New Tech Startups join Northwestern Mutual Black Founder Accelerator® Program

Now in its third year, company initiative provides$100K, mentorship and resources to support qualifying high-potential Black entrepreneurs

MILWAUKEE, May 4, 2023 /PRNewswire/ -- Northwestern Mutual, in partnership with gener8tor, today announced the addition of five promising tech startups to its innovative Black Founder Accelerator program. An extension of the company's Sustained Action for Racial Equality (SARE) Task Force, the program demonstrates Northwestern Mutual's commitment to closing the racial wealth gap and empowering the next generation of Black entrepreneurs.

These startups – the first of two five-company cohorts joining the Black Founder Accelerator program in 2023 – are eligible to receive a $100,000 investment, access to venture capital partners, individualized coaching from Northwestern Mutual executive mentors, inclusion in a specially curated 12-week program and more.

"Since the program's inception, we've partnered with more than two dozen Black-founded startups nationwide, with program alumni positioned to raise additional funding, secure contracts and partnerships, and continue to grow their businesses," said Abim Kolawole, chief audit executive at Northwestern Mutual. "We remain committed to helping more Black entrepreneurs reach their potential and pioneer a pathway for future innovators to thrive in technology and business."

In 2021, the Black Founder Accelerator program was launched to provide Black entrepreneurs with the funding and resources needed to drive innovation in the tech industry and to help address the ongoing racial gap in venture capital funding. Building on their successful experiences with the program, alumni have gone on to join other accelerator and industry-specific growth programs, and have sold products and services across a variety of sectors.

"This business accelerator has been a powerful vehicle for cultivating greater diversity, equity and inclusion, and we're committed to ensuring the program – and the exciting startups it supports – continues to thrive," said Craig Schedler, managing director of Northwestern Mutual Future Ventures. "As demonstrated by the remarkable work from last year's cohort, I am looking forward to seeing the lasting impact these five innovative startups and founder teams will make in their communities."

The five startups selected to participate in the program all align with Northwestern Mutual Future Ventures' key strategic areas of focus including fintech, insurtech, digital health and data analytics. The startups include:

Bryan Young: Founder and CEO | homelendingpal.com
Home Lending Pal (Orlando, Fla.) provides lenders with a streamlined platform to find and connect with potential pre-vetted borrowers who are looking for home loans. The platform's AI technology reduces the time and effort needed to approve a loan application by helping lenders assess the borrower's creditworthiness and financial situation.

R'Kes Starling: Founder and chief executive | revelesclinical.com
Reveles (Southlake, Texas) supports drug and clinical developments by expanding access and increasing awareness of clinical research, specifically for minority communities.

Michael Haddix: CEO and co-founder | investwithscout.com
Scout (Clifton Park, N.Y.) is an investing platform that allows users to create a diversified portfolio, gain financial insights and connect with their digital financial advisor through their phone. By increasing the accessibility to investing, the platform is designed to help close the wealth gap.

Ed Ross: CEO | getcoreai.com
Core Ai™ (Cary, N.C.) is a conversational analysis platform which enables enterprise leaders to gain real-time insights into their employee development conversations. By leveraging advanced algorithms and machine learning models, the platform provides accurate and comprehensive analysis of conversations and emotions.

Stella Ashaolu: Founder and CEO | wesolv.com
WeSolv (Chicago) is an AI and performance data-driven platform that automates sourcing more diverse candidates and objectively assesses skills and competencies with real mini-projects. The platform democratizes access to real experience and uses predictive data to reduce hiring bias.

In addition to the Black Founder Accelerator program, Northwestern Mutual oversees a$100-million impact investing fund to deliver on the company's commitment to addressing inequality and the racial wealth gap in the U.S. The fund focuses on three key areas: physical and social infrastructure, access to capital for individuals and businesses, and healthy sustainable

neighborhoods and communities.

The next Black Founder Accelerator cohort will be announced in late summer.

About gener8tor
gener8tor is a venture capital fund and startup accelerator. Ranked one of the top-15 accelerators in theUnited States, gener8tor operates programs for startups, musicians, artists, investors, and workers and prioritizes investing across race, place, and gender. Fast Company named gener8tor one of the 10 Most Innovative Companies in 2020 and one of the Best Workplaces for Innovators in 2021.

Northwestern Mutual Black Founder Accelerator
The NMBFA is a joint collaboration between Northwestern Mutual and gener8tor to advance Black tech startups based in the United States focused on fintech, insurtech, digital health and data analytics. gener8tor is the administrator of the twelve-week accelerator that runs two cohorts of five Black-led tech startups a year.

About Northwestern Mutual
Northwestern Mutual has been helping people and businesses achieve financial security for more than 165 years. Through a comprehensive planning approach, Northwestern Mutual combines the expertise of its financial professionals with a personalized digital experience and industry-leading products to help its clients plan for what's most important. With more than $558 billion of total assets being managed across the company's institutional portfolio as well as retail investment client portfolios, nearly $35 billion in revenues, and $2.2 trillion worth of life insurance protection in force, Northwestern Mutual delivers financial security to more than five million people with life, disability income and long-term care insurance, annuities, and brokerage and advisory services. Northwestern Mutual ranked 97 on the 2022 FORTUNE 500.

Northwestern Mutual is the marketing name for The Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company (NM),Milwaukee, WI (life and disability insurance, annuities, and life insurance with long-term care benefits) and its subsidiaries. Subsidiaries include Northwestern Mutual Investment Services, LLC (NMIS) (investment brokerage services), broker-dealer, registered investment adviser, member FINRA and SIPC; the Northwestern Mutual Wealth Management Company® (NMWMC) (investment advisory and services), federal savings bank; and Northwestern Long Term Care Insurance Company (NLTC) (long-term care insurance). Not all Northwestern Mutual representatives are advisors. Only those representatives with "Advisor" in their title or who otherwise disclose their status as an advisor of NMWMC are credentialed as NMWMC representatives to provide investment advisory services.

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