

Fast Track Academy

A new community program to address digital skills in Connecticut

Local opportunity

As the digital skills gap continues to grow, many individuals, particularly those from disadvantaged communities, are unable to access opportunities to acquire the necessary skills to thrive in the ever-changing job market. STEAM Train's initiatives aim to address this challenge by providing digital skills training, thereby ensuring a skilled and diverse workforce for the future

Engaging the community

[STEAM Train Inc.](#), is addressing the digital skilling needs of the community through our program offerings. The Fast Track Academy equips graduates with cutting-edge digital skills for the workplace. Connect-In-Tech Camp teaches computer technology to highschoolers, and our AI workshops showcase the power of Artificial Intelligence. We leverage [Microsoft Copilot](#), [Microsoft Cloud for Nonprofit](#), [Power Automate](#), [LinkedIn Learning](#) training and certifications, AI tools, and [AI4All](#) resources. We aim to bridge the technical skills gap for underrepresented individuals.



[Microsoft TechSpark's](#) involvement and resources bolstered our ecosystem, lent credibility and drew attention the importance of STEAM Train's work. We are now garnering interest from C-suite leaders, academics, and elected officials, who are invigorating support for our cause. Microsoft's presentation at the STEAM Train's fundraiser reinforced our standing in the region, offered clarity to leaders on the significance of our digital skills vision, Artificial Intelligence (AI), and provided invaluable resources to advance our mission.

Fast Track Academy

Activating local ecosystems

An ecosystem is vital for fostering collaboration and innovation with communities, serving as a dynamic network where diverse stakeholders come together to drive collective progress. Ecosystem partners for this program include:

- Connecticut Senate -9th District, Connecticut House of Representative – District 100, Wesleyan University, CT State Community College, Cigna Corporation, Liberty Bank, Travelers Insurance Company, Campus Works, Workforce Alliance, Shiloh Christian Church, and Microsoft

Impact to date

Community Impact metrics evaluate how well initiatives improve communities, guiding decisions, fostering sustainability, encouraging collaboration, and empowering communities.

- Modernized curriculum leveraging LinkedIn Learning
- 85 learners
- IT apprenticeships for graduates

“We are learning how to strengthen our ecosystem by collaborating with Microsoft TechSpark.”

[Donna Hylton](#),
Microsoft TechSpark Fellow
Connecticut



In the news

Sharing the story more broadly is crucial as it allows others to learn from your experiences, fostering knowledge sharing and collective growth

- July 2023: [STEAM Train selected as part of Microsoft TechSpark](#)

“STEAM Train, Inc’s important work in moving people to STEM careers is a never-ending process. The AI Institute initiative will ensure that their students and community partners keep up to date with the opportunities and challenges that artificial intelligence will bring.”

**Prof. Peter J. Kootsookos, CT State Community College
Middlesex**



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Talent is everywhere, Opportunity is not

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