

Thank you Chairman Chaffetz, Ranking Member Cummings, Congresswoman Kelly, and all the esteemed members of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform for the opportunity to testify before you today.

My name is Emile Cambry. I'm the oldest child of an immigrant from Haiti and an African-American woman on the west side of Chicago. In their youth, my parents endured the frustration of economic hardship and the pain and indignity of racism and anti-immigrant sentiment firsthand. But, they overcame the frustration. They overcame the pain. And they overcame the indignity to become a Doctor and a Nurse. They had the work ethic **and** the access to opportunity necessary to do what statistics said they never would be able to do.

Succeed.

And, they made sure they did everything possible to give my younger brother and sister the opportunities to overcome the obstacles necessary for us to attend top institutions.

Thanks to their sacrifice, I was able to study Economics at the University of Chicago and Business at Northwestern University's Business school. My brother, Jonathan, despite dealing with a debilitating illness, is a renown concert pianist. My sister, despite dealing with challenges, is a successful graphic designer.

I've since had the opportunity to work at JP Morgan Chase in their investment banking unit and teach graduate level business and economics courses at 3 graduate institutions.

My parents, and all of my life's experience up until 3 years ago helped me realize one thing.

Entire communities and generations of hard-working, incredibly talented men, women and youth are not being given access to the very opportunities that helped my family overcome the hardships in their life.

That's why I founded an organization that addresses that: BLUE1647. To bring opportunity to opportunity-deserts across the country.

BLUE1647 transforms lives and communities by going into these opportunity-deserts and providing residents with access to the 21st century tech skills so that they too can access the opportunities necessary for them to overcome the hardships in their life.

The formula was simple. Go where the need is greatest. Teach those interested in the most marketable skills. And see people overcome poverty, racism and other hardships in way that you've never seen it before.

And today, I'd like to take the time today to talk about how the various programs and public sector partnerships I've had the chance to build are turning communities with few prospects into

hubs for tech rockstars that can and will yield an ecosystem of diverse talent to fill the 1.2 new tech jobs that will need to be filled by 2020 in this country and more.

And, already, we're starting to see that vision come to fruition.

While we were founded in Chicago just three years ago, thanks to the support of people like Congresswoman Kelly, we've since grown to have our tech-centers present in 8 cities and serve over 16,000 youth and adults.

Our classes have included everything from app and software development, traditional IT, cybersecurity, and the Internet of Things. Physical location of our innovation centers are important, which is why we target communities in lower socio-economic areas and 95% of our students are black or latino. But we do not water down our curriculum because of space, place, age, or income. Our Software Development curriculum is Department of Labor certified for our technology apprenticeship program.

I'd like to take a moment to highlight some of our programs and success stories. Our 1919 Program is our Women in Tech and Entrepreneurship program. Since it's inception a year ago, over 200 women have participated in our cohort-based program, which is 12 weeks in length. We have various tracks, and have created a community approach for skill development in IT. We will soon be adding tracks in project management and cybersecurity. We have over a 97% net promoter score, and an additional 75 women have begun our program this week. All of these women are black or Latino.

Our 21st Century Youth Project is for students as young as 4 and as old as 17 where we have had some great successes in cohort based training. We have had students intern at Google, Answers.com, Accenture, and Microsoft, including starting their own ventures. Over 70 students have gone on to matriculate into computer science and engineering programs.

We have hosted the Chief Officers for the United States Digital Services Team, United States Chief Data Officer, D.J. Patil, and have held general recruiting events about federal IT opportunities and careers. Over 200 were in attendance for one event and the major takeaway was that you can serve your country using your technology skills, which was a new concept to many of the attendees.

We have executed some tremendous public and private partnerships to plant seed sin placed most would not likely expect. In St. Louis, we are a partner in the JOBS PLUS program, a federal HUD program over four years to increase employment prospects in housing developments. The housing development we focused on is the Clinton Peabody development, where before the program started, had 68% unemployment rate, and 93% were led by a single mother. At the development, we are partnered with the St. Louis Housing Authority, the workforce development arm of the city of St. Louis, SLATE, and the NAACP of St. Louis. BLUE1647 installed community wifi, so residents can participate in having internet access, while

we focus on bridging the digital divide. We conduct technology classes for adults during the day and provide afterschool technology immersion for youth after school. Our partners focus on placement and case management, and we were able to freeze rent for the community for four years to break the cycle of poverty, because rent has served as a disincentive for residents to pursue further employment prospects. As a partnership, we have exceeded our benchmarks for success. Average income for the community has increased 40%, and enrollments in the job development programs are almost a year ahead of our projected pace.

In addition to working with one housing development in St. Louis, we started working in six housing developments in Los Angeles this week, and we partnered with an adult school in Compton, CA where our first adult cohort has concluded and they are taking their certification exams this week and next for internationally recognized IT certifications. The more we can replicate our model and support other like ourse, we ultimately create a pipeline of tech talent who will be naturally interested in technology careers, impacting Federal IT opportunities as employers and service providers.

That's what one organization with a shoestring budget has been able to do. Imagine what we could do with assistance from the federal government? Help us do more of what we do best, and that's close the talent gap in Federal IT and beyond.

Thank you for your time, I'll gladly take any questions that members of the committee might have.