

I.c.stars gets \$5M gift from MacKenzie Scott, propels tech careers for underserved adults

Thanks to this generous donation, i.c.stars will significantly expand its impact by leveraging a unique model of upskilling through project-based learning.

CHICAGO, IL, USA, April 8, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- i.c.stars, an innovative leader in technology

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*Sandee Kastrul, co-founder
and CEO of i.c. stars*

education and workforce development, proudly announces a \$5 million donation from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott. This pivotal contribution will support the nonprofit's mission of connecting adults from underserved communities with dynamic careers in the high-growth tech sector.

i.c.stars distinguishes itself through an upskilling model that combines hands-on and agile project work with coding, business, and leadership training. Participants engage directly with real-world problems, delivering web-based application solutions for clients such as Amsted Rail, United Airlines, and Accenture.

“This gift is a powerful affirmation of our unique educational approach,” said Sandee Kastrul, co-founder and CEO of i.c. stars. “Participants tackle real client challenges through web-based application development, receiving coding, business, and leadership instruction along the way. More than just creating future technologists, we're committed to cultivating community leaders and embedding a sense of pay-it-forwardness in our graduates.”

The funding from this donation will support several key initiatives, including:

1. **Innovation in Program Delivery:** i.c.stars will continue to update its program model and enhance current offerings through its Innovation Lab.
2. **Expansion to New Cities:** By tapping into new markets, i.c.stars aims to provide access to technology careers for a greater number of promising young adults.
3. **Collaboration on New Models & Partnerships:** i.c.stars plans to collaborate with higher education institutions, more nonprofit partners, and other stakeholders to increase the impact

on graduates and communities

4. Championing Social Enterprise: i.c.stars will work towards reducing barriers and widening access to tech careers while generating mission-aligned earned income through its social enterprise

As i.c.stars celebrates its 25th anniversary in 2024, this gift marks a pivotal moment in the organization's journey. "We aim to transform one million learners and leaders by 2030, and this support is instrumental in breaking the cycle of poverty through economic mobility and nurturing a new generation of community leaders," Kastrul said.

i.c.stars extends heartfelt gratitude to Mackenzie Scott and all its supporters for their unwavering dedication and vital support of the organization's mission. This momentous contribution celebrates past achievements and ignites the potential of the next quarter-century.

About i.c.stars

Founded in 1998 by former teacher Sandee Kastrul in response to seeing a promising student working as a hotel housekeeper, i.c.stars operates in Chicago, Milwaukee, and Kansas City. The award-winning nonprofit aims to propel talented high school graduates or GED holders beyond minimum-wage positions into meaningful careers. Through an intensive training program, internships, and job placement efforts, i.c.stars seeks to break the cycle of poverty and unlock the full potential of its participants. Learn more at icstars.org.

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