



## **GENERAL ASSEMBLY ANNOUNCES “OPPORTUNITY FUND” SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM TO SUPPORT UNDERREPRESENTED STUDENTS ENTERING THE TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY**

***With Support from Google, Microsoft, Hirepurpose and Nas, New Program Offers Scholarships to Women, Veterans and Minorities to Attend Web Development Immersive Course***

**NEW YORK, April 17, 2014** – [General Assembly](#), the global educational institution building a community of entrepreneurs and professionals through instruction and opportunity in technology, business and design, announced today the pilot launch of its “[Opportunity Fund](#)” scholarship program, which will provide scholarships to members of traditionally underrepresented groups in the technology industry.

Initial program supporters Google, Microsoft Corp., Hirepurpose and recording artist Nas will enable New York-based students to participate in General Assembly’s full-time, 12 week Web Development Immersive (WDI) course, designed to transform beginners into junior-level web developers. Google, through its Google for Entrepreneurs program, will provide scholarships to women; Microsoft is supporting veterans and Nas’ QueensBridge Venture Partners will support minority students, specifically African-Americans and Latinos, in pursuing high-tech fields. Hirepurpose, an organization that connects veterans with career opportunities, will provide a housing stipend and career support for veterans accepted into the Opportunity Fund program. General Assembly is providing subsidized tuition to scholarship recipients.

At launch, the Opportunity Fund pilot program has a total of \$170,000 to offer scholarships to 17 students, who will participate in WDI throughout the year. Following the program, participants will have full access to all of General Assembly’s resources, including its hiring partner network and personalized support in finding full-time employment. Benefactor companies will also have the ability to hire the recipients they’ve supported directly.

“General Assembly is committed to continually expanding the accessibility and affordability of our programs to anyone who wants to pursue a meaningful career that they love, no matter their background,” said Jake Schwartz, co-founder and CEO, General Assembly. “We are in a unique position to help narrow the diversity gap in the industry by giving people the education, skills and opportunities to break into tech, and we see Opportunity Fund as the first step toward that eventual goal. We are grateful to Google, Microsoft, Hirepurpose and Nas for sharing our commitment to making actionable changes.”

As part of the Opportunity Fund program, scholarship recipients are required to commit 100+ hours of their time to mentoring underprivileged youth. In partnership with technology education nonprofits including All Star Code, Black Girls Code, CodeNow, Coderdojo and ScriptEd, recipients will provide technology skills and coding education to disadvantaged youth in New York.

“Google for Entrepreneurs is proud to support women entrepreneurs in gaining valuable skills and resources they need to succeed in the tech industry through the Opportunity Fund,” said Bridgette Beam, Google for Entrepreneurs manager. “Women-led tech companies achieve 35 percent higher

return on investment, and, when venture-backed, bring in 12 percent more revenue than male-owned tech companies, yet women are still underrepresented in startup communities. General Assembly's Opportunity Fund provides an avenue for women to start their path to success in tech."

"We are incredibly proud to work with GA to help transform more of our national heroes into technical superheroes who can both build the next generation Web and mentor the future talent of America. Along with our Microsoft Software & Systems Academy, we look forward to seeing veterans bridge from one great career – serving in the military – to another where they can help improve lives through technology," said Stefan Weitz, senior director, Bing.

"Education is power, and Opportunity Fund is providing that power to minorities who will be able to use it throughout their careers," said Nas. "Education, careers and opportunities in technology should not be limited to any one demographic, and I'm happy to support minorities who will see doors open to them as a result of participation in this program."

General Assembly's Opportunity Fund scholarship is open to qualified women, veterans and minorities at the New York campus. [Applications](#) are available beginning today and will be accepted through May 7.

#### **About General Assembly**

[General Assembly](#) is a global educational institution that is building a community of individuals empowered to pursue work they love through instruction and opportunity in technology, business and design. General Assembly offers classes, workshops, full-time immersive programs and online educational programming on the most relevant skills of the 21st century economy, including web development, user experience design, digital marketing and data science.

#### **About Google for Entrepreneurs**

Google for Entrepreneurs empowers entrepreneurs around the world through programs, partnerships and Google products. With over 70 programs in 120 countries, Google for Entrepreneurs seeks to grow entrepreneurial communities and to equip entrepreneurs with skills and resources to pursue their big ideas. To learn about the programs, or to grow your own skills through free online courses, visit [Google.com/entrepreneurs](http://Google.com/entrepreneurs) or on Google+ at [google.com/+GoogleForEntrepreneurs](https://plus.google.com/+GoogleForEntrepreneurs).

#### **About Hirepurpose**

Launched in January of this year, Hirepurpose offers a free service for transitioning military veterans to find a career when they enter the civilian workforce. Hirepurpose employs a state-of-the-art career assessment metric, the Birkman, which tells veterans which careers may be the best fit based on their interests and soft skills. This, in addition to thousands of jobs from dozens of the top companies in America, helps transitioning military veterans explore new industries and provides direct connections with leading employers.

#### **About Nas**

Nasir Jones, or Nas, critically acclaimed for his lyrical skill, social analysis and commitment, has helped usher in an original form of hip-hop debate and analysis that reflects on and represents urban youth angst and conflict as well as intelligence, confidence and ambition. A quintessentially honest artist, Nas has taken great risks in exposing his deepest vulnerabilities while still staying relevant to a wide audience. In doing so, he has inspired a generation. The first full-length album by Nas arrived in 1994, the RIAA platinum *Illmatic* (Columbia Records), which paved the way for two decades of chart-topping

hits. LIFE IS GOOD (released July 2012), the most recent album by Nas, was his third consecutive Def Jam album to debut at #1 on the Billboard 200 albums chart. In recent years, Nas has transcended mere rapper status and engaged in greater levels of philanthropy. He is an avid UNICEF supporter, helping the organization to raise funds for East African region Horn of Africa and for its Month of Giving. The rapper also donated all proceeds of Distant Relatives, his 2010 collaboration with longtime friend Damian Marley, to help end poverty in Africa.

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