

WINNER PROFILE



➔ **Meet: Laquitta DeMerchant**
Founder and CEO, Fuzion Apps, Inc.
Sugarland, Texas

➔ **The Challenge: Equal Pay App**

In 2012, the White House and the U.S. Department of Labor invited software developers to use publicly available labor data to create applications to build tools that promote equal pay.

➔ **The Prize:**

Full tuition and scholarship to attend an immersive program in digital product innovation and entrepreneurship

💡 **The Solution:**

Aequitas, a mobile personal career management system that empowers users with current wage data, interview, resume, and negotiation tools. It provides wage and Equal Pay Act information and connects to equal pay-related social networks/discussions. The app is both iPhone and iPad accessible.

☎ **For More About the Winner:**

Laquitta DeMerchant
Phone: 281-714-6246 or 281-389-8275

SUCCESS: IN HER OWN WORDS

How has participating in this challenge helped you advance your solution?

Winning the grand prize and Women Innovation Mobile Award while competing against teams from Carnegie Mellon and MIT brought great accolades to the product and the company, Fuzion Apps, Inc. It opened doors. Being listed on the White House website brought clout and credibility to the company.

What is the impact of your solution for government, your community, and society?

The Aequitas Equal Pay App (also called Aequitas Career Manager) brought greater visibility to the wage gap. As a result of my efforts, I was interviewed by and quoted in USA Today College edition, Victory Advocate, Fort Bend Sun, University of Houston-Downtown's Dateline Downtown College Newspaper, VICE News, and Essence Magazine. I also was interviewed on LatinoTalk TV in Houston and wrote articles for Houston's own Small Business Today and The Shriver Report. All of this helped to educate people about the wage gap and providing best practices on how to eliminate it. Winning the competition put Fuzion in the position to win its first deal. The University of Houston-Downtown purchased 12,000 licenses of Aequitas for their student body. Our solution is revolutionizing how resumes and college transcripts are kept current with academic and career accomplishments.

