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RIGHT TO START LAUNCHES NATIONAL MOVEMENT TO ADVANCE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A COMMUNITY PRIORITY AT A TIME OF ENORMOUS ECONOMIC NEED ACROSS AMERICA


Kansas City, MO – July 20, 2020 – Victor Hwang, a leading champion of entrepreneurship in America, announced today the launch of Right to Start, a national movement that will advance entrepreneurship as a community priority throughout the United States. Entrepreneurship has long been viewed as a solitary endeavor – the lone starter in a basement or garage. Right to Start’s vision is to transform America so that all communities prioritize entrepreneurship, clearing away obstacles to ensure that every American has an equal right to start and a level playing field on which to embark.

The need could not be greater. At the start of 2020, the United States was already struggling with growing inequality, stagnant wages, and deep pessimism and division. The COVID-19 pandemic then shut down 3.3 million US businesses – more than one out of five. Stunningly, 41% of black-owned businesses were closed. At the same time, racial injustices nationwide have been laid bare, and those injustices are integrally linked to economic opportunity.

Right to Start provides a path forward – and a movement to make it happen. It will involve as many people as possible in every community in the nation to advance economic opportunity. People need new incomes. New businesses must start to provide missing goods and services. The nation needs diverse supply chains. Right to Start will work to do the following:

• **Change minds.** Shift our nation’s conversation, so the Right to Start becomes recognized as critical to American renewal.
• **Change policies.** Advocate for policies to enshrine the Right to Start at all levels of our system.
• **Change communities.** Engage ordinary Americans in lifting their communities through simple actions that strengthen the Right to Start.
Right to Start already involves a remarkable set of leaders, shown here. It will grow to embrace the entire nation, its extraordinary diversity, and its breadth of experience and expertise.

In conjunction with the launch of Right to Start and to illuminate the philosophy behind it, Victor Hwang, Founder and CEO, has written a 40-page book, available free, titled *We Are All Starters: A Manifesto to Renew Ourselves and Our Nation*. Written as a call to action, the book explains the importance of Right to Start, the mission and objectives behind the movement, and the specific ideas it will advance. The book was six months in the making and reflects the insights of more than 100 people. It is available as a shareable PDF, as a paperback book, and on Kindle.

Right to Start’s first programmatic initiative is a video series on YouTube called “The Start Show” that will explore entrepreneurship as a community priority throughout America. The series features entrepreneurs (“starters”) and their communities. That includes policymakers and civic leaders who support them. “The Start Show” highlights the untold stories of starters, from all races, places, genders, and backgrounds, and the civic infrastructure that enables them to succeed. Each episode tells the story of another community.

The first episode of “The Start Show” – available here – visits Tulsa, OK, to discuss black entrepreneurship. The episode includes discussions with, among others, Rose Washington, CEO of the Tulsa Economic Development Corporation and former Chair of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City; Kevin Matthews, Oklahoma State Senator and Membership Chair of 100 Black Men of Tulsa; Cecilia Wessinger, Principal and Founder, Mass Collaboration; Onikah Asamo-Caesar, Program Advisor, the George Kaiser Family Foundation, and Nancy Bruce, President of Lambrusco'z To Go. The next episode will visit Peoria, IL, and explore entrepreneurship in agriculture and manufacturing.

On the launch of Right to Start, Victor Hwang, Founder and CEO, said, “I believe each of us has the innate spark to start something new, make an idea into reality, create value in the world. When the right to start is shared widely in a society, prosperity ripples out in the form of more jobs, opportunity, and progress. It’s time to embrace, share, and extend to all the Right to Start. It’s time to build a new civic infrastructure to renew ourselves and our economy and to unleash the potential of our people. That’s how we will realize the original promise of America.”

Victor Hwang is a renowned economic growth expert and champion of entrepreneurship as a community endeavor, having played related leadership roles as an entrepreneur, investor, philanthropist, network-builder, and author. His ideas have shaped the economic lives of millions of people worldwide. His work has helped more than 300 communities, cities, states, companies, and entire countries create greater prosperity. Most recently, he was Vice President of Entrepreneurship at the Kauffman Foundation, the world’s leading philanthropy supporting entrepreneurs. He is author of *The Rainforest: The Secret to Building the Next Silicon Valley* and *The Rainforest Blueprint*. His parents started a business in order to send him to Harvard.

Additional information on Right to Start is available at www.righttostart.org. To speak with Victor Hwang, contact Henry Miller – hmill@highimpactpartnering.com or 917-921-8034.