



Press Clippings
May 2018
Web

Title: Diversity in tech starts with the kids, and other lessons from introduced by Technical.ly

Author: Ebonee Johnson

Link: <https://generocity.org/philly/2018/05/07/philly-tech-week-introduced-technical-ly-impact-diversity-tech-equity-workforce-development/>

Date: May 7, 2018

The word “diversity” can sometimes seem a catchall for the solution to any company’s hiring needs, or the sole path to ethical improvement.

The speakers featured in the Generocity-curated Impact room of Philly Tech Week’s brand new Introduced by Technical.ly conference had a lot to say throughout the day about the importance of varied (and genuine) experience cornucopias within every professional organization.

It starts with the kids

Reflecting on a Coded by Kids workshop he observed a few months ago at Thomas Edison High School, founder and CEO Sylvester Mobley said during his “School Doesn’t Suck: 3 Ways Classrooms are Changing” lightning talk that when the students at the workshop were asked what career path they wanted to follow, most of the girls said they wanted to be hairdressers, while the boys said they wanted to be auto repairmen.

In their immediate environments, the people who look like them or who they know personally mainly do these jobs. Mobley said that his company’s ethos of measuring success by “creating a whole generation of employers, not employees” means “locating mentors and instructors that look like our children.”

Nate Nichols, founder of the Palette Group, said during the “Equity in Tech: Ensuring Everyone Wins, Online and Off” panel that, due to his difficult childhood in the foster care system, the need to compel diversity is in his DNA. He recalled his search for family connections outside of his nuclear home, yielding a plethora of relationships with people from all walks of life within his own neighborhood. Because of his upbringing, he said, he was “always looking to unite people on values.”

Practicality

Neha Agarwal, senior experience designer at Think Company, said during the “Equity in Tech” panel that leadership at Think actively asks how can the company can be more diverse and inclusive and converses with their employees about the topic mainly because they know it creates better work.

Translator founder and CEO Natalie Egan noted during the “Company Responsibility: #MeToo, Black Lives matter and Polarization” panel that although studies show more diverse teams tend to produce results at a slower rate, they consistently produce better results and make better decisions than their less diverse counterparts.

And according to Uva Coles, VP of institutional advancement and strategic partnerships at Peirce College, a company must “be willing to engage with the inherent conflict that comes from gathering people from multiple experiences and backgrounds,” she said during the “Building a Talent Pipeline: Where Community Interests Meet Hiring Needs” panel.

Measurable results

“Metrics are the key to ensure diversity,” said Karissa Justice, manager of people operations for Azavea, during the “Building a Talent Pipeline” panel. It’s all well and good to throw the word around in meetings and add to it company retreat titles, but how are consumers and employees concretely holding company’s accountable.

“We can’t just say we’re committed to diversity and inclusion,” said Digitability founder and CEO Michele McKeone, during the “Equity in Tech” panel. “What’s the baseline to measure that, and what’s the rate of achievement?”

Title: Power Moves: Ajeenah Amir is now director of the Mayor's Office of Public Engagement

Author: Julie Zeglen

Link: <https://generocity.org/philly/2018/05/08/power-moves-ajeenah-amir-public-engagement-childrens-scholarship-fund-philadelphia-greenlight-fund-united-way/>

Date: May 8, 2018

GreenLight Fund Philadelphia picked nine new Selection Advisory Council members.

The venture philanthropy nonprofit led by Omar Woodard announced an incredibly impressive list of advisors ahead of its 2018-2019 investment cycle:

Marc Singer, managing partner of Osage University Partners

Sean Coleman, chief credit officer of FS Investments

Uva Coles, VP of advancement and strategic partnerships of Peirce College

Indivar Dutta-Gupta, co-executive director of the Georgetown Law Center on Poverty and Inequality

Umi Howard, director of the Lipman Family Prize at Penn's Wharton School

Rohit Mehrotra, managing director of JP Morgan Chase

Naledi Nyahuma, director of the Will and Jada Smith Family Foundation

Andy Rachlin, managing director of lending and investment of Reinvestment Fund

Dr. David Rubin, cofounder of PolicyLab at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia

Dalila Wilson-Scott, SVP of community investment of Comcast Corporation and president of the Comcast Foundation

The council will choose the org's forthcoming funding focus areas. In the past, it's funded the Center for Employment Opportunities, Parent-Child Home Program and Year Up.

Title: On the Market: The Salvation Army is training and placing people in tech jobs - Technical.ly Philly

Author: Roberto Torres

Link: <https://technical.ly/philly/2018/05/09/on-the-market-salvation-army/>

Date: May 9, 2018

Here are more jobs, courtesy of our tech jobs board:

Senior FrontEnd Engineer at Stitch

Software Engineer at Vistar Media*

Ruby on Rails Developer at WebLinc*

C++ Developer at Stevens Capital Management*

Software Engineer at ReachMobi*

Digital Marketing Specialist at Peirce College

DevOps Engineer at IntegriChain*

Cloud Ops Engineer at Clarivate Analytics*

Software Developer at Pariveda Solutions

Fullstack Developer, Growth at Inspire*

ERP Business Consultant at Deacom*

Director of Sales at Practice*

DevOps / Site Reliability Engineer at Perpay*

Software Engineer at Azavea*

Social Media Content Producer at Visit Philadelphia

Mobile Developers at Chariot Solutions*

Linux Technical Support at Linode*

Digital Designer at Relay

Drupal Frontend Developer at Zivtech*

Title: 'The conference that I've been waiting to see in Philly' - Technical.ly Philly

Author: Kate Kelly

Link: <https://technical.ly/philly/2018/05/17/ptw18-introduced-recap-conference-ive-been-waiting-for/>

Date: May 17, 2018

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Title: Philadelphia Commerce Director Harold T. Epps to Deliver Peirce College's 2018 Commencement Speech

Author: Citybizlist Staff

Link: <http://citybizlist.com/article/482327/philadelphia-commerce-director-harold-t-epps-to-deliver-peirce-colleges-2018-commencement-speech>

Date: May 23, 2018

Harold T. Epps, Philadelphia's Director of Commerce, who has led efforts to increase economic development through collaborative workforce partnerships that reduce the city's poverty rate, will deliver the 2018 Commencement speech at Peirce College's June 11 graduation exercises.

Epps will address graduates at the college's 153rd Commencement Ceremony, to be held at the Kimmel Center for Performing Arts in Center City Philadelphia at 6:45 p.m.

Over the past several years, Peirce and the Department of Commerce have solidified deep ties through their overlapping missions to ensure more Philadelphians are able to earn life-sustaining wages and educational credentials that qualify them for career opportunities.

"Our graduates are a critical part of Philadelphia's continued economic development," said Peirce's new President and CEO, Mary Ellen Caro, who will be presiding over her first Peirce Commencement. "We help students gain the credentials and skills they need to succeed in the workforce and we are thankful for leaders like Harold, who ensure opportunities throughout the region await them."

Epps, a former executive at PRWT Services with more than 30 years of corporate experience, has helmed the Department of Commerce since 2016. As Director of Commerce, he oversees and implements policies to help both small businesses and major corporations in Philadelphia thrive. He has played a leadership role in the city's bid for Amazon HQ2; the creation of the new citywide workforce development initiative, "Fueling Philadelphia's Talent Engine;" and efforts to increase minority-owned business contracting opportunities.

"Peirce College is a valuable partner in realizing the Department of Commerce's vision of a highly skilled, well-prepared, diverse and inclusive workforce," Epps said. "I am honored to address the Peirce Class of 2018 and look forward to seeing how these graduates positively impact our city and our workforce."

Nearly 300 students, most of whom are working adults, will graduate from Peirce in 2018.

Title: City's workforce strategy includes District

Author: Paul Jablow

Link: <http://thenotebook.org/articles/2018/05/31/citys-workforce-strategy-includes-district/>

Date: May 31, 2018

At Parkway Center City Middle College High School, it's sometimes a little hard to tell the faculty without a scorecard.

Most of the teachers at the school in the Callowhill neighborhood are from the School District of Philadelphia, but others are from the Community College of Philadelphia.

The first freshman class entered in 2017, and when they graduate, they will have both high school diplomas and associate's degrees from CCP.

The magnet high school program is cited as a promising element in the development of the city's employment picture in a recent city workforce strategy report, titled "Fueling Philadelphia's Talent Engine."

At the center of the report is a shift in focus from short-term job training and placement to long-term career planning and advancement. It also marks a shift, officials hope, toward getting the components of the city's employment engine — schools, industry and government — working better together.

The report states: "A career pathway system pairs progressive levels of education and training with career coaching and social service supports to help individuals with diverse skills and needs advance to increasingly higher levels of employment."

A single program cannot provide the full benefits of a career pathway system, the report says. Instead, "multiple linked and aligned programs" are needed, "including industry; the public workforce system; and K-12, adult, and higher education."

Three broad goals

During the February launch ceremony for the workforce strategy, which was at CCP, Mayor Kenney called for a fight not just against unemployment, but also against underemployment.

"It's unacceptable," he said, "for any Philadelphian to be working a full-time job and still living in poverty. It's embarrassing. It's disgraceful."

All told, the plan set out three broad goals:

- Prepare Philadelphians with the skills that employers need for a world-class workforce.

- Address the underlying barriers that prevent Philadelphians from accessing meaningful opportunities.
- Build a workforce system that is more coordinated, innovative, and effective.

The plan also laid out 18 specific goals to be reached by 2020, each with a lead stakeholder to accomplish it.

In three cases, the School District of Philadelphia is to take the lead:

- Increase the graduation rate from 67 percent to 71 percent by the 2018-19 school year.
- Along with CCP and other institutions, provide opportunities for 6,000 students a year to attain post-secondary credit.
- Along with CCP, give every Career and Technical Education student the chance to earn a minimum of three college credits.

Staying in the workforce

Much of the strategy is directed at adults who may be out of the workforce or on the edges of it, but the School District and CCP are charged with seeing that they get into the workforce and stay there.

One key, says David E. Thomas, an associate vice president at CCP, is creating an almost seamless transition between high school and college.

“No longer are we in the day when it’s a dry cutoff,” he says. “It behooves us to work backwards, down the chain.”

In many cases, the cutoff has been CCP’s college placement tests. High school graduates who can’t pass them must enroll in noncredit developmental reading, developmental writing and/or developmental math courses before they can take courses that award college credit.

That can slow down their progress at the college or even discourage them from enrolling.

Last fall, almost a third of entering CCP freshmen from District and charter schools had to take developmental reading and/or developmental writing. Sixty-three percent of District students and 55 percent of charter students had to take developmental math. For alternative school graduates, the figures were considerably higher.

CCP spokeswoman Linda Wallace says that students who fail the test in the spring can now get tutoring in a summer program and retest in the fall. But Thomas says that a longer-range solution might be to have CCP faculty working throughout the school

system, helping to spot students who are likely to have trouble moving directly into college work.

“There’s work to be done at both the District’s end and the college’s end,” he says. “We’re trying to look at multiple measures of success, not just one test.”

Post-secondary credit

The goal of giving some 6,000 high school students a chance at post-secondary credit represents a 20 percent increase from the current baseline of 5,000, says city Commerce Department spokeswoman Lauren Cox.

Enrollment of high school students in CCP’s Advance at College dual enrollment program — which allows students to take high school and college courses at the same time — increased from 487 in the spring of 2017 to 705 this spring, although Thomas said this was due partly to a one-time state grant.

Giving every CTE student the chance to earn a minimum of three college credits would not represent a major increase, says Michelle Armstrong, executive director of CTE programs for the School District. She estimates the current figure at 85 percent.

In some cases, said Armstrong, who was on the workforce report’s 40-member steering committee, it is a question of aligning the District’s offerings with the curricula of institutes such as CCP, Peirce College, the Art Institute of Philadelphia, and Thomas Jefferson University.

“The post-secondary partners are being very cooperative,” she says.

But the District also faces challenges in attracting students to CTE programs such as manufacturing and building trades despite its confidence that jobs will be there.

“It’s an ongoing stigma,” says Nicholas Gasis, CTE director for the School District.

On the other hand, health-care programs are expected to grow, and the District plans to open a rehabilitation aide program next year with Temple University and St. Christopher’s Hospital, Armstrong says.

Carol DeFries, vice president for workforce and innovation at CCP, says, “We still need to get more CTE students into the college. But a lot of them go out and get employed right away,” perhaps due to the need for immediate income — and perhaps at a lower level than they could achieve with additional college-level courses.

Christina Grant, assistant superintendent for the District’s Opportunity Network — which works with dropouts, students at risk of dropping out, and students subject to expulsion — adds that academic improvements alone won’t be enough.

“We’re thinking beyond the number of credits” to help the students understand the job market, says Grant, who was also on the steering committee. “They need a significant bench of soft skills” to make the switch from classroom to job. “Collaboration, teaming. Bridging the gap between the two worlds.”