



# Tech Jobs Academy

21<sup>st</sup> century skills for  
stronger  
communities



"Tech Jobs Academy was the most transformative experience I've ever had in my life."

— Abel Chajet, Graduate

# What is Tech Jobs Academy?

An innovative approach to the skills gap.

***Too many businesses can't find the right talent and too many capable people don't have the skills that are in demand today. Tech Jobs Academy helps talented adults acquire in-demand IT skills, enabling them to gain employment with local businesses – including the hundreds of thousands of Microsoft partner companies worldwide – in need of precisely these 21st century skills.***

Every community's greatest asset is its people. Tech Jobs Academy was created for those who have everything but opportunity. The program expands access to in-demand technical training to unemployed or underemployed adults who are passionate about launching careers in technology. With a hybrid learning model that blends hard skills and soft skills, Tech Jobs Academy combines a focus on real-world projects with labs, lecture, and certification exams. Through roughly 1,000 hours of intensive skills development, graduates earn in-demand skills and a path toward a rewarding career in tech.

Billions of taxpayer dollars are spent each year on workforce development but, too often, the skills taught are out-of-date or not actually desired by employers. Tech Jobs Academy solves the disconnect between those public sector investments and the needs of industry, producing an outstanding return on investment for society.

## 4 month

full-time program

## 1,000

hours of training

## 7.3x

return on investment  
projected over five years

"It is never too late to be what you might have been."

— George Eliot

## Why Tech Skills?

They're in demand by employers.

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***According to data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, there are currently more than five million open jobs in the United States of America, including 500,000 tech jobs – a number expected to surpass one million by 2020 due to increasing demand for technical skills in various sectors of the economy.***

Half of employers report difficulty finding job candidates with the right skills. Meanwhile, nearly one-third of Americans live at or below 200% of the poverty line – including a disproportionate amount of women and people of color. Tech skills provide opportunity because, beyond the sheer number of available tech jobs, these so-called middle-skill careers tend to pay more than non-technical ones at similar levels. In real terms, median wages in the U.S. have been stagnant over the last 15 years. Yet, average wages for IT jobs rose nearly 8% in 2015 alone. Additionally, in 2015, one-third of American families had no savings at all – a critical barrier to access, since the cost of a coding bootcamp or similar middle-skill training program exceeds \$10,000 on average. For the many millions of Americans with no savings or who live below the poverty line, these barriers are often insurmountable – making scalable, publicly funded programs like Tech Jobs Academy critical to addressing the opportunity divide.

The private sector possesses unique resources and expertise and – especially when working collaboratively with the public sector – can help distribute tech skills and opportunity for all.

“Education is the most powerful weapon  
which you can use to change the world.”

— Nelson Mandela

# The Benefit to Communities

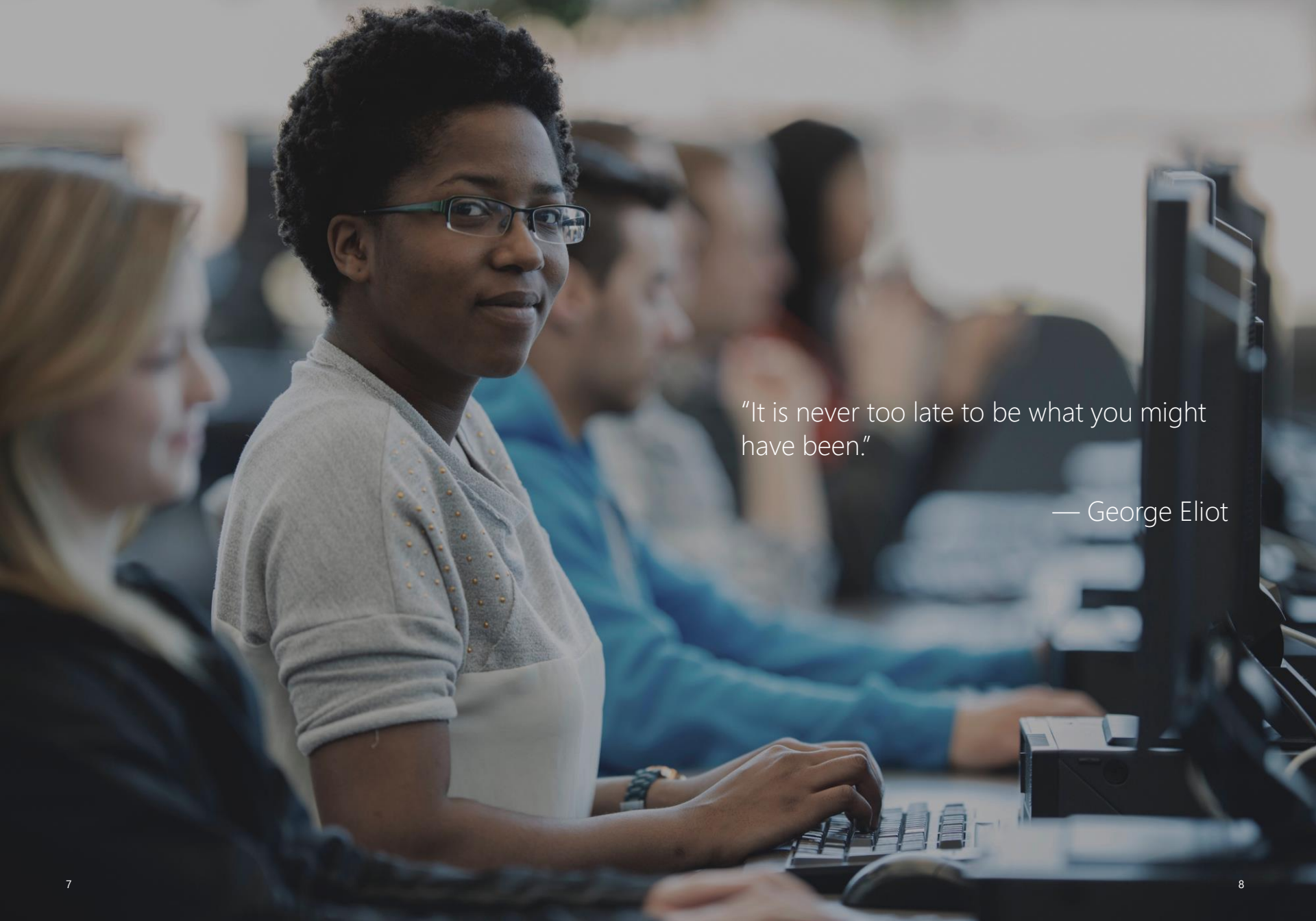
A greater ROI than a Harvard degree.

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***Tech Jobs Academy doesn't just change the lives of participants and their families – it also has a lasting impact on communities and benefit to taxpayers, with an ROI of 7.3x in just five years.***

The 7.3x return on investment of Tech Jobs Academy exceeds the 1.4x that a bachelor's degree from Harvard provides – all with just one four-month program. The in-need adults Tech Jobs Academy targets are not taxpayers prior to the program, with average salaries of only \$9,000. At that level, they are also recipients of social benefit programs that come from tax payer dollars, such as public housing assistance and unemployment insurance for the many who are unemployed.

After graduating the program, however, the average salary for trainees rises to \$47,000, meaning they now pay taxes and no longer receive the same amount of social benefits. This funnels all of that money back into the community: instead of requiring tax dollars for assistance, Tech Jobs Academy graduates have a net positive affect on communities financially. There is also a continued, cyclical affect – rising out of poverty and into a solid middle class standing doesn't just impact the individual trainee, but also their family, by giving their children access to greater opportunity. This multiplier effect benefits a community past a single cohort of Tech Jobs Academy graduates.



"It is never too late to be what you might have been."

— George Eliot

**3 months**  
median time-to-employment

**94.3%**  
employment rate

**5.2x**  
income multiplier

## Pilot Year Outcomes

### New York City

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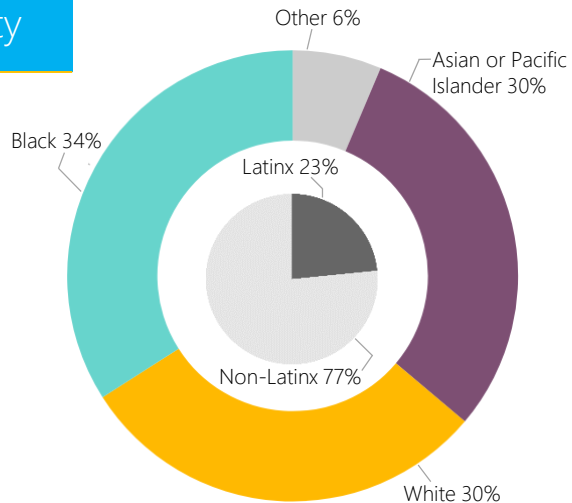
*Tech Jobs Academy launched in New York City in 2016. Two pilot cohorts of the program were delivered through a cross-sector partnership with the City of New York's Tech Talent Pipeline initiative, the New York City College of Technology, and employability coaches from Jobplex. After completing Tech Jobs Academy in a matter of months, 94% of those searching for jobs were hired and average salaries surged over 5x.*

Based on feedback from hundreds of local employers, Microsoft identified Cloud and Server Administration as the skillset in highest demand (other areas of focus could include Cybersecurity, Database Administration, or DevOps). After the program was publicly announced in coordination with dozens of community groups, more than 500 people applied, undergoing a rigorous selection process that admitted 50 people into the new program. Each cohort of 25 trainees attended classes full-time over the course of four months. Of those who began the program, 94% graduated. For context, only 59% of matriculating U.S. college students ultimately finish. Tech Jobs Academy graduates' new job titles include Cloud Engineer, System Administrator, and IT Specialist; they work at Xerox, the Anti-Defamation League, and the City of New York, among others.

For many, Tech Jobs Academy has been a lifechanging experience, lifting them from below the poverty line into middle-class careers.

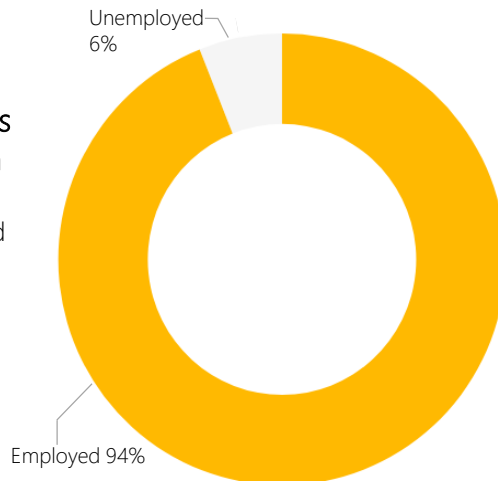
## Race & Ethnicity

**Tech Jobs Academy is diverse and inclusive**, with 85% of its graduates coming from groups underrepresented in technology.



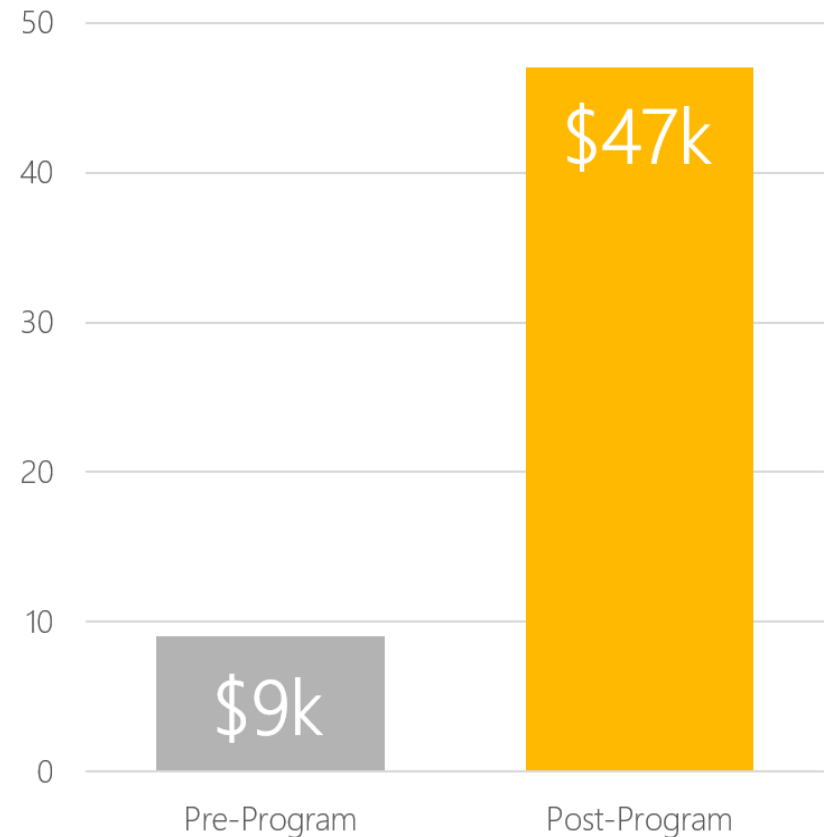
## Employment Success

**94% of Tech Jobs Academy graduates who actively search for jobs find them.** Most were unemployed prior to the program.



## Average Salaries

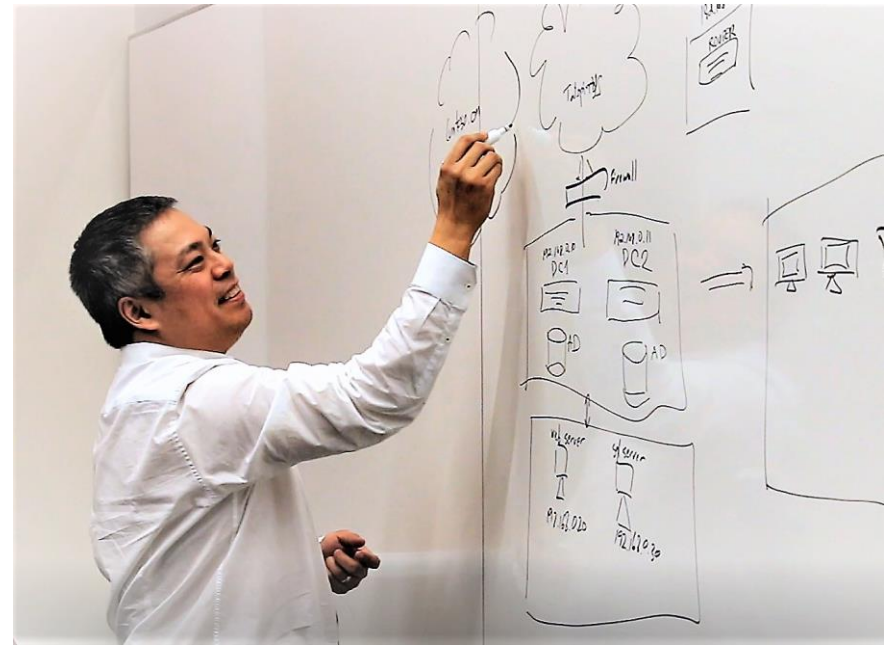
**Earnings jump over 5x**, lifting people out of poverty and into the middle class in a matter of months, not years.





# John's Story

Growing up in the Bronx, John's mom would take him out to sell books on the street. At one point, his dad worked three jobs to support the family. Together, they taught him to always be on the hunt for new opportunities. Today, John has four daughters of his own to support, and he is committed to his children, just like his parents and grandparents were to him. After being unemployed for two years, John realized he needed to gain new skills to set himself apart in the job hunt and to improve his family's prospects. Upon graduating from Tech Jobs Academy, he was hired by Xerox, where he is using both his newfound technical know-how and his winning personality. John's youngest daughter even spoke at his Tech Jobs Academy graduation. "She said that I inspire her," John recalled, "and that meant all the world to me, because that's what I'm here to do. I want to be an inspiration."



# Lum's Story

Lum is a war refugee. Seeking safety and a chance at a better life, his family arrived in New York City when he was just four years old. Growing up in a working-class, immigrant neighborhood in the Borough of Queens, everyone in Lum's family worked blue-collar jobs, like carpentry and plumbing. Lum started college but was forced to drop out during his third year because he could not afford to stay enrolled. He says that "programs like [Tech Jobs Academy] are a godsend" for people in his situation, where finances are a barrier to gaining new skills. After meeting a Microsoft Partner Company at the career fair held the day of his Tech Jobs Academy graduation, Lum was quickly hired. He is now a network engineer with not just a job, but a career path. "It's not just work anymore," said Lum, "It's who I am."

## April's Story

April had been in an abusive relationship for a number of years, when she made a difficult choice – enough was enough. It was time to leave. With her three kids, April's search for a better life began in the unlikeliest of places: a shelter for battered and abused women. There, she fought to take care of her children as a single parent while being homeless, working a job, and going to school. As April put it, "I didn't let my circumstance become who I was."

Having always loved technology, April decided that a career in IT offered the best path forward, both for herself and for her children. However, it was nearly impossible to find a program she could afford that provided sufficient skills for someone without a college degree to break into the tech industry. When April heard about Tech Jobs Academy, she jumped at the opportunity.

In class one day, April had an *aha* moment, when, as she said, "It all finally clicked...That was the crowning moment when everything I knew came together. And I finally became a geek." She believes that the skillset from Tech Jobs Academy is what put her over the top, and she quickly received a job offer after graduating from the program. April and her children now live in their own apartment, where they have safety and stability – and even access to healthcare and benefits. Having received a hand up from Tech Jobs Academy, April now pays it forward to the community through the work she does in her job: installing free public Wi-Fi into the largest public housing project in North America.

April's story was shared by New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio in his 2017 State of the City Address. With tears in her eyes, April stood and received a round of applause.







Microsoft

Rewiring the U.S. labor market isn't easy,  
and it won't be accomplished solo.  
Let's do it together.

Get involved:  
**TechJobsAcademy.com**

"Thank you for taking a chance on me and  
for changing my life. And please –  
don't stop."

— John Spruill, Graduate

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