Gerald Chertavian
Founder and CEO
Year Up

Gerald Chertavian is dedicated to closing the Opportunity Divide that exists in our nation. Determined to make his vision a reality, Gerald combined his entrepreneurial skills and his passion for working with urban young adults to found Year Up in 2000.

An intensive one-year training and education program that serves low income youth ages 18-24, Year Up provides the technical, professional and communication skills needed to empower urban young adults to make successful transitions to careers and higher education. With its annual operating budget exceeding $50M, Year Up is one of the fastest growing non-profits in the nation. It has been recognized by Fast Company and The Monitor Group as one of the top 25 organizations using business excellence to engineer social change. Year Up has also been named one of the nation’s top 50 non-profits to work for by the Non-Profit Times.

Gerald’s commitment to working with urban youth spans more than 25 years. He has actively participated in the Big Brother mentoring program since 1985 and was recognized as one of New York’s outstanding Big Brothers in 1989. He is the recipient of the 2003 Social Entrepreneurship Award by the Manhattan Institute and the 2005 Freedom House Archie R. Williams, Jr. Technology Award. In 2006, Gerald was elected as a Fellow with the Ashoka Global Fellowship of social entrepreneurs, and in 2008, he was appointed by Massachusetts’ Governor Deval Patrick to serve on the MA State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Gerald began his career on Wall Street as an officer of the Chemical Banking Corporation. Following graduate school he co-founded Conduit Communications and fostered its growth to more than $20M in annual revenues and more than 130 employees in London, Amsterdam, New York and Boston. From 1993 to 1998, Conduit ranked as one of the UK’s fastest growing companies. Following the sale of Conduit to i-Cube in 1999, Gerald turned his full attention to opportunities for others.

Gerald earned a B.A. in Economics, Phi Beta Kappa, summa cum laude, from Bowdoin College and an M.B.A., with honors, from Harvard Business School. He has received honorary doctorates from the Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology and Mount Ida College. He is on the Board of Advisors for the Harvard Business School Social Enterprise Initiative and a member of the World Economic Forum’s Youth Unemployment Council. Gerald is a former Board member of The Boston Foundation and an Emeritus Trustee of Bowdoin College. His 2012 book, A Year Up, is a New York Times best seller.