Building 21st Century Skills: Demand Driven IT Job Training

December 2, 2015
Youth Unemployment Conference
Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia

Mission + History

- Per Scholas is a nonprofit organization, committed to breaking the cycle of poverty by providing education and economic opportunities to adults and young adults.

- Founded in 1995, Per Scholas uses technology to address the skills gap and offers employers in the IT community qualified talent to grow their businesses.

- Per Scholas has trained 5,000 adults (18+) for IT professions in the Bronx and Brooklyn, NY; Columbus and Cincinnati, OH; Silver Spring, MD; Dallas, TX; and Atlanta, GA (in January 2016)

- Program consistently meets 85% graduation and 80% job placement rates with 75% 1-year retention

Brief History of Per Scholas

1995
Original mission is to close the digital divide in the South Bronx by reconditioning used computers and giving them away to schools and families.

2008
First IT job training begins in 1998. By 2008 , it serves 100s each year. Market changes lead to phase out of direct computer recycling.

2010
Independent, multi year research shows that our graduates earn significantly more than a control group of their peers. We receive a White House Social Innovation Fund award to scale our model.

2013
Annual nat'l enrollment tops 500 students. Launch Software Testing Education Program (STEP) in New York.

2015
Five national locations in 4 states. Vice President Joe Biden and White House tout model as a top solution to help unemployed individuals back to work.

PER SCHOLAS

The Opportunity

1.2 Million

UNFILLED TECH JOBS BY 2020

Universities and other traditional sources of learning are expected to fill only a portion of the large number of tech jobs in the United States, creating a significant demand for talent.

The Challenge

How do we level the playing field for non-degreed individuals to be as competitive for these jobs, as their degreed counterparts?

Our Answer (over a 2-year period)
- Technical training
- Job placement in industry
- Advanced skill sets (additional training)
- Advanced job opportunities and promotions