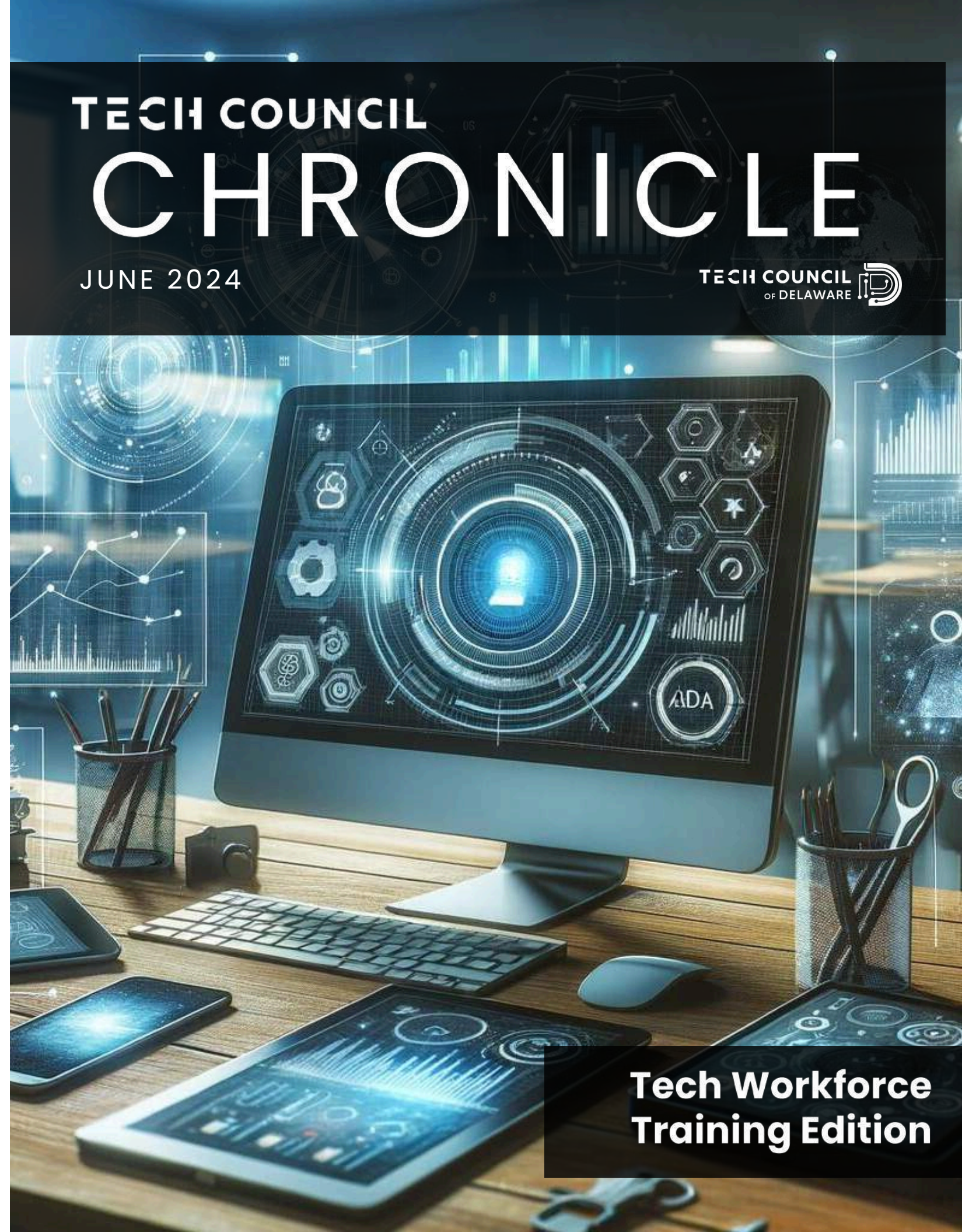


TECH COUNCIL CHRONICLE

JUNE 2024

TECH COUNCIL
OF DELAWARE 



**Tech Workforce
Training Edition**

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HOW THE TECH COUNCIL OF DELAWARE IS BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE TECH TALENT PIPELINE

Written by Abby Lee Mosconi of Technical.ly

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How the Tech Council of Delaware is building an inclusive tech talent pipeline.



“As a workforce committee, we agree that awareness and promotion of career fields and opportunities is the first step to diversifying our tech workforce,”

*-Ariel Almondo, Work-Based Learning Transition Specialist
Smyrna School District*

On its mission to turn Delaware into a thriving tech hub, the Tech Council of Delaware is laying the groundwork to build and scale an inclusive tech talent pipeline within the state’s underrepresented communities.

To do so, the Council has united tech workforce and training providers from across the state through its Tech Talent & Workforce Committee. Members of the committee convene monthly to highlight their programs, brainstorm solutions, share ideas and create actionable steps.

“As a workforce committee, we agree that awareness and promotion of career fields and opportunities is the first step to diversifying our tech workforce,” said Ariel Almondo, a work-based learning transition specialist at the Smyrna School District, “followed by awareness of the various training options that open doors to these careers.”

Collaborating to create community and avoid duplication

Delaware has many passionate and dedicated tech workforce and training providers. What the Council has done is provide a platform where they can work together, in-person and virtually, to advance their mutual goals for creating inclusivity in the Delaware tech industry. Some of the programs deliver similar offerings, but rather than seeing one another as competitors, members of the committee are instead combining their skills and services to create a hub of access and opportunity. “Our work is very collaborative by nature,” said Vic Wang, director of non-credit programs in the University of Delaware’s division of professional and continuing studies. “The committee allows us to highlight the educational programs we offer and how they contribute to the growth of inclusivity in our tech community, address needs in the tech workplace and create the programs to develop that education.” Case in point: Coding bootcamp Zip Code Wilmington recently worked with Year Up – a one-year, tuition free training program ensuring equitable access to economic opportunities for 18-29-year-olds – to make the Zip Code curriculum more accessible for underserved groups who wouldn’t otherwise be prepared for the bootcamp. “The committee does a good job of bringing providers together so that we can work to complement one another,” said Shana Washington, program coordinator in the University of Delaware’s division of professional and continuing studies. “We want to have resources that support a variety of needs, not five versions of the same program.”

Filling in the gaps with partnerships and referral programs

Identifying gaps in Delaware’s tech workforce and training programs is an important part of the Tech Talent & Workforce Committee’s work. Members of the committee work with corporate partners to keep tabs on the skills students and career seekers need to secure high-wage employment and ensure their programs are delivering on those needs. This not only creates more effective training programs, but a more diverse talent pipeline that is confident and prepared to enter the workforce. Since connecting on the committee, Wilmington University and Delaware Technical Community College – the only community college in the state – recently updated their connected technology degrees with a revised curriculum.

Written by
Abby Lee Mosconi

Technical.ly
NEWS FOR TECHNOLOGISTS AND ENTREPRENEURS



“This collaboration now provides a seamless transfer of credits for our information technology and networking associate graduates going on to pursue a bachelor degree at Wilmington University,” said Michelle R. Garey, college-wide academic director of information technology and networking at Delaware Technical Community College. “Since working on the Tech Council together, I feel the relationship has strengthened and more conversations around our two programs have developed.”

“For young students or career changers who don’t yet know what they want to pursue, the Council is a key resource to help them understand and navigate the training opportunities that exist and the options for making their career goals a reality.”

*-Vic Wang, Director of Non-Credit Programs
University of Delaware, Professional and Continuing Studies*

Almondo, the K-12 work-based learning specialist, has been sharing information with the committee about the Delaware Pathways system and how it prepares students for the workforce during their high school years. “These pathways, along with the certifications and dual-enrollment opportunities that they offer, bridge the gap between secondary education and higher-level training,” Almondo said.

Getting employers involved early benefits both sides

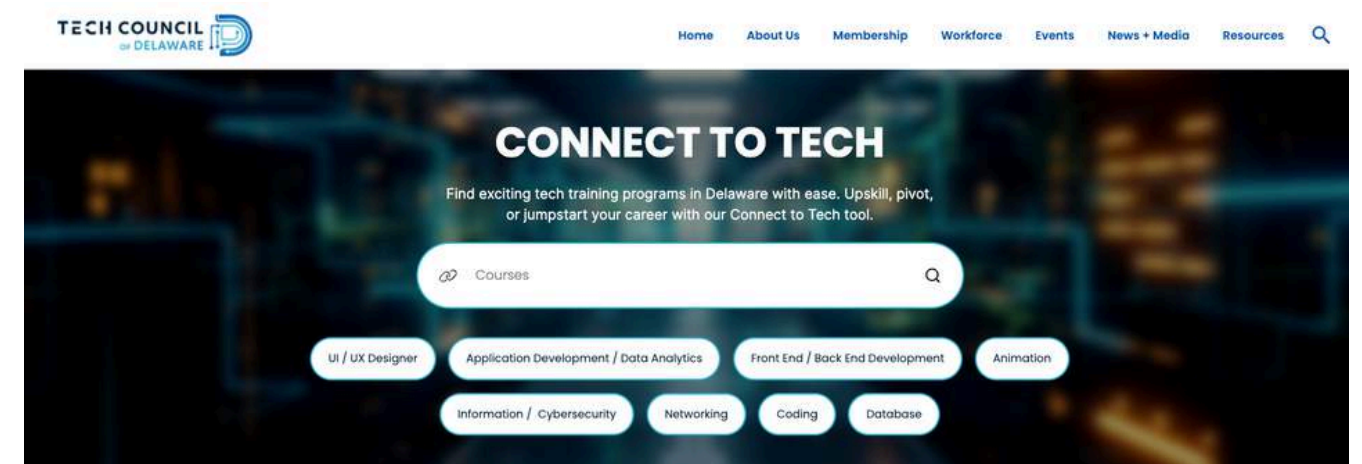
Together as a collective, the committee is also helping employers understand how to get involved in building the talent pipeline. Some of the programs, like Year Up, engage corporations to provide internships and create better runways for students they hadn’t yet had the opportunity to work with. Year Up’s program includes a six-month learning and development phase, followed by a six-month internship with a participating corporation. In the last two years, 67% of their interns have converted their internships into full-time employment, according to Year Up.

“We’re not just introducing youth to other pathways previously unavailable to them, we’re also introducing nontraditional talent to companies that will benefit from their talents,” said Wang, of University of Delaware’s division of professional and continuing studies.

Similarly, the Delaware Technical Community College works closely with the Delaware Office of Work-Based Learning and its own information technology and networking advisory committee to secure internships with local tech employers. “We are fortunate that many of them not only host our students as interns, but also give us valuable input on our curriculum to make it stronger,” said Garey, the collegewide IT director. Many members of the Tech Talent & Workforce Committee partner with employers to create projects with real world applications and to host students as interns, but are continually looking for new ways to involve corporations more deeply.

Bringing it all together with a new online training exploration tool

The Tech Council of Delaware is laying the digital bricks to build an online tool where aspiring technologists, and even employers, can explore technology training providers and their respective program offerings. “We’re hoping to develop a sort of digital concierge service, where people can say, ‘This is the job I want, how do I get there?’” Wang said. “Then, we as the training providers can say, ‘Here are the requirements to get that job, here are the educational and training opportunities in which you can gain the required skills.’” For young students or career changers who don’t yet know what they want to pursue, the Council is a key resource to help them understand and navigate the training opportunities that exist and the options for making their career goals a reality. Previously, Delaware didn’t have a platform or a resource for people seeking a way into tech,” Wang said. “The Tech Council of Delaware is doing an amazing job of putting this together, and bringing the right people together, to create awareness and access for all.”



Learn more about the Connect to Tech tool on page 35.



Training Providers





Training Providers



Who is Code Differently? Code Differently, based in Wilmington, Delaware, offers comprehensive workforce training programs, strategic talent acquisition planning and execution, and consulting services tailored to meet the evolving demands of today's technology landscape. Our combined services enrich communities, fostering a symbiotic environment where innovation thrives and collective successes are achieved. Code Differently is a Certified Small Business, Women Owned Enterprise Business and Minority Owned Enterprise Business.

Tech Training Programs:

- Full Stack Software Engineer Training Program equips adults aged 18 and above with a robust skill set, covering software engineering foundations aligned to today's job market. This comprehensive program includes training in front-end and back-end development, databases, configuration management, and deployment. The program also includes an externship to gain real work experience prior to transitioning to the workplace. By combining theoretical knowledge with practical, hands-on projects, participants gain real-world experience that prepares them to tackle complex software engineering challenges and thrive in their careers.
- Computer Systems Analyst Training Program offers participants the skills necessary to analyze and improve computer systems and processes within organizations. This program includes training in system data analysis, technical writing, project coordination, quality assurance, and business process optimization. Participants will learn to bridge the gap between business needs and technological solutions, making them invaluable assets in any tech-driven environment.
- 1000 Kids Coding in partnership with New Castle County Government is a transformative work based learning program aimed at introducing youth to technology careers and building healthy work habits. From design thinking, mastering digital literacy, and coding, this cooperative learning program fosters a passion for technology and innovation careers with youth at an early age.

Statement on Inclusive Tech Talent Pipelines

At Code Differently, we are dedicated to building and expanding inclusive tech talent pipelines by providing accessible, high-quality education and fostering an environment where diversity thrives. Our mission is to ensure that everyone, regardless of their background, has the opportunity to succeed in the tech industry.

Contact: stephanie@codedifferently.com

Who is Delaware Technical Community College? Delaware Technical Community College is the First State's only community college. The College offers academic, technical, community education, and workforce development comprising more than 120 bachelor's degree, associate degree, diploma, and certificate programs. The information technologies associate degree programs include: Information Technology & Networking and Computing and Information Science. Delaware Tech's Workforce Development offers various IT certification programs. The College is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. Delaware Tech has four campuses across Delaware in Georgetown, Dover, Stanton, and Wilmington.

Tech Training Programs:

Associate in Applied Science in Information Technology and Networking (concentrations in Information security, networking, and programming)

- Associate in Applied Science in Computing and Information Science
- Oracle
- CISCO Certified Network Associate (CCNA) Certificate Program
- JAVA Programming

Delaware Tech is committed to building and expanding inclusive tech talent pipelines. Through a grant from JPMorgan Chase & Co., we are piloting the state's first 1+1 program at Howard High School of Technology. The primary goal of the project is to expand the number of high school students from underserved and low-income populations who are enrolled in dual enrollment courses, and pair those courses with holistic services and supports to increase completion, enhance equity, and ultimately close the historical achievement gap for underserved students. By the time they graduate from Howard, students will have completed 33 college credits toward their Associate in Applied Science in Information Technology and Networking. We have also partnered with employers to provide an internship in Information Technology and Networking so students may gain work experience prior to graduation, which can create a pipeline to employment.

- We have been working with the Delaware Department of Education and other postsecondary training providers, to address the equity gaps within various programs offered throughout the state of Delaware. Delaware Tech worked to decrease the equity gap of females in IT through a targeted marketing campaign as well as advising. Since then, our female ITN degree-seeking students increased by 19% from spring 2023 to spring 2024.
- Delaware Tech is a proud member of the Tech Council of Delaware and is working to make Delaware a Tech Hub to work in partnership with training providers, employers, and community organizations.

Contact: www.dtcc.edu or (302) 857-1000 (call or text).



**Training
Providers**



Who is Goodwill of Delaware? Goodwill Industries of Delaware and Delaware County, has been a beacon of economic development since its inception in 1902, evolving into the state's most enduring non-profit organization focused on job training. With a core mission to enhance the quality of life for people facing barriers to self-sufficiency, Goodwill operates with a deep-seated belief in the transformative power of work.

Our goal is to meet our customers where they are, provide resources to build their career potential, and increase their economic mobility. For many this starts at Goodwill with our technology training program where individuals can gain the workplace essential skills needed to launch their careers:

Tech Training Programs: This belief is realized through providing comprehensive job training programs including technology training to assist Delawareans develop pathways to advanced training opportunities and employment at a livable wage.

- Technology training is provided through Goodwill's Job Resource Centers and provides training leading to certifications in computer and internet fundamentals, Microsoft Word, Power Point and Excel software.
- Goodwill is also very excited to launch our Goodwill Connect Project this summer to provide increased access to employment, training, and supportive services to all Delawareans. Goodwill Connect spaces will be created in all 11 Goodwill of Delaware retail stores and provide users the ability to connect with technology training programs funded by the Delaware Workforce Development Board, Goodwill of Delaware & Delaware County, and our partners.

Contact: PLonie@GoodwillDE.org



Training Providers



Who is Polytech Adult Education? Located in Woodside, Delaware, they offer postsecondary career and technical training in the skilled trades, healthcare, and IT. Polytech's programs are designed for a range of participants, including those with little to no prior knowledge and others with years of experience seeking professional certification and professional licensure. Polytech works closely with industry partners to provide Registered Apprenticeship programs, upgrade training, professional development, and customized programming for their incumbent workforce.

Polytech is helping to build and expand the inclusive tech talent pipeline by applying six decades of experience providing apprenticeship training to this industry sector. Polytech offers three IT apprenticeships, one IT pre-apprenticeship, and two technology related apprenticeship programs. Registered apprenticeships expand access to a broader audience by allowing participants who cannot afford to take time off for training to earn while they learn.

Tech Training Programs:

- Information Technology Fundamentals
- Computer Support Specialist
- Cybersecurity Technician
- Network Technician
- CAD (Computer Aided Design)
- Introduction to PLCs

Contact: Jeremy McEntire jeremy.mcentire@polytech.k12.de.us
polytechworks.com



**Training
Providers**



Training Providers



Who is Tech Impact? We're a nonprofit and national leader in technology services and training. Our mission is to transform lives, organizations, and the world through technology. Since 2003, we have helped thousands of nonprofits transform their organization and thousands of individuals transform their careers. Our workforce development programs provide technical training, soft skills, credentials, supportive services, and job placement assistance in thriving industries with competitive wages.

Tech Impact's programs like ITWorks or those supported through TechHire DE, are life-changing. They offer free tech training and certifications to DE residents with prior experience. This helps individuals build new skills, secure employment, and transform their futures while contributing to a diverse and skilled workforce.

Tech Training Programs:

- Computer Systems Analyst
 - Duration: 14 weeks
 - Time Commitment: Monday through Friday 9:00a-3:00pm
 - Sessions: Spring and Fall
 - Price: Grant Funding Available
 - Eligibility: 18 years or older, A state of Delaware resident, Have a High School Diploma or GED required, Eligible to work and job seeking in the U.S.
 - This program has a focus on underemployed individuals, people of color, veterans, citizens reentering the workforce as ex-offenders, women, and individuals with disabilities for in-demand job opportunities in the IT industry
- Software Development
 - Duration: 14 weeks
 - Time Commitment: Monday through Friday 9:00a-5:00pm
 - Sessions: Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter
 - Price: Grant Funding Available
 - Eligibility: 18 years or older, A state of Delaware resident, Have a High School Diploma or GED required, Eligible to work and job seeking in the U.S.
 - This program has a focus on underemployed individuals, people of color, veterans, citizens reentering the workforce as ex-offenders, women, and individuals with disabilities for in-demand job opportunities in the IT industry
- ITWorks (IT Support Specialist Training)
 - Duration: 16 weeks
 - Time Commitment: Monday through Friday 9:00a-3:00pm
 - Sessions: Spring and Fall
 - Price: Free
 - Eligibility: 18 - 26 Years Old, High School Diploma or Equivalent, but Without a 4-Year Degree, Local to Program Headquarters (Philadelphia, PA; Wilmington, DE; Las Vegas, NV, Interest in Technology
 - Able to Commit Monday - Friday, 9AM - 3PM for 16 Weeks

Contact: admissions@techimpact.org



Who is UD PCS? The University of Delaware's Division of Professional and Continuing Studies (UD PCS) provides educational opportunities for anyone seeking to begin or complete their college career, enhance their professional skills or enrich their personal life. UD PCS also provides customized training and educational services to area businesses, organizations and professional associations.

At UD PCS, we're not just offering educational opportunities; we're building bridges to inclusive tech futures. Through our customized training and accessible short-term programs, we're nurturing diverse talent pipelines, ensuring that everyone has the chance to thrive in the ever-evolving tech industry. Our commitment to flexibility and affordability empowers individuals to embark on transformative journeys, enriching both their professional capabilities and personal lives. Together, we're shaping a tech landscape that reflects the richness of our communities.

Tech Training Programs:

- Cybersecurity Certificate
 - Target Audience: Anyone interested in a career change who possesses an interest in technology and security

- Project Management Certificate
 - Target Audience: Newly appointed or aspiring project managers, experienced project management leaders who want to take management skills to the next level, business and management professionals interested in enhancing their planning and resource management knowledge, project managers seeking entry into the Project Management Institute's PMP certification process

- Foundations of Digital Marketing Certificate
 - Target Audience: Anyone involved in the planning, implementation or measurement of digital strategies or who would like to pursue a career in these areas

- Social Media Marketing
 - Target Audience: Business owners looking to optimize social media marketing, aspiring social media managers, marketing and communications professionals, consultants, nonprofit employees and volunteers, sales professionals, anyone looking to start a social media marketing business

Contact: smwashin@udel.edu





Training Providers



Who is Wilmington University? A private, nonprofit, open enrollment institution accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. WilmU has been serving students for more than 50 years and currently enrolls more than 20,000 students at multiple mid-Atlantic locations and around the world via its online campus.

Tech Training Programs:

WilmU offers 200+ undergraduate and graduate degree and certificate programs designed to meet the needs of busy adults. Its growing suite of 50+ STEM offerings includes programs in:

- Artificial Intelligence
- Cloud Practitioner
- Computer Science
- Cybersecurity
- Data Analytics
- Data Visualization
- Fintech
- Information Systems Management
- Java Programming
- Management Information Systems
- Microsoft .NET Applications Development
- SCADA Cybersecurity
- Technology Project Management

Courses are designed and led by expert practitioners whose real-world experience keeps course content relevant and up to date with industry standards. Programs emphasize career readiness, incorporating hands-on learning practices that prepare skilled graduates. In fact, WilmU's BS in Cybersecurity program is recognized by the National Centers of Academic Excellence in Cybersecurity, the National Security Agency (NSA) and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Thousands of students transfer previous college credits to WilmU in order to complete degrees. In addition, students can be awarded WilmU academic credit for knowledge they hold through work or military experience and professional certifications, licenses and training. WilmU has been recognized by the Phi Theta Kappa Transfer Honor Roll for providing dynamic pathways that support transfer student success and equate to increased rates of bachelor's degree attainment. The University is also recognized as a Military Friendly® Gold-Level institution for its dedicated military support services and its commitment to service members' success, including graduation rates and job placement.

Learn more about all the benefits of a WilmU education at: wilmu.edu/explore

Contact: recruiting@wilmu.edu



Who is Year Up? Year Up's mission is to close the Opportunity Divide by ensuring that young adults gain the skills, experiences, and support that will empower them to reach their potential through careers and higher education. Alongside its rigorous technical training, Year Up also puts heavy emphasis on the foundational career readiness and business skills to create confident, accountable, and professional young adults and prepare its participants to effectively communicate within and navigate a modern, professional work environment.

Companies invest in Year Up because it's good for business, it's good for the economy, and it's good for the communities they serve. Year Up is a collaborative talent acquisition partner that connects employers with diverse, skilled, and motivated talent that they wouldn't otherwise reach through traditional hiring channels, in turn adding tremendous value to their organizations.

As a national nonprofit organization operating for 24 years, Year Up helped connect more than 43,000 young adults, 90% of whom identify as a person of color, to livable wage careers at hundreds of top companies, and have shown the highest wage gains of any workforce development program. 80% of graduates are employed and/or enrolled in school within four months of completing Year Up. Employed graduates earned an average starting wage of \$26/hour, equivalent to \$52,000/year.

Tech Training Programs:

- o Application Development & Support
- o Data Analytics
- o Investment Operations
- o Banking & Customer Success

Contact: vfear@yearup.org





**Training
Providers**

Zip Code Wilmington

A Nonprofit Coding Bootcamp

Because talent is distributed evenly, opportunity is not.



Zip Code Wilmington has trained software developers and data engineers since 2015. **Graduates transform their lives.**



Laser-focused on employer-requested skills

What is Zip Code Wilmington?

- Graduates earn an average of \$80K annually, compared to \$33K before enrolling
- 12-week nationally-recognized, intensive coding bootcamp
- Immersive full-stack coding bootcamp with tracks:
 - Software Development (Java)
 - Data Engineering (Python, R, SQL)
- Minimum educational requirement of a high school diploma or equivalent

1,100+

hours of training, study and professional development during hybrid (in-person and online) classes

33% of graduates are under-represented minorities in tech

31% of graduates are women

86% of graduates land jobs within 6 months of graduation



Learn more:

302-256-5203
admissions@zipcodewilmington.com
zipcodewilmington.com



Partnerships & Initiatives



FIRST STATE TECH PARTNERSHIP



About First State Tech Partnership

First State Tech Partnership (FSTP) is a sector partnership for the tech industry in Delaware. It is a collaboration between the Tech Council of Delaware, employers, educational institutions, tech workforce providers, and community organizations to close skills gaps, build diverse talent pipelines, and eliminate structural barriers that prevent underrepresented residents from connecting to, and thriving in, high-quality tech careers.

As a workforce intermediary, the Tech Council of Delaware leads the First State Tech Partnership in creating workforce solutions and training programs that provide employers with skilled talent while also supporting Delawareans, particularly those from underrepresented backgrounds, with launching careers in the tech industry. FSTP workforce programs feature an 'earn-and-learn' model wherein selected candidates are hired by employer partners, in temporary or contract roles, while completing the on-the-job and classroom-based training required for promotion into the permanent, higher-salary position. This best practice model provides a more seamless transition into permanent employment, allows employers to develop the talent they desire, and produces a direct economic benefit to program participants, employers, and the State of Delaware overall.

To learn more, visit: <https://firststatetechpartnership.recruitee.com/>

About Workforce Intermediary Services

The Tech Council of Delaware provides tailored, fee-based workforce intermediary services to companies interested in collaborating on the First State Tech Partnership. Visit our website to learn more about how to *Request Workforce Services* and our approach to utilizing a non-disclosure agreement and a memorandum of understanding, both of which are applicable to all engagements. Additionally, the Tech Council of Delaware actively pursues workforce funding and investments, in an ongoing manner, to secure funds to offset the costs associated with developing a modern, tech-ready workforce. Funding allows us to cover our costs, contract for employer of record, program administration, training delivery, and wrap-around instruction services, and procure curriculums and supplies. Ultimately, our goal is to ensure that each workforce project has the required providers and resources to deliver a high-quality workforce program that is beneficial to all clients and stakeholders while producing desired outcomes.

To learn more, visit: <https://techcouncilofdelaware.org/page/workforceservicesrequest>

E-mail inquiries to: info@techcouncilofdelaware.org

**Sector
Partnership**

Program Design Services

The Tech Council of Delaware utilizes project management and instructional design expertise to create new, or customize existing, workforce programs that provide employers with skilled tech talent while also supporting Delawareans with launching careers in the tech industry.

The Council has the expertise to:

- Conduct a complimentary employer needs conversation and explain the First State Tech Partnership initiative in greater detail
- Identify a suitable training provider to serve on the Project Team to participate in the design or customization process
- Create and execute a comprehensive project plan and facilitate project working sessions
- Utilize instructional design expertise to design new, or customize existing, tech or tech-adjacent workforce programs
- Create the final program concept to serve as the foundational document for program implementation and cohort launch

The program concept includes program overview and details, projected vacancies, learning objectives, training curriculum(s), applicable industry certifications, applicant eligibility criteria, target metrics, a sample weekly training schedule, cohort budget, and proposed partners.

Cohort Launch & Training Support Services

An employer can request cohort launch services when the company is ready to launch a cohort of an existing program. With a signed memorandum of understanding in place, the Tech Council of Delaware executes the following tasks required to prepare for and launch a cohort.



YES, WE TECH! SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM



Yes, We Tech! is a paid summer internship program for Delaware high school students from diverse backgrounds that provides foundational career experiences through work-based learning and classroom training. Yes, We Tech! enables students to build in-demand workplace skills, achieve digital proficiency, and attain an industry-relevant certification, with the goal of preparing for and securing careers in growing industries after graduation from high school and/or college.

Led by the First State Tech Partnership, Yes, We Tech! represents an invaluable investment in Delaware's diverse youth, providing them with the competitive edge to thrive in today's labor market. Students are hired as Technology Interns in a temporary role by the Employer of Record where they work for 30 hours per week and earn \$15 per hour (\$2,880 total before taxes). The training provider coordinates classroom-based training where interns complete several online curriculums. Worksite companies provide on-the-job learning opportunities through meaningful projects and assignments, enabling interns to refine the digital and durable skills learned in the classroom. Yes, We Tech!, which launched on June 16, 2023, was the first workforce development program implemented by the First State Tech Partnership. The inaugural cohort had a 90% completion rate with 18 interns graduating on August 4, 2023. 33% of the graduates were girls and nearly 70% identified as students of color. A photo of the 2023 graduates is shown below.

The Council serves as an active member of the Technology Councils of North America (TECNA). In August 2023, Yes, We Tech! was recognized by TECNA with the 2023 Innovation Award for the Talent Pipeline & Workforce category at the annual TECNA Summer Conference which was held in Seattle, WA. Building on the resounding success of the program, the FSTP launched the second cohort of Yes, We Tech! on June 17, 2024 to continue creating a skilled, diverse, and resilient workforce that propels Delaware's tech industry to new heights.



2023 Graduating Cohort: Zafyr Ahmad, Hahna Allen, Seth Davis, Alyssia Delgado, Alanna Denault, Kayden Fleurimond, Jeremy Francois, Cole Hope, Daven Kaufmann, Aditya Kshirsagar, Syan Marcano, Demetrios Moutsatsos, Rebecah Nyakundi, Kori Sampson, Cassidy Simmons, Mekhi Starcks-Crews, Brian Tran, Randon Vodery.

CERTIFIED CYBERSECURITY PROFESSIONAL PROGRAM



Delaware's Information and Cybersecurity occupation, a subsector which has the highest growth rate among all tech occupations in Delaware, is projected to grow by 12.1% between 2022-2027. This growth even surpasses the anticipated 7.3% rate for the ultra-popular software developers/programmers occupation during the same period.

Designed by the First State Tech Partnership in 2022, the Certified Cybersecurity Professional Program, was developed in collaboration with industry and higher education. The Tech Council of Delaware convened senior cybersecurity leaders from Exelon, Christiana Care, WSFS Bank, and Best Egg, along with representatives from Wilmington University, to design a comprehensive program intended to prepare career seekers with the industry knowledge and skills required to qualify for entry-level cybersecurity positions with local employers.

The program is very flexible with cohort duration options of eight weeks or sixteen weeks, depending on the readiness level and training needs of the candidate pool. Selected candidates are hired by an employer of record, into the temporary position of Cybersecurity Trainee, while they complete a blend of classroom instruction and on-the-job training. The contracted workforce provider coordinates the classroom-based training which includes online workplace readiness courses, a cybersecurity curriculum, and certification prep courses. Trainees are prepared to attain one of the following CompTIA certifications, all of which are valuable industry-recognized credentials: IT Fundamentals, A+, or Security+. Certification attainment enhances the marketability of program graduates and lays an important foundation for continuous learning beyond attainment of a single certification. Trainees that meet program requirements to graduate are hired by participating employer partner(s) into a permanent, higher-wage cybersecurity position.

While four employers collaboratively designed the Certified Cybersecurity Professional Program, the Tech Council of Delaware invites any regional company with Information and Cybersecurity positions to serve as an employer partner and play an active role in developing the future cybersecurity workforce.

To learn more, visit: <https://firststatetechpartnership.recruitee.com/>

AMERICAN DREAM ACADEMY & LEARNER SUPPORT INITIATIVE

In 2023, the Milken Center for Advancing the American Dream, selected the Tech Council of Delaware as a strategic partner to promote the American Dream Academy in Delaware. In support of the goal to build and expand inclusive tech talent pipelines, the Tech Council of Delaware launched the American Dream Academy and Learner Support Initiative on September 11, 2023 and graduated the pilot cohort of 12 learners on March 22, 2024.

The American Dream Academy, a tuition-free scholarship program funded by the Milken Center for Advancing the American Dream offered young adult learners across the country, ages 18–24, access to online, self-paced technology certificate courses, through Coursera, developed by companies such as Google, Meta, IBM and Salesforce, as well as a workplace skills course. Program completers earned an industry-recognized credential which is valuable when pursuing high-quality, higher-wage tech and/or tech-enabled employment. The Tech Council of Delaware secured a Charitable Foundation Grant from Bank of America to enhance the training with a dedicated Learner Support Coach and provide helpful resources to ensure an enriching and engaging learner experience.

With the capacity to support up to 100 residents in the 2024 cohort, the Tech Council of Delaware strongly encouraged applications from women, Black and African American residents, and Hispanic and Latino residents as these groups are currently underrepresented in Delaware's tech workforce. Outreach efforts conveyed the benefits of participation such as upskilling, personalized coaching, career development instruction, financial guidance, continuous learning options, and a complimentary one-year Aspiring Tech Professional membership.

The American Dream Academy and Learner Support Initiative was the Council's first statewide upskilling workforce endeavor that supported Delawareans with attaining valuable skills and industry credentials, thereby fostering career advancement and economic mobility for residents seeking to better themselves.



TECH READY DELAWARE

To ensure that Delaware residents interested in preparing for technology careers and occupations still have a tuition-free, online, self-paced technology training option, the Tech Council of Delaware seeks to implement a similar, yet enhanced, program to the popular American Dream Academy titled: Tech Ready Delaware.

Tech Ready Delaware is a foundational upskilling and workforce development program for adults ages 18–34, from disadvantaged communities, that enables learners to attain a digital proficiency certification, acquire an in-demand technology credential via Coursera's Career Academy, and develop durable skills – all of which are extremely valuable in today's highly competitive labor market and to Delaware employers who have expressed a desire for candidates with these skills. Program participants receive professional development assistance in the form of a Learner Support Coach, mentoring, resume development, networking guidance and experiences, and connections to tech-based career opportunities. Program completers receive a one-year Tech Council of Delaware Aspiring Tech Professional membership and assistance with transitioning into a more advanced technology training program or bootcamp, enrolling in college, joining the military, and/or attaining tech-related employment. The Tech Council of Delaware will manage Tech Ready Delaware and contract for program-related services from qualified providers. Collaborations with members and partners will help ensure the program is enriching and successful. Congressionally Directed Funding, over a three-year period, will enable the Tech Council of Delaware to partner directly with Coursera to cover training costs so there are no out-of-pocket expenses for learners to enroll in the Career Academy and acquire credential documents (i.e., digital badges; certificates).

The Council plans to leverage the time and skills of its two 2024 Yes, We Tech! Technology Interns to finish designing key components of the Tech Ready Delaware program by early August 2024. A *Congressionally Directed Spending* application was submitted to Delaware's Congressional Delegation in March 2024 to develop and implement Tech Ready Delaware in 2025. A grant decision is expected in the Spring of 2025.



CONNECT TO TECH

The Connect To Tech career tool, an initiative of the Council's Tech Talent and Workforce Committee, aims to better inform the two primary client groups that education and workforce providers serve: employers and career seekers. The tool serves as a single repository of technology training programs offered by colleges, universities, and bootcamps that are members of the Tech Council of Delaware.

The Connect To Tech tool is an online platform featuring a variety of technology training programs designed to prepare students, aspiring and current tech professionals, career changers, and incumbent employees for positions in the tech industry. Connect To Tech is a valuable resource for individuals seeking to upskill, reskill, pivot, or advance their education and career through in-person, online, or hybrid programming. Employers can use the tool as a one-stop location to identify Delaware-based technology programs which can effectively train current employees and ensure the company's workforce has the knowledge, skills, competencies, and credentials to perform at a high level in the rapidly changing tech industry.

Features & Benefits



Tech Trainings



Mobile-Friendly



Easy Navigation

Connect To Tech features advanced filtering and sorting options, visually appealing program cards, and detailed career pathway information, helping users find and plan their ideal careers. With built-in accessibility features and a mobile-friendly design, it ensures a seamless and inclusive experience across all devices.



Scan to Explore

“The Tech Council of Delaware is very excited to bring **Connect To Tech** to Delaware's tech ecosystem! This cool new tool is a one-stop hub featuring the many technology training programs offered by colleges, universities, and bootcamps in Delaware. While everyone in Delaware's tech ecosystem can benefit from using **Connect To Tech**, it is especially valuable to career seekers, employers and managers, educators, and economic development leaders. Don't delay, explore **Connect To Tech** today!”

Vishakha Jha, Director of Education
Tech Council of Delaware

