Surge Academy and The Mind Trust announce Indianapolis launch of executive program for leaders of color in education

Two virtual gatherings for interested applicants will be offered in April, hosted by Surge Institute Founder and President Carmita Semaan

(Indianapolis – April 1, 2020) – The Surge Academy, a program that spends six months developing, elevating and uniting emerging education leaders of color, will be expanding to the city of Indianapolis, IN.

Designed by the Surge Institute, the Surge Academy provides an intensive fellowship experience, packed with powerful content that explores executive skills such as finance, strategic planning and change management. The experience also includes a deep and unflinching dialogue about personal growth, trauma, and the true state of diversity, equity, and inclusion in America. Beginning in 2019, the program brought together a cohort of 11 African-American and Latinx emerging leaders to explore how to transform education in Kansas City to best serve all youth and communities. In addition, the program is currently working with the second Kansas City cohort composed of 17 education leaders of color.

Jennifer Collier, a 2019 Surge Academy Alumna and Chief Human Resources Officer at Kansas City Public Schools explains what the Surge journey has meant for her: “My Surge experience has reignited my passion and will to be a champion for equity, justice, and liberation for myself, my community, and other disenfranchised groups.”

The expansion of the Surge Academy to Indianapolis is made possible with the partnership of The Mind Trust, an education focused nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide every student in Indianapolis, no exceptions, with access to a high-quality education. The Mind Trust has supported the launch of 29 schools in Indianapolis that currently serve 10,018 students and will collectively serve over 13,500 at scale. Through the Innovation School Fellowship, The Mind Trust provides expert support and planning time to talented school leaders. Eighty percent of current School Fellows identify as leaders of color.

The Mind Trust is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of its work to ensure present and future educational success for all students in Indianapolis. Supporting the launch of Surge Academy in Indianapolis is part of the organization’s commitment to empowering and elevating leaders of color.
“Indianapolis education leaders of color want and deserve access to excellent executive leadership development and a strong, authentic community where they can find support from others who share their same lived experience. Surge Academy offers a space for leaders of color to fully acknowledge their cultural identity, build each other up professionally, and join a national network of change-makers,” said Patrick Jones, Senior Director of School Incubation at The Mind Trust.

Upon graduating from the Surge Academy, fellows join a national network of Surge alumni bolstering a sprawling movement of rising education leaders of color, from Oakland to Chicago to Washington D.C. and beyond, united in the purpose of a greater future.

Carmita Semaan, Founder and President of the Surge Institute, says this expansion is the next step in further serving youth and communities of color who deserve authentic and dynamic education leaders.

“I couldn't be more thrilled to have been invited to expand our rich and impactful work to Indianapolis. The interest and love we've received thus far have been tremendously affirming. It also validates what we've come to learn – our people are SO hungry for investment in and elevation of their collective genius to change the game for young people who deserve every opportunity to shine and thrive.”

The Surge Institute will also host two Virtual #SurgeCircle Chats with Carmita Semaan on April 14 and April 24. These e-gatherings are an opportunity to be in community and learn more about the Surge Academy as well as the recruitment process. Interested individuals can register by clicking the corresponding dates above. Applications for the Surge Academy will open on April 17.

Visit the Surge Academy website to learn more about the program and apply. Sign up for the Surge Institute email list to stay informed about upcoming events and developments. You can follow the Surge Institute and The Mind Trust on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube.

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**About The Surge Institute**
The Surge Institute is a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that was established with a simple but important mission to develop and elevate leaders of color who create transformative change for children, families, and communities. Founded by Carmita Semaan in 2014, the organization was designed to empower emerging diverse leaders to change the landscape of education by providing them with a unique, authentic leadership development experience. To learn more about The Surge Institute, please visit: [https://www.surgeinstitute.org/](https://www.surgeinstitute.org/).

**About The Mind Trust**
The Mind Trust is an Indianapolis-based education nonprofit organization that works to build a system of schools that gives every student in Indianapolis, no exceptions, access to a high-quality education. The Mind Trust does this by building a supportive environment for schools through policy and community engagement, empowering talented educators to launch new schools, and providing existing schools with the support they need to hire world-class talent and achieve excellence. Since 2006, The Mind Trust has supported the launch of 29 schools and helped place more than 1,500 teachers and school leaders in Indianapolis classrooms. More information can be found at [themindtrust.org](http://themindtrust.org).