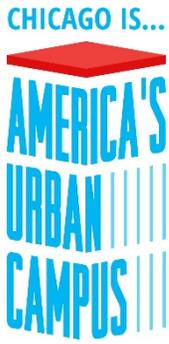
- Collaborating with the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce and J.P.Morgan Chase Foundation to link to a digital platform to match our diverse students with jobs and internships, with a goal of reducing bias in the hiring process
- Agreed formally to work with the city on sourcing talent from our institutions for new and expanding companies by working collaboratively with hiring managers for the companies—currently working directly with World Business Chicago on this activity.

Member Institutions

Adler University
The Chicago School of Professional Psychology
Chicago State University
City Colleges of Chicago
Columbia College Chicago
DePaul University
East-West University
Illinois Institute of Technology
The John Marshall Law School
Loyola University Chicago
National Louis University
North Park University
Northeastern Illinois University
Northwestern University
Robert Morris University
Roosevelt University
Rush University
Saint Xavier University
School of the Art Institute of Chicago
University of Chicago
University of Illinois at Chicago

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- Developing a model for a joint career fair set for October 29, 2019 at UIC to showcase our graduates in the hard and social sciences to Chicago companies.
- Collaborating with the city, civic organizations and foundations to address the issue of assuring a more diverse work force.

What we need to implement in the next 100 days:

Convene and work with the key players in Chicago's Talent Pipeline to emphasize the administration's commitment to creating opportunity for a more diverse work force and leveraging existing resources to place that talent in jobs for which they are educated/trained. Much of the groundwork has been put in place.

Participation and engagement from Mayor Lightfoot at the Annual AUC University President's meeting at Noon on October 30, 2019 on the Northwestern University Chicago Campus, hosted by Morton Schapiro. A formal invitation is forthcoming.

What we can plan for longer-term implementation:

Working with business groups, foundations and the universities, to adopt a strategy and tracking mechanism for assuring that our graduates from all of our communities have the opportunity to stay and work in Chicago if they choose to. This is a great way to counteract the recent decline in City population and assure companies, both in the neighborhoods and elsewhere, have access to the talent they need.

What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative:

The talent pipeline is a complicated, multi-faceted component of any city's economic development strategy. Cities all over the country and the world are competing for talent and/or trying to hold on to their talent. Chicago needs to be at the forefront of this competition, as we have the talent others want, while also having the opportunity to create meaningful jobs for residents of the South and West sides. In addition, the administration can give encouragement to the current public/private initiatives listed above to build a more inclusive work force and reduce unconscious bias in the hiring process.