ACCESS CODE

2016 Nominet Trust 100 Winner

2016

CREATING NEW PATHWAYS TO TECH CAREERS

By Coalition 4 Queens

Project URL: http://www.c4q.nyc/accesscode
Project Twitter: @C4QNYC

- Digital Engagement
- Economic Empowerment
- Education
- Internet
- Mobile

The tech industry has been heralded as the sector that could bring back American jobs following the great recession and new regulation across Wall Street. However, women, minorities and immigrant communities are drastically underrepresented in tech jobs. Only 12% of the tech workforce are women, and only 1% are African-Americans.

Coalition for Queens (C4Q), a non-profit initiative founded by New York Mayor Bill De Blasio's transition team member Jukay Hsu, set out to bring more diversity to the city's tech sector, while empowering people from every community to overcome poverty through tech skills.

Launching a 10-month programme called Access Code, C4Q provides 80+ hours of coding training to produce a new generation of industry-ready programmers for Android, iOS and the web, while also equipping its graduates with entrepreneurship and career-building skills. The curriculum is designed by a Brain Trust made up of leading technologists and engineers, and doesn't require a college degree or any payment of its students. Instead, participants commit to paying a percentage of their first year's salary back to C4Q to help fund future cohorts.

The programme has been immensely popular, with 600 people applying for a 30-spot class in 2015, and it is certainly achieving its objectives in increasing diversity: 50% of students are women, 50% are minorities, 50% are immigrants, and 60% are without college degrees. What's more, graduates have tripled their annual income from an average of $18,000 to $80,000 at leading tech companies like BuzzFeed, which employed Access for Code graduate Paola

Maldonado, who went from "making 10 bucks an hour or on unemployment", to developing BuzzFeed's smartphone apps.

C4Q continues to work to expand its services to more students. They are looking for applicants, employers and volunteers to join them. Find out more at http://www.c4q.nyc

Image courtesy of C4Q

Last updated: 13th of September, 2016