

Former NASA astronaut and pro-football player Leland Melvin encourages students to participate in breakthrough math challenge focused on grit and hustle

CHICAGO (January 28, 2016) – [Hyatt Hotels Corporation](#) (NYSE:H) together with [Khan Academy](#) today announced that [LearnStorm](#), a free and innovative digital learning challenge, will launch in Chicagoland on January 29, 2016 to help transform the future of tens of thousands of students. It is the first time the challenge will be available to students in the Chicagoland region, including Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry and Will counties.

“LearnStorm is a tangible way to engage Chicagoland students to help them to be their best and succeed in ways they didn’t know were possible,” said Mark Hoplamazian, CEO and President of Hyatt. “It is critical for us to support our hometown of Chicago, and there is no better way to do that than by strengthening our relationship with Khan Academy through an innovative program that invests in the talent of tomorrow through technology and education.”

The free, nine-week math challenge will be available in schools across Chicagoland and will run through April 1, 2016. Local students in grades 3-12 will be able to participate to earn points and unlock real-life rewards for themselves and their schools by practicing math skills.

“We designed LearnStorm to not only teach math, but also to encourage a growth mindset, or the belief that anyone can build and grow intelligence through practice and perseverance,” said Sal Khan, Founder and CEO of the not-for-profit Khan Academy. “We’ve seen that when students have resources to learn at their own time and pace, they not only find it valuable, but fun.”

“Hyatt shares our values and has been a great education supporter in Chicago. That makes them an ideal partner for LearnStorm,” added Khan.

There will be two types of points earned by students throughout the program: “mastery points” represent an understanding of math skills, and “hustle points” will be earned when a student demonstrates perseverance and grit when learning a new skill. LearnStorm is breaking new ground by rewarding not only the knowledge students attain, but also the learning skills they need to attain it. This broader focus means LearnStorm can challenge any student no matter their pre-existing level.

“By giving more of our students opportunities to learn math through the LearnStorm challenge, we will help them succeed in the STEM jobs of the 21st century economy,” said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. “I want to thank Hyatt and Khan Academy for engaging Chicago’s next generation of innovators. This challenge will open more doors of opportunity for our students to land good-paying jobs today in the promising careers of tomorrow.”

Chicago Public Schools has worked closely with Khan Academy and Hyatt to endorse LearnStorm and share the challenge with students across the district.

“CPS is always looking for innovative ways to get students excited about learning, and LearnStorm is another tool to do just that,” said Dr. Shawn Jackson, Acting Officer of Family and Community Engagement, Chicago Public Schools. “This challenge has the dual benefit of being a great resource for teachers and helping students conquer critical math skills.”

Weekly leaderboards will show school and individual results for both mastery and hustle. LearnStorm will culminate in a final in-person celebration of the hard work and effort of the participating students and schools in Chicagoland.

“I am so proud to be a part of this exciting effort that lets students know anything is possible when they put their minds to it,” said Leland Melvin, former NASA astronaut and pro-football player, who joined Hyatt, Khan Academy and more than 150 area students at the Jesse White Community Center and Fieldhouse Thursday to kick off the challenge. “My days as both a pro-football player and NASA astronaut not only taught me about grit, hustle and perseverance, but it also showed me how important it is to learn skills like mathematics. With the help of Hyatt and Khan Academy, LearnStorm has the ability to transform and inspire thousands of students to reach for the stars.”

For more information on LearnStorm Chicago or to sign up, visit www.learnstorm2016.org.

About Khan Academy

Khan Academy is a 501(c)3 nonprofit with a mission to change education for the better by providing a free, world-class education for anyone, anywhere. We believe that students of all ages should have free, unlimited access to the best educational content, and that they should be able to consume and master this content at their own pace. In addition, we believe that there are incredible opportunities to use intelligent software development, deep data analytics, and intuitive user interfaces to more effectively surface and present these educational resources to students and teachers around the world. Our library of content covers kindergarten to early college math, science topics such as biology, chemistry, and physics, and reaches into humanities

with tutorials on economics, finance, music, philosophy, and art history. To date, we have delivered over 700m lessons and nearly 5 billion practice problems. For further information, visit www.khanacademy.org.

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