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From: **White House Office of Communications** <noreply@messages.whitehouse.gov>

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Subject: White House Highlights Immigrant Innovator "Champions of Change"

To:

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of Communications

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 29, 2013

White House Highlights Immigrant Innovator "Champions of Change"

WASHINGTON, DC – On Wednesday, May 29th, the White House will honor eleven people as Immigrant Innovator "Champions of Change." This Champions event will highlight immigrant innovators and entrepreneurs – the best and brightest from around the world who are helping create American jobs, grow our economy, and make our nation more competitive.

"Immigrants have long made America more prosperous and innovative, and the Champions we are celebrating today represent the very best in leadership, entrepreneurship, and public service," said US Chief Technology Officer Todd Park. "We are proud to recognize these leaders who work every day to grow our economy, advance science and technology, and support their home communities."

The Champions of Change program was created as an opportunity for the White House to feature groups of Americans – individuals, businesses and organizations – who are doing extraordinary things to empower and inspire members of their communities.

To watch this event live, visit www.whitehouse.gov/live at 11:00 am ET on May 29th. To learn more about the White House Champions of Change program and nominate a Champion, visit www.whitehouse.gov/champions.

Shradha Agarwal
Chicago, IL

Shradha Agarwal, Co-Founder of ContextMedia, has always had a passion for communication and launched her first media enterprise at age nine in India. While building ContextMedia from the ground up, she branded the healthcare media company as "for-benefit" – a successful for-profit enterprise that exists for social benefit – and focused on organizational culture architecture. Having led ContextMedia's product development strategies for media and technology, Shradha currently designs and oversees the expansion initiatives that have doubled the company's growth year-after-year. Shradha, based in Chicago and New York City, is also an angel investor, conference speaker and startup advisor. Shradha was also recognized by Crain's Chicago Business as one of the Tech 50 individuals leading Chicago's startup wave and inducted into the 40 Under 40 list of young achievers in 2012.

Riddhiman Das
Kansas City, MO

Riddhiman Das came to the United States in 2008 to pursue an American college education and studied Computer Science, Mathematics and Entrepreneurship. As an undergraduate student, he co-founded three startup tech companies – Dr. Peet's Software, LLC, TalentHelix LLC, and Galleon Labs LLC. He is also heavily involved with EyeVerify LLC, a Kansas City based technology startup that has commercialized the Eyeprint Verification System as a simple, safe replacement for entering passwords on smartphones. After his graduation from college, he had to either join a bigger company who could sponsor his visa, or remain enrolled in school in order to stay in the country and be able to focus on his businesses, so he decided to pursue a graduate degree and remain engaged in his businesses. His proudest moment was being able to hire two of his fellow graduates and one of his college professors full time to work at his consulting company about three months after he graduated from college.

Ashifi Gogo
Cambridge, MA

Dr. Ashifi Gogo is the CEO of Sproxil, a social enterprise that empowers consumers in emerging markets with mobile technology to combat the \$600 billion counterfeit goods industry. Under his leadership, Sproxil developed its award-winning Mobile Product Authentication™ (MPA™) technology that has been used on over 100 million products by more than 2 million consumers to verify the authenticity of their medication. Former U.S. President Bill Clinton described Sproxil as “a genuinely remarkable achievement... [it's] empowering...putting people in charge of their own healthcare.” Sproxil’s MPA solution is now used on multiple continents and in many industries including pharmaceutical products, automotive, garment, and fast-moving consumer goods.

John Herrera
Holly Springs, NC

John Herrera is an immigrant from Costa Rica and the Co-Founder of the Latino Community Credit Union, the first fully bilingual financial institution in the state of North Carolina. A pioneering example of how businesses can creatively meet a gap in the market for the underserved, it has become the fastest growing community development credit union in the nation and a model for banking for new immigrants.

Olga Koper
Dublin, OH

Olga B. Koper, Ph.D., born in Poland, works in the Business and Open Innovation group for Energy and Environment, at Columbus, Ohio's Battelle Memorial Institute, the largest nonprofit research organization in the world. She is a holder of more than 30 U.S. and international patents to improve environment, energy, and health using nanomaterials. Previously, she was the first employee and became the CTO and Vice President of NanoScale Corporation, a spinoff of Kansas State University. In 2007 she was selected as Pipeline’s *Innovator of the Year* award in the Charter Class of Pipeline, and in 2013 Entrepreneur Magazine chose Koper as one of seven “Entrepreneurial Woman to Watch.” Koper received an M.S. in general chemistry from the University of Silesia in Poland and a Ph.D. from Kansas State University, where she holds an Adjunct Professor position.

Jonas Korlach
Newark, CA

Dr. Jonas Korlach is Chief Scientific Officer at Pacific Biosciences. He co-invented the company’s SMRT technology with Stephen Turner, Ph.D., Pacific Biosciences Founder and Chief Technology Officer, when

the two were graduate students at Cornell University. SMRT technology dramatically improves the accuracy and speed of DNA sequencing. Dr. Korlach joined Pacific Biosciences as the company's eighth employee in 2004. Dr. Korlach is the recipient of multiple grants, an inventor on 33 issued U.S. patents, and an author of numerous scientific studies on the principles and applications of SMRT technology, including publications in Nature, Science, and PNAS. He received both his Ph.D. and his M.S. degrees in Biochemistry, Molecular and Cell Biology from Cornell, and received M.S. and B.A. degrees in Biological Sciences from Humboldt University in Berlin, Germany.

Anna Mongayt

Palo Alto, CA

Anna Mongayt is a Co-Founder at Upstart – a crowdfunding platform that lets people raise money in exchange for a portion of their future income. Upstart is enabling young people to alleviate financial burdens such as student loans or living expenses by monetizing their future potential. It helps recent graduates pursue their dreams – to start a business, learn to code, or begin a career in a field they're passionate about – by matching them with backers who believe in their aspirations. Investors can opt-in to become mentors and earn a return based on a regression model that predicts an individual's income over ten years.

Victoria Ransom

Menlo Park, CA

Victoria Ransom has been an entrepreneur since her early twenties and has developed three companies, the most recent of which, Wildfire, was acquired by Google in 2012. As founder and CEO of Wildfire, Victoria led the company to profitability in just one year and built the company to tens of thousands of customers, over 400 employees, and eight offices worldwide. Victoria is #19 on Fortune Magazine's 40 under 40 list and she was named one of Fortune Magazine's Most Powerful Women Entrepreneurs in 2012. She has been featured in several publications including The New York Times' Corner Office, Bloomberg TV, Entrepreneur Magazine, and The Wall Street Journal. In her spare time she is an avid snowboarder and surfer and a passionate adventure traveler who once spent six weeks living with a remote Amazonian tribe and five months living in a favela in Brazil!

Zack Rinat

Redwood Shores, CA

Zack Rinat is Model N's Founder and has served as the Chairman of the Board of Directors and as Chief Executive Officer since its inception in December 1999. Previously, Mr. Rinat co-founded and ultimately served as President and Chief Executive Officer of NetDynamics, Inc., an application server software company, before its acquisition by Sun Microsystems in 1998, where he served as the Vice President and General Manager of the NetDynamics business unit. From 1998 to 1999, Mr. Rinat served as a founding member of the Board of Directors of TradingDynamics, and from 2005 to 2012 he served on the Board of Directors of Conduit Ltd., serving as Chairman of the Board of Directors from 2005 to 2011. Previously, Mr. Rinat held senior management positions in operations, marketing, and engineering at Silicon Graphics, Inc., and at Advanced Technology Israel. He holds an MBA from Harvard Business School and a BA in computer science from the Technion (Israel Institute of Technology).

Amar Sawhney

Bedford, MA

Amar Sawhney is an inventor and serial entrepreneur in the field of medical devices. He holds over 120 patents, which form the basis for several first of a kind medical devices that have helped millions of patients worldwide. He has founded six companies, which account for over 1,600 jobs created and over \$1.5 billion in revenue to date. Amar helps foster entrepreneurship by mentoring young innovators and creating companies through Incept, a medical device incubator he helped co-found.

Siva Sivananthan
Chicago, IL

Dr. Sivalingam (Siva) Sivananthan is a College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Distinguished Professor and Director of the Microphysics Laboratory (MPL) at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). He is also the founder of the high-tech, Bell Labs-styled incubator, Sivananthan Laboratories, Inc., based in Bolingbrook, Illinois. Born in Chavakacheri, Sri Lanka, Dr. Sivananthan is a world-renowned physicist as well as a successful entrepreneur in creating advanced military infrared night vision technology, which has also served as the platform for ground-breaking, next generation solar cells. To that end, he helped found InSPIRE (the non-profit Institute for Solar Photovoltaic Innovation, Research, and Education), whose mission is training Illinois's workforce and exciting Illinois undergraduate and high school students to create a renewable energy and solar eco-system in Illinois. His mission in life has been always to give his very best – to his family and friends, his students, his research, his business, his country, and the world at large.

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