



# A Year Up: Helping Young Adults Move from Poverty to Professional Careers in a Single Year

*Gerald Chertavian*

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The inspiring story of a pioneering program that is redefining urban young adults as economic assets, not deficits

During Gerald Chertavian's many years as a Big Brother, the former technology entrepreneur realized that our nation's "Opportunity Divide" strands millions of young, disadvantaged, yet motivated workers at the bottom of the job ladder. In 2000, Chertavian dedicated his life to closing that divide and Year Up was born.

Year Up is an intensive program that offers low income young adults training, mentorship, internships, and ultimately real jobs—often with Fortune 500 companies. 85 percent of program graduates are employed or in full-time college within four months of graduation. Today, Year Up serves more than 1,300 students in nine cities across the nation.

Following a Year Up class from admissions through graduation, *A Year Up* lets students share—in their own words—the challenges, failures, and personal successes they've experienced during their program year. This deeply moving and inspirational story also explains Chertavian's philosophy and the program's genesis, offering a road map for real change in our country and a beacon for young adults who want the opportunity to enter the economic mainstream.



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