Year Up Founder and CEO Gerald Chertavian Awarded 2013 Jefferson Award for Outstanding Service by an Entrepreneur

Award Presented at the Pierre Hotel in New York on March 6

NEW YORK, NY/ March 6, 2013 – Recognizing his commitment to helping urban young adults cross the Opportunity Divide and reach their full potential, the Jefferson Awards honored Gerald Chertavian today with the 2013 Award for Outstanding Service by an Entrepreneur.

Chertavian founded the nonprofit program Year Up in Boston in 2000 to connect young adults in need of opportunities with companies in need of skilled, motivated talent. The first class consisted of 22 students. Now, Year Up serves 1,900 urban young adults every year at ten sites across the U.S., providing them with technical and professional training, college credits, stipends and corporate internships at top U.S. companies. Eighty-four percent of Year Up graduates are employed or attending college within four months of completing the program, earning an average salary of $30,000/year.

Chertavian first began thinking about starting a program like Year Up while volunteering as a Big Brother to David Heredia, a 10-year-old boy living in one of New York’s most dangerous neighborhoods. Chertavian came to realize the despite David’s artistic talents, his opportunities would be limited by his zip code. He presented the original idea for Year Up in his Harvard Business School application essay, and devoted himself to building Year Up and closing the Opportunity Divide for young adults like David after selling the software company he co-founded at age 35.

Last summer, Chertavian helped launch Year Up’s Professional Training Corps (PTC) program at Miami Dade College. Modeled after the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC), Year Up’s PTC is a community college-based program that helps students earn an associate’s degree while providing them with professional development and work experience closely linked to labor market demand. The PTC will allow Year Up to rapidly scale and expand its successful program to serve 100,000 students annually.

“‘This year’s Jefferson Awards recipients have made real and lasting differences in the lives of countless people across the United States,’” said Sam Beard, the Jefferson Awards President.

Founded by Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, Senator Robert Taft Jr., and Sam Beard, the Jefferson Awards honor extraordinary individuals and companies whose profound achievements and commitment to their communities are making the world a better place to live. Other 2013 Jefferson Award winners include the Robin Hood Foundation, NFL star Marty Lyons and three young “GlobeChangers.”

The Robin Hood Foundation received the 2013 Lifetime Achievement Award. Hailed by Fortune magazine as “one of the most innovative and influential philanthropic organizations of our time,” Robin Hood has donated $1.25 billion dollars since 1988 to end poverty in New York City.

NFL defensive tackle Marty Lyons was honored for Outstanding Service by a Professional Athlete. Dedicated to reaching out to terminally ill children, the Marty Lyons Foundation has granted over 6,000 wishes since its founding and expanded throughout twelve states.

Recipients of the “GlobeChangers” youth service award included a Yale University senior whose international non-profit Girls Helping Girls has trained and mentored thousands of girls worldwide to incubate entrepreneurial projects in more than twenty
countries, a 22 year old coder whose organization Code The Change has generated over $250,000 worth of value for the social sector, and a Pittsburgh teenager whose military veteran-focused group Seeds of Hope is expanding nationwide.

About Year Up Inc.
Year Up's mission is to close the Opportunity Divide by providing urban young adults with the skills, experience, and support that will empower them to reach their potential through professional careers and higher education. Year Up achieves this mission through a high support, high expectation model that combines marketable job skills, stipends, internships and college credits. Its holistic approach focuses on students' professional and personal development to place these young adults on a viable path to economic self-sufficiency. Year Up currently serves more than 1,900 students a year at sites in Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Miami, New York City, Providence, San Francisco Bay Area, the National Capital Region, and Puget Sound (Seattle). To learn more, visit www.yearup.org or www.youtube.com/yearupinc.

About the Jefferson Awards for Public Service
The Jefferson Awards was founded in 1972 by Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, U.S. Senator Robert Taft, Jr. and Sam Beard as the “Nobel Prize for public service.” Named for one of America’s most influential Founding Fathers and the principal author of the Declaration of Independence, the Jefferson Awards’ central tenet is that each and every citizen shares a responsibility to work towards the betterment of their communities through economic participation, public service, volunteerism and other such efforts to improve life for all. Today, the mission of the Jefferson Awards is to “collaboratively engage the nation in public service and volunteering by providing training, inspiring and enabling action, measuring impact and celebrating the achievements of exceptional individuals.”

The schools report 5.2 million hours of service, valued by the Independent Sector at $109 million. Through our Youth Service Challenge, more than 150 mayors have signed on to shine a positive spotlight on student-led service projects. In year two, more than 800,000 young Americans participated in 4,900 projects.

President John F. Kennedy said, “One person can make a difference and every person should try.” From the beginning in 1972, more than 50,000 grassroots “Unsung Heroes,” employees in the workplace, young Americans and non-profit volunteers have won Jefferson Awards through our Media Partners, corporate Champions and Youth Service Initiatives.

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