

HISD PRESS RELEASE

Curtis “50 Cent” Jackson partners with HISD to prepare student entrepreneurs

May 17, 2021 – Houston Independent School District (HISD), Curtis “50 Cent” Jackson, and Horizon United Group have joined forces to help high schoolers learn the business skills that define successful entrepreneurship.

The partnership will bring a groundbreaking initiative, the G-Unity Business Lab, to Kashmere, Worthing, and Wheatley high schools at a time when students most need to reconnect with learning and acquire critical professional skills.

Up to 50 students will apply for paid internships to take part in the after-school program this fall at their home school site.

Students in the lab will engage in MBA-level lessons that represent the full lifecycle of a product or concept, from idea creation, to market branding, to even running a company.

“The G-Unity Foundation’s partnership with HISD will create an immense opportunity for our students to grow the next generation of entrepreneurs and business leaders,” said HISD Interim Superintendent Dr. Grenita Lathan. “By focusing on underserved youth and providing paid internships, the G-Unity Business Lab will help students from low-income households envision a different reality for themselves and their future. We could not set students on a path to success without partners like Curtis Jackson, who see the value and potential of investing in our children.”

This initiative represents the first flagship investment of Curtis Jackson’s philanthropic arm, the G-Unity Foundation. The pilot program is co-funded by the G-Unity Foundation investing \$300,000 over two years and HISD matching the funds for a total of \$600,000.

“It’s great to be giving back to this community that’s already given me so much,” said Curtis Jackson. “These young kids can do great things if they just have the right skills and tools. This program is going to help get them there.”

The G-Unity Business Lab also lines up with Mayor Sylvester Turner’s initiatives to create jobs.

“A quality education is the best tool we can give young people to help them succeed in the classroom and prepare for a career,” said Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner. “I am deeply grateful to Curtis “50 Cent” Jackson for investing in Houston ISD students. This program will have a big impact on the lives of students and their families. It will provide a platform to help young people grow their skillset by learning how to be future entrepreneurs, scientists, engineers, and business leaders.”

Beginning in the fall of 2021, selected students from Kashmere, Worthing, and Wheatley high schools will work with HISD educators, Houston business leaders, and the G-Unity Foundation to complete an after-school course that teaches MBA concepts aligned with Curtis Jackson’s book, *Hustle Harder, Hustle Smarter*.

Through the 12-week course, students will be exposed to instruction from high-achieving business leaders that will mentor them through the process.

The program will culminate in a “Shark Tank” style competition that will be judged by Curtis Jackson, Al Kashani, President of Horizon United Group, and other community leaders. The winners will receive seed money to begin their businesses that are incubated in Houston.

About G-Unity Foundation

Founded by Curtis “50-Cent” Jackson, the G-Unity Foundation supports a variety of programs that can demonstrate positive outcomes for urban kids. The foundation has been active for years in communities nationwide and is currently focused on youth programs that lead to improved academics, social engagement, and mental and physical well-being. To learn more, please visit www.gunityfoundation.org.

About Horizon United Group

Horizon International Group, LLC is a certified SBE/MBE/WBE/HUB construction services firm with a proven history of providing clients impeccable contracting services since 1994. Horizon is now one of the premier general contractors, job order contractors, construction managers, and consulting experts in the construction industry. Horizon has succeeded in becoming a leader for the Greater Houston Area contractors by providing the highest standards of quality and greatest value.

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The Houston Independent School District is the largest school district in Texas and the seventh-largest in the United States, with 280 schools and more than 209,772 students. The 333-square-mile district is one of the largest employers in the Houston metropolitan area, with more than 27,000 employees.

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