My story is about the lack of gender diversity in technology companies in New York City. Although NYC has more women working in technical occupations than Silicon Valley, the numbers are still low. There have been a plethora of government and company-led programs that have popped up in the past year to increase the number of women in New York City’s tech force. It was difficult, however, for me to get the data from these programs about how many women participants actually gained jobs in technology after completing the curriculum because many of them were new or they were nonprofits that just started to track those numbers.

I decided to create a visualization that illustrated how many women worked at well-known technology companies based in New York City and I included major companies to put the numbers in perspective. I selected the data of large companies from their diversity reports. It was difficult to find numbers for the NYC companies until I found this: <https://docs.google.com/a/columbia.edu/spreadsheet/ccc?key=0AlZH8QBl60oodEJTdFA5TlZOcDJCMU02RkZoSHF5SHc#gid=0>

It’s a spreadsheet created by Tracy Chou, a software engineer at Pinterest, who crowdsources the number of men and women software engineers at more than 200 technology companies across the country. She has guidelines for contributions and I checked the data for Thoughtworks and the numbers on the spreadsheet matched what the employees there told me. The fact that her data has been referenced before in news articles made me feel better about using it, but some of the data is from 2013 so it’s a little outdated.

I used a stacked column chart and chose two different color schemes to distinguish between the two different sets of tech companies. I used two shades of the same color in each scheme to show that it was the same type of company that was being reflected in the visualization. I used a light and dark shade of gray for the larger companies and a light and dark shade of blue for the NYC-based companies. I thought the blue served to highlight the NYC companies. I ordered both groups by proportion instead of raw numbers because the companies are all of varying sizes hence ordering it by numbers would have made the data look skewed.

I used the title “From Small Companies to Large, Gender Diversity Remains a Problem” because it reflects what’s illustrated in the chart – namely that companies as large as Apple and as small as Paperless Post still have an issue with a largely homogenous tech workforce. The x-axis is labeled “Gender Breakdown in NYC Companies vs. Tech Giants” and the y-axis is labeled percent of employees.

I made the legend as an image in Photoshop that showed both sets of colors, and then I inserted it into the sibling div of my chart but I had a difficult time adjusting the margin so that the legend appeared closer to the chart. It would have been nice to find a way to include information about the source of the data in each column annotation.