

# 2017 Year In Review

## Creating Opportunities





## 20 Years of Creating New Opportunities in Tech Careers

In 2018, Creating IT Futures celebrates our 20th anniversary year. As an IT workforce charity founded by [CompTIA](#), our organization has been creating opportunities and launching IT careers since 1998.

While we're always researching and developing new workforce and STEM

CREATING  FUTURES



programs, we're currently focused on two main endeavors:

- IT-Ready, our eight-week, classroom-based training program that prepares adults for tech careers free of charge, and
- NextUp, our innovative effort with CompTIA to inspire more teenagers to consider and pursue tech careers.

Before I joined as CEO in 2010, Creating IT Futures — then called the CompTIA Educational Foundation — mainly helped military veterans and other people in need, particularly folks with disabilities, get a leg up in their careers by accessing online training from CompTIA's partners and vouchers for CompTIA certifications. We also gave out hundreds of small scholarships to high-school students who passed CompTIA certifications.

### Finding the missing piece

While those efforts certainly improved the lives of a couple thousand people, we recognized that there was a piece missing

in terms of making sure people landed IT jobs. We needed to become more involved — more hands-on — to ensure that tech training and certifications led directly to IT careers. So we spent the next few years researching and developing pilot programs that launched what has become our signature IT-Ready career program.

Since then, [IT-Ready](#) has become one of America's most effective job training and placement programs — with 88 percent of students graduating and 86 percent of graduates landing a full-time paid position as an IT professional. We hear from IT-Ready alumni all the time about how the program quite literally changed their lives for the better — profoundly and permanently.

We often feature powerful stories about these successful graduates on the Creating IT Futures blog, and you can read some of their heartwarming testimonials here within our annual report. Clearly, IT-Ready is making a real difference in the lives of graduates, as well as positioning them for future career advancement and success.



Charles Eaton, CEO, Creating IT Futures

**Expanding our programs**

Last year, IT-Ready opened pilot training sites in Portland, OR, and Charlotte, NC, and we are making those locations permanent in 2018. We plan to add more locations and more types of tech training classes in 2018.

We're also excited about our [NextUp](#) program, which launched last year, engaging with more than 3,000 middle-school students through partnerships with FUSE, the New York Academy of Sciences, and TechGirlz. This year, NextUp adds a new partner — the Technology Student Association — to help us reach even more students.

With more than 250,000 student members nationally, the Technology Student Association runs dozens of stimulating

student STEM competitions each year and is the perfect partner for reaching and influencing young people with a professed interest in doing more with technology.

Throughout this year, we'll keep you up to date on our latest expansion news, developments and partnerships. And we will continue executing on our 20-year commitment to encourage rewarding careers for populations traditionally under-represented in the information technology workforce, such as women and people of color.

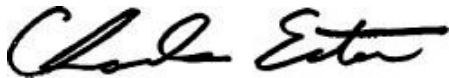
**Thank you for your support**

2018 promises to be one of the most successful years yet for Creating IT Futures,

and all of us here are excited to be part of game-changing efforts to improve the lives of individuals and support the workforce needs of the tech industry.

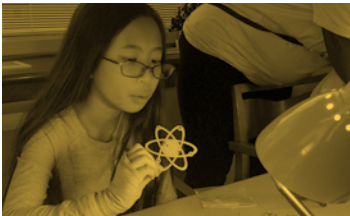
Thank you for your support this year — and indeed, during the past 20 years — as we work to create more opportunities for people to prepare for, secure and succeed in IT careers.

Sincerely,



Charles Eaton  
CEO, Creating IT Futures

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## IT-Ready: Empowering People for Tech Careers

More than half a million tech jobs go unfilled every year in America because employers cannot find enough skilled workers to fill those jobs. We've found that the tech skills gap exists because there is a lack of diversity in recruiting, an overemphasis on expensive college educations that don't build relevant job skills, and not enough on-ramps to educate people about tech careers.

Phao Thor



The right people to fill those open tech jobs are in our own backyards. They simply need the training and connections to get there.

Six years ago, Creating IT Futures launched [IT-Ready](#), our signature training program to prepare brand-new workers for the tech industry — and preferably reaching displaced or underemployed people, adults without college degrees, veterans, women and people of color. With eight weeks of full-time, classroom-based training, IT-Ready assesses, trains, certifies and places adults into tech careers.

Our efforts are bearing fruit: 86 percent of IT-Ready graduates secure full-time employment in the tech industry, making IT-Ready one of America's most successful tech training programs.

## IT▶READY

Clearly IT-Ready is changing lives — for the better.

Consider Phao Thor, who recently launched his own tech company.

Thor, an Army veteran, graduated from IT-Ready in 2012 and we connected him to Pearson VUE, where he landed a help desk support job. He gradually took on more responsibility, and took advantage of professional development programs, learning website design and Java programming.

In October 2017, Thor resigned to launch his own programming company. His tenure at Pearson VUE allowed him to pay off all debt, including his mortgage, and

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### Building Diversity in the Tech Workforce

**66%** of IT-Ready graduates are people of color

**44%** of IT-Ready graduates are female

**11%** of IT-Ready students are veterans

save enough to survive the austerity that comes with starting a small business.

“If it wasn’t for IT-Ready, I would never have been able to live my dream,” he said.

And there’s Theresa Demby. Before IT-Ready, she was a struggling accountant unable to secure full-time work making family-sustaining wages.

“I wanted to make sure my current skill set was transferable and that a new career did not require several years of schooling,” she said. “Information technology met those requirements.”

Demby graduated from IT-Ready in June 2016 and now works as an associate IT specialist with Hennepin County, the county government of Minneapolis.

You can read more about Thor and Demby — as well as dozens of other graduates — by visiting our blog on the Creating IT Futures website, [CreatingITFutures.org](http://CreatingITFutures.org), where we tell the inspiring stories of IT-Ready graduates whose lives have been changed — for better, for good — thanks to our sponsors’ and partners’ consistent support of IT-Ready.



Theresa Demby



### Program Growth for 2018

After operating for five years in the Twin Cities and running pop-up classrooms in six sites nationally, IT-Ready was ready to expand. Last year, we piloted new IT-Ready locations in Portland, OR, and Charlotte, NC, which we made permanent in 2018.

We’ve also launched IT-Ready QA, a new curriculum for software testers. Since careful destruction of software is just as valuable as brilliant creation, IT-Ready QA teaches best practices for breaking software and squashing bugs.





## NextUp: Inspiring Teens to Become Technologists

It's no secret the tech industry faces a significant shortage of talent. With nearly 1.4 million unfilled job openings a year and millions of tech workers set to retire in the next eight years, the shortage will only worsen.

Now more than ever, we must inspire the next generation of talent to pursue tech industry occupations — but how?

A new effort funded by CompTIA and managed by Creating IT Futures introduces teens to the possibilities of technology careers and encourages their pursuit.

Called NextUp, the effort leverages curricula, projects, partnerships and mentorship to spark teens' curiosity and passion for technology through meaningful engagement. By connecting teens to the promise of technology today, we hope to build a new generation of technologists for tomorrow.

### What we know about teens and technology

Research commissioned by Creating IT Futures revealed that 7 out of 10 teenagers say they're open to the possibility of a tech career — an increase from the number we found (62 percent) in a 2015 CompTIA survey.

But the research also identified shortcomings in providing students with comprehensive information to help them make informed career choices. For example, just 33 percent of boys and 24 percent of girls knew someone who worked for a tech company or had a tech career.

“We want to create opportunities for teens and build a foundational awareness of IT careers in such a way that teens become really excited and inspired about the notion of a career in technology,” said Charles Eaton, CEO of Creating IT Futures.

# NEXTUP

### Which brings us to NextUp

NextUp supports and develops grassroots-level programs that engage kids in grades 6 and higher with tech within the context of their interests, and connects them with mentors who work in the tech industry. We established partnerships with existing STEM organizations and recruited mentors from CompTIA's vast network of members and certified professionals.



“We are committed to dramatically increasing the number of students who are exposed to tech-related roles and activities,” Eaton said. “Our hope is that after students finish middle school, their experiences and the relationships they forged through NextUp will lead them to pursue studies for a tech career.”

### Partnering to inspire the next generation of technologists

NextUp works with partner programs that support and enhance existing youth engagement initiatives through curricula, competitions, clubs and camps, and inspire and engage teens through mentorship. These partners include:

1. [FUSE](#), a Northwestern University program that’s expanding and enriching STEAM —STEM + arts and design — learning, paying particular attention to IT concepts and skills for students in middle and high school.
2. [The New York Academy of Sciences](#), where CompTIA’s network of IT professionals mentors students attending the academy’s after-school and summer programs.
3. [TechGirlyz](#), which offers fun and educational hands-on workshops

called TechShopz throughout the country, as well as an annual Entrepreneur Summer Camp — all of which are aimed at encouraging middle-school age girls to explore technology in a supportive setting.

4. [The Technology Student Association](#), a nonprofit organization consisting of 250,000 students in 48 states who go head-to-head each spring in a number of STEM team-based competitions.

And through our special relationship with CompTIA...

The [CompTIA Association of IT Professionals \(AITP\) Student Program](#) matches IT students with mentors to help them learn about and prepare for technology careers. Students can get résumé support, mentorship, information on career strategies, and more with their free membership.

[Dream IT](#), a program created by CompTIA’s Advancing Women in Technology Community, has reached more than 10,000 people with the message that technology is a field of terrific opportunity for women and girls. Materials are available for speakers in the United States, United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand.

[CompTIA’s Academy Partner Program](#) provides valuable tools and resources to assist schools in recruiting, training, certifying



and upgrading the skills of their students in IT. Some 4,500 secondary schools, colleges, universities, and other organizations across North America that provide technology instruction are CompTIA Academy Partners.

### Join our effort!

Corporate or philanthropic organizations interested in working with NextUp as a partner are encouraged to contact Eric Larson, senior director, Creating IT Futures, at [elarson@comptia.org](mailto:elarson@comptia.org).

Individuals interested in volunteering with NextUp are encouraged to contact Joan Matz, senior manager, Creating IT Futures, at [jmatz@comptia.org](mailto:jmatz@comptia.org).

Together, we can inspire a new generation of technologists — and chip away at our industry’s long-standing talent shortage.

## Encouraging Teens Through Research and Innovative Programs

Within the past several years, Creating IT Futures has supported innovative programming and research — resulting in new information and understanding that we and other organizations are leveraging to encourage teens to pursue tech careers. They include:

### Connecting students to work-based learning opportunities

The city of Chicago's innovative public education model is producing tech-savvy, STEM-oriented high-school graduates equipped with associate degrees. These work-ready individuals are eager to enter the professional workforce and prove themselves in the IT field.

Chicago's five dual-enrollment Early College STEM Schools are the result of an ambitious collaboration by the Office of the Mayor, the City of Chicago, Chicago Public Schools and the City Colleges of Chicago. Students are admitted into these free, public schools in the ninth grade and graduate within six years with both a high-

school diploma and an associate's degree from a local community college.

Moreover, these schools provide as part of the students' education real-life, work-based learning experiences that expose students to valuable professional opportunities and hands-on learning that prepare them for entry into the full-time workforce.

Creating IT Futures has been closely involved with Chicago's Early College STEM

Schools since their start. And CompTIA and Creating IT Futures, through a grant with the Chicagoland Workforce Funder Alliance, played a crucial role in helping develop and implement new work-based learning activities for the five Early College STEM Schools.

Together, we created a new framework for work-based learning experiences in The Four Ps of Internships: A Project, A Place, Personnel and Payment for an intern.

## the 4Ps of internships.

### Project

for the student to work on that's both challenging and valued



### Personnel

who will both care about and supervise the students



### Successful Internship

### Place

for the student to work on the project



### Payment

to the students for the work they do



### Commissioned research into teen thinking

Creating IT Futures commissioned [research](#) to better understand how urban teens think about and plan for their futures — along with what might drive or present barriers to teen interest in tech careers.

The survey involved 326 teens who were in the 11th or 12th grade in a public school, earned Bs and Cs for grades, had never been expelled, and lived in an urban area and in a household earning \$65,000 annually or less.

We also surveyed parents to better understand their hopes and expectations for their teens, surveying 325 parents of youths who met these same criteria.

Collectively, we learned:

- Nearly all teens said they want a career, not just a job — and they want to learn new things all the time.
- Before being asked any questions about IT, teens were presented with 60 career options. Their top 10 picks included three IT careers.
- Four out of 10 teens chose at least one technology career among their top potential interests.
- Most teens have positive perceptions of IT, associating it with good pay, helping people and interesting work.

- Almost 90 percent of teens surveyed felt they could succeed in an IT career. Along with these positive findings, our commissioned research also identified some potential stumbling blocks:

- Most teens — and parents — are not certain what “IT” means and most do not know someone with an IT job.
- Nearly everyone surveyed believed IT requires strong math and science skills.
- More than half of the teens — and one-third of parents — believe an IT career requires a four-year college degree.

These and other takeaways from the research have provided valuable insight into what inspires teens to consider a tech career — and helped us develop programming that addressed potential barriers while exposing teens to the many opportunities in IT. And we are applying what we learned from our commissioned research into our NextUp campaign.

### Career training for young adults with disabilities in Illinois

Creating IT Futures currently is working with the State of Illinois on a workforce grant to assist young adults with disabilities in both DuPage and Cook

Counties to gain training and employment in IT-related positions.



As these young adults continue with their education and move toward graduation, Creating IT Futures is helping them identify and secure opportunities for hands-on work experience, internships, and part-time and full-time positions throughout the community by showcasing these accomplished students to local area employers.

# Funding Programs for Tomorrow's Tech Workforce

With CompTIA's support of our operational and business development costs, financial gifts from mission investors, grants and donors go directly to program expenses.

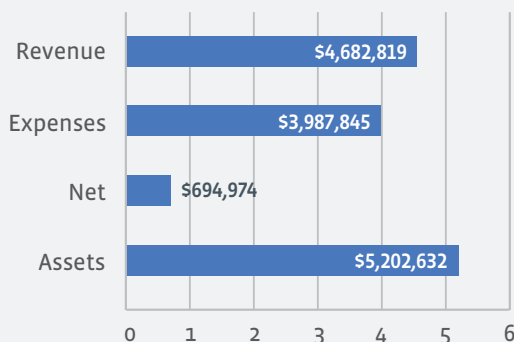
In 2016, Creating IT Futures focused its activities on four main lines of activity: IT-Ready, NextUp, work-based learning for teenagers, and funding STEM/workforce-related programs developed by partners and other charities. On behalf of CompTIA and its members, Creating IT Futures gave \$324,000 to 13 other non-profits and their tech-related programs.



In 2017, CompTIA divided its philanthropic efforts into three branches: Creating IT Futures, NextUp and [CompTIA Giving](#). The grant-making function of Creating IT Futures was moved to the newly formed CompTIA Giving, which provides financial and volunteer resources to worthy charities focused on helping young people and adults pursue careers in IT and promoting diversity in the IT workforce.

Creating IT Futures now focuses on developing its own research, programs and partnerships, using outside grants and donations to fund these activities. Creating IT Futures also continues to manage and develop NextUp.

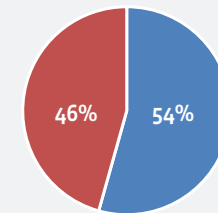
2016 Revenue & Expenses in \$M



## Focused STEM & Tech Workforce Development for 2018

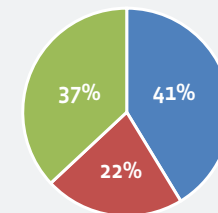
2018 Estimated Revenue of \$4.6M

- CompTIA Philanthropic Investment
- Mission Investors, Donors & Grants



2018 Estimated Spending of \$4.6M

- IT-Ready
- NextUp
- Foundation Operations & Business Development





You're key to helping us enlarge and diversify the tech workforce, put more people into tech jobs and inspire more teenagers to pursue tech careers.

Grants and donors pay for our program expenses so that IT-Ready students can attend classes and get certified at no cost. Investors, volunteers and partners allow teenagers to participate in hands-on technology and engineering challenges.

Thank you for your support and partnership as we work together to enable thousands to take the first step to a tech career.

## Mission Investors

(Funding at \$50,000 or more in a calendar year)



## Donors

(Funding at \$1,000 or more)

- ACT Foundation
- CDW
- CompTIA Staff
- City of Minneapolis Employment and Training
- Fidelity Charitable
- Goodwill
- Minneapolis Urban League
- Network for Good
- Pearson VUE
- Pitney Bowes Foundation
- Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation
- Robert Half International Inc.
- TeamLogic IT
- West Metro Fire Relief Association
- Women's Endowment Fund of the Jewish Community Federation

## Non-Profit & Government Partners

- Charlotte Works in Charlotte, NC
- MSP TechHire managed by the City of Minneapolis
- FUSE in schools nationwide
- Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont based in Charlotte, NC
- Jewish Family & Children's Services of Minneapolis
- Minneapolis Urban League
- New York Academy of Sciences in New York City
- Per Scholas based in New York City
- The Stride Center in the San Francisco Bay Area
- TechHire in cities nationwide
- Technology Student Association in schools nationwide
- TechGirlz based in Philadelphia with STEM programs nationwide
- Urban Tech Jobs in Portland, OR
- WorkSource Portland Metro in Portland, OR

If you'd like to join us in our mission to create better on-ramps to launch tech careers, we would love to talk with you more. Visit us at [www.CreatingITFutures.org](http://www.CreatingITFutures.org).

# CREATING **IT** FUTURES

