RELEASE

Zip Code Wilmington's coding boot camps create opportunities and transform lives

Nonprofit software coding bootcamp is diverse by design and accessible to all; applications for February 2023 cohorts are open.

WILMINGTON, Del. (Nov. 2, 2022) – In Zip Code Wilmington's intensive 12-week and three-week coding "boot camps," students from diverse backgrounds receive the training, professional development, and connections with employers they need to launch successful software development careers. In turn, the nationally recognized nonprofit organization matches companies with highly trained, highly qualified and diverse talent.

Since Zip Code opened seven years ago, it has graduated more than 500 software developers and data engineers with average starting salaries of $76,000 in 2021, said Desa Burton, Zip Code's executive director. About 20% of its graduates have been African American and 10% of have been Hispanic, groups which are greatly underrepresented in the technology industry.

Zip Code eases entry into the lucrative field of software development for students who might have financial, personal or cultural barriers to a four-year degree in computer science. For many, Zip Code is the start of a second career.

"During my tenure as an instructor at Zip Code Wilmington, I've had the good fortune to act as a guide to students who come in with little to no prior experience, helping them to achieve their goals of becoming coders in the real world," Lead Technical Instructor L. Dolio Durant said. "I get joy from seeing the lightbulbs of understanding and ideas come alive, as well as knowing that we are taking part in cultivating our region's homegrown talent. This allows our partners to reinvest into the community by tapping into that valuable resource."

Whitney Martinez, a software engineer at JPMorgan Chase & Co., moved to Delaware from Puerto Rico in 2018 to take advantage of the opportunity offered by Zip Code's three-month intensive training program.

"I took my whole life from Puerto Rico and came over here by myself just to give this career a chance," Martinez said. "It was scary and challenging, but they did everything they could to make sure I could attend the classes and also didn't have to worry about financial hardship."

When Martinez needed help, Zip Code provided a tutor and extra classwork.

"They'll help you update your resume and prepare for interviews," Martinez said. "They'll help you with whatever you need to ace your next interview and get that job."

Zip Code's training is accessible and affordable. Because of Zip Code's corporate alliances and support from the Office of the Governor of Delaware, students who qualify will have their tuition paid in full or in part by scholarships and will receive a stipend during their training. Other students, who do not qualify for scholarships, may have their remaining balance paid by their first employer if that is a corporate partner.

With employment of software developers projected by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics to grow 22 percent from 2020 to 2030, more than five times faster than average job growth, Zip Code's boot camps offer a foundation for long-term professional success.

Applications for February 2022 are open. Full scholarships and stipends are available for those who qualify. Application deadline is Dec. 4.

To learn more about Zip Code Wilmington, visit zipcodewilmington.com.

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L. Dolio Durant, Lead Technical Instructor at Zip Code Wilmington

Whitney Martinez, a software engineer at JPMorgan Chase & Co.