

DAILY NEWS

Tech Talent Pipeline links underserved New Yorkers to STEM jobs

The \$10 million Pipeline is a government initiative designed to connect schools, city services, the business world and the city's booming tech sector. 'Tech is a really important industry,' said Jackie Mallon of the city's Small Business Services Department. 'It represents the opportunity for people to have a real, sustainable, living-wage salary.'

BY BEN CHAPMAN



Kristen Titus (l.), founding director of the Tech Talent Pipeline and Jackie Mallon (r.), deputy commissioner of workforce development at the Department of Small Business Services.

They're putting a new spin on STEM in the city.

Jackie Mallon and Kristen Titus have been working furiously to expand access to careers in science, technology, engineering and math since Mayor de Blasio created the city's Tech Talent Pipeline in May.

The \$10 million Pipeline is a government initiative designed to connect the schools, city services, the mainstream business world and the city's booming tech sector.

Mallon, deputy commissioner of workforce development at the city's Small Business Services Department, said their effort is important because tech is key to the future of the city's economy.

"Tech is a really important industry," Mallon said. "It represents the opportunity for people to have a real, sustainable, living-wage salary."

Technology is among the highest-paying and fastest-growing sectors in the city, representing 291,000 jobs and \$30 billion in wages each year.

Providing access to those jobs for everyday New Yorkers is key to fighting income inequality in the city, Mallon said. That's the mission of the Tech Talent Pipeline.

Titus was tapped to lead the effort largely because of her background as executive director of the national nonprofit Girls Who Code, which seeks to increase female participation in the tech industry by promoting programming education for girls.

As founding director of the Pipeline, Titus is spearheading efforts to fund and support public and private partners working to deliver technology education, training and job opportunities to underserved city residents.

Titus said that connecting the dots between city services, nonprofits, education and the tech industry is key to building gender and social equality in New York City.

"What we're doing here at the Tech Talent Pipeline to expose populations that are traditionally underrepresented and provide them with opportunities to engage, opportunities for employment, is really a critical part of the solution," Titus said.

And just months since its creation, Mallon and Titus said, the city's Tech Talent Pipeline initiative is already showing some positive results.

A Web developer training program at Manhattan's Flatiron School — started last year — gave a free, 22-week course to New Yorkers who earned less than \$50,000 a year and had never worked as developers.

A whopping 96% of participants from the first class of the program have landed jobs with companies including Intel, Etsy and Venmo at an average salary of \$70,000, Small Business Services Department officials said.

Mallon and Titus are now expanding the program for a new group of trainees, between 18 and 26 years old, who do not have college degrees.

Young New Yorkers who lack college diplomas typify the type of underserved demographic the Pipeline seeks to empower, Titus said.

"I think the Tech Talent Pipeline is going to be hugely influential in rising up all populations traditionally underrepresented in the tech industry," Titus said.