



## **LaunchED seeks to keep hometown talent in Birmingham through high-quality internships, professional development**

### **IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**BIRMINGHAM**, Ala. – December 1, 2020 – The Birmingham Business Alliance (BBA) and the Birmingham Education Foundation have partnered to create "LaunchED," a pilot program for talent retention that seeks to expose students to internship and job opportunities that exist in Birmingham and prepare them with life readiness tools needed for success.

LaunchED kicked off in November and is looking for employers to give Birmingham City Schools alumni internships in summer 2021 and help hone their professional development skills, with the hope of keeping their talents in the Birmingham region for years to come.

"Our Birmingham City School alums have limitless potential, and we are excited at the Birmingham Education Foundation to partner with the BBA to ensure we connect them to opportunities to work and grow as leaders in Birmingham," said J.W. Carpenter, executive director of the Birmingham Education Foundation.

In addition to placing these students into internships next summer, LaunchED will also create a database of ongoing internship opportunities for students that will be found on [OnBoard Birmingham](#), the BBA's new talent attraction platform.

"Professional development is one of the great equalizers, and this program will establish a blueprint of equitable talent development in Birmingham," said Karla Khodanian, manager of talent and higher education partnerships at the BBA. "This is an intentional recruitment strategy that targets students who already have close ties to our community, establishing a pipeline of support for Birmingham City Schools students beyond graduation day. It's investing in the next generation of workforce so they can invest back into our community one day."

The program will be targeted at individuals who are Birmingham City Schools alumni and current college students, seeking to connect them to Birmingham businesses through professional development and high-quality, paid internships. All participants will also be part of the BBA's Magic City Summer social experience for interns.

"The Birmingham Education Foundation is excited to partner with BBA to connect Birmingham's future leaders with valuable work experience," said Carolyn Williams, program manager for the Birmingham Education Foundation. "The city sits at the intersection of opportunity and talent. We want students to know that they are wanted and valued. This program will teach students skill mobility and provide them with mentorship and guidance from seasoned professionals. Evidence shows that students who receive internships in college are more equipped to excel in professional settings. As a Birmingham City School alumna, I know that our alumni have limitless potential. This program provides a pathway for students to maximize it."

If your company offers paid summer internships and is interested in partnering with LaunchED on this initiative, [email Karla Khodanian](#).

The Birmingham Business Alliance is the lead economic development organization for the Birmingham region. For more information about the BBA visit its website at [www.birminghambusinessalliance.com](http://www.birminghambusinessalliance.com).

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