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## **Trailblazing Edu-Technology Platform Launches at Northern Illinois University**

Learning Marketplace is a dynamic new EdTech platform set to radically transform the traditional landscape of education for children and teens. On October 19th, social entrepreneur, speaker and author Somya Munjal officially launched the platform at an Association of Latino Professionals for America hosted event, held at Northern Illinois University (NIU).

The event's audience of 11th and 12th graders learned a heart-centered approach to decision-making, which Somya explored through one of Learning Marketplace's newest products - *Cultivating Heart Intelligence*. The experiential exercise emphasizes compassion, collaboration and contribution as pillars of positive decision-making, and heart intelligence as an effective tool for navigating life.

Learning Marketplace is a virtual hub for experiential, web-based K-12 education products that focus on expanding the decision-making capabilities of teens and children through brain and heart development. Current studies show that, globally, 1.1 billion youth are constantly immersed in technology. The Learning Marketplace platform presents a modern approach to learning that understands how this cultural shift has affected learning, and correlates to the new cognitive processes and learning preferences of today's youth. Its products are designed by a community of stellar educators around the world. "We want our future world leaders to be sincere humans that lead themselves and their communities well", Somya notes.

Somya, herself an NIU alumni, built Learning Marketplace alongside lifelong friends, Waseem Gorgi and fellow alum, Phil Callahan. The platform is powered by Youthful Savings, a social enterprise Somya co-founded with Phil, which specializes in the creation of entrepreneurial and financial tech education tools created to foster social change. Several web courses and apps have been launched under the Youthful Savings umbrella, with Learning Marketplace being its latest major project.

The 34-year-old social change dynamo is driven by a quest for the economic empowerment of all and the disruption of the wealth gap, through a primary focus on optimizing youth potential. "The prefrontal cortex of the brain gets developed by the age of 25", Somya shares, explaining that exposing youth to heart-centered, socially conscious ideas, and modes of living and doing business - rather than trying to redirect already solidified belief systems in those who are older - generates greater possibility for a brighter future.

She believes education is the most powerful tool for empowerment, and each of her social enterprises - which include: CPA for the People, a social good financial firm she co-founded with her mother, Kiran Munjal; Audacious Endeavors , an art-based social change agency; and, of course, Youthful Savings, and its giving arm, Youthful Savings Foundation, which provides youth scholarships and business investments - utilize education for alleviation of economic disenfranchisement.

On November 20th Somya will launch another learning tool - the 3rd edition of her book called *Audacious Endeavors: 8 Steps to Social Consciousness that will Spark Your Inner Fire*. The book shares techniques to live a life of purpose and create impactful, socially conscious business practices and decisions. Published by Bold and Bright Media, the book is available for pre-orders via <https://boldandbrightmedia.com/audacious-endeavors-book/>.