



Ford Presents Inaugural Ford Gives Back (FGB) Freedom Award to The Hidden Genius Project

- The Hidden Genius Project wins inaugural Ford Gives Back (FGB) Freedom Award and is awarded \$25,000 grant to further its work training and mentoring black male youth
- Ford presented monetary award on June 7 at The Hidden Genius Project headquarters in Oakland, California

DEARBORN, Mich., June 10, 2019 – Ford Motor Company Fund announced the winner of the inaugural Ford Gives Back (FGB) Freedom Award is The Hidden Genius Project of Oakland, California – a nonprofit organization trains and mentors black male youth in technology creation, entrepreneurship and leadership. The Hidden Genius Project organizers received a \$25,000 grant during a presentation on Friday, June 7 from 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. at their headquarters in Oakland.

Launched earlier this year, the FGB Freedom Award is open to past honorees of some of Ford Fund's most notable initiatives: Ford Freedom Unsung and Ford Freedom's Sisters programs – two initiatives that recognize individuals or organizations that are making a positive impact in their community. Past honorees of both programs are eligible to apply for up to \$25,000 in supplemental funds to build upon the vital work they are doing in the areas of education, social mobility and community development or safe, smart mobility. Applicants must represent a 501(c)(3) organization.

"We are proud to again recognize such a dynamic organization as The Hidden Genius Project as our inaugural FGB Freedom Award winner," said Pamela Alexander, director of Community Development, Ford Motor Company Fund. "More importantly we are excited to invest in their ability to further their work and that young men's lives will be positively impacted and thrive because of their efforts."

The Hidden Genius Project is recognized for their Immersion Program, which addresses the connection between the high unemployment of black male youth and the surplus of career opportunities within the technology sector. The funds granted will allow the organization to continue this comprehensive, intensive year-round program for black male high school students with the goal to spark interest in gaining skills and exploring careers within the technology landscape. The organization was first recognized by Ford in 2015 as part of the Ford Freedom Unsung Program and was also a featured partner on the Ford GIVE episode on NBC hosted by actor Blair Underwood.

"Winning the Ford Gives Back (FGB) Award is critical in helping us focus our energies on our core passions and strengths: empowering young people to reveal their highest potential," said Brandon Nicolson, executive director, The Hidden Genius Project. "As we continue to grow and inspire more young people each year, we must tap every available resource to help them achieve their goals. With this award, Ford Motor Company Fund is thrusting us along our path."

Ford's longstanding support of the African American community dates back to the early 1900s when it was the first automaker to pay employees of all races the same wage. Today, Ford Fund continues to build on that legacy with numerous initiatives that celebrate and empower African Americans. Two signature programs include Ford First Gen, a program that provides first generation college students support to help them stay in school, and Ford Freedom Unsung, which celebrates individuals who have made significant contributions in their communities while inspiring others to also have a positive impact.

For more information on Ford Fund's support of the African American community, visit <http://fgb.life>.

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About Ford Motor Company Fund

As the philanthropic arm of Ford Motor Company, Ford Fund's mission is to strengthen communities and help make people's lives better. Working with dealers and nonprofit partners in 63 countries, Ford Fund provides access to opportunities and resources that help people reach their full potential. Since 1949, Ford Fund has invested more than \$2 billion in programs that support education, promote safe driving, enrich community life and encourage employee volunteering. For more information, visit www.fordfund.org or join us at @FordFund on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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