

Partnering for Impact: The Per Scholas Satellite Model

A Barclays and Per Scholas Report



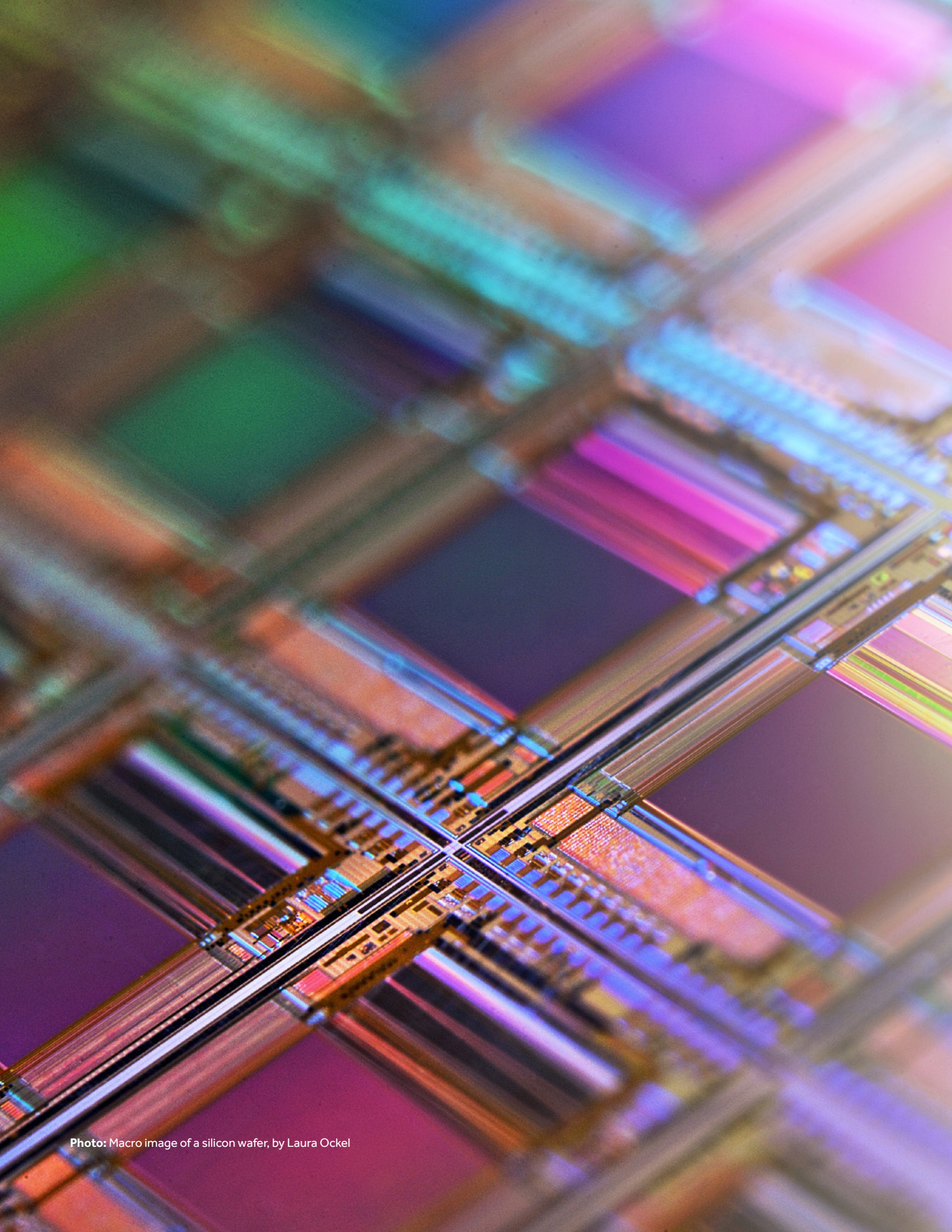


Photo: Macro image of a silicon wafer, by Laura Ockel

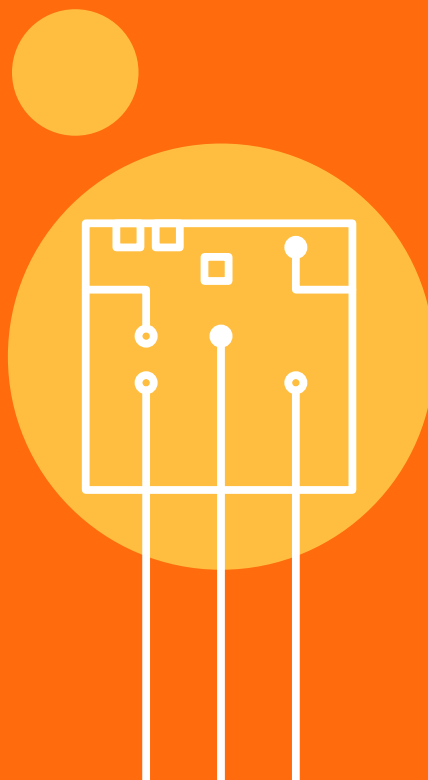


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Summary

In mid-2021, Per Scholas sought to expand its footprint and increase access to its tech training programs by establishing Satellite locations in partnership with community-based organizations across New York City. Drawing on early implementation experiences and program outcomes, this report examines the Per Scholas Satellite model's promise as a next generation workforce strategy designed to take advantage of advances in technology and remote learning modalities, open training and careers in technology to a broader portion of the city's diverse population, and ultimately yield cost savings overall by leveraging the expertise, community relationships, and excess capacity of partner agencies and Per Scholas. Initial positive learner outcomes, paired with an assessment of program improvements incorporated with each subsequent cohort, paint an optimistic outlook for the program model, specific to Per Scholas's application and for the workforce development field more broadly.





Barclays Opening Letter

Economies, businesses, and communities grow and thrive when the pathways into rewarding careers are made more accessible to all. For the past decade, Barclays has partnered with Per Scholas to build and expand pathways into tech for more individuals who have historically been underrepresented in the technology sector. Our investments in the organization's Brooklyn, NY campus in 2016 and Newark, NJ campus in 2019 increased Per Scholas's ability to prepare more individuals for tech careers; and, yet demand continues to outpace the number of seats available.

from **Travis Barnes**,
Global Head of
Financial Sponsors
Group & Sustainable
and Impact Banking,
Barclays

This report chronicles a new expansion strategy that leverages advances in remote learning technology, Per Scholas's extensively tested and refined program model, and the assets of multiple community-based and embedded nonprofit organizations located throughout New York City. The Satellite model holds significant promise to uncover and activate latent tech talent that is in demand at firms like Barclays, and over time shift the composition of the tech workforce to better reflect the rich diversity of the city's population.

Our commitment to overcoming inequities in the communities in which we work relies on innovative talent identification and preparation strategies like the Satellite model. We believe strongly in the power of partnership and feel privileged to support Per Scholas in this work. We look forward to continuing to accelerate proactive approaches to creating and expanding diverse talent pipelines alongside our partners, and know that we are stronger together.



Per Scholas Opening Letter

from Plinio Ayala,
President & CEO,
Per Scholas

New York City is awash with talent, attracting droves from around the globe. Yet, access to the vast array of opportunities within the city remains uneven—and even inaccessible—to all. Entire communities within New York City remain cut off from prosperity geographically, culturally, and economically. The recent COVID-19 pandemic, the accompanying economic downturn, and present rebound have made stark some of the persistent inequities in the City, prompting calls for action from City Hall, the business community, and others to ensure New York’s recovery is centered on equity and economic mobility.

Per Scholas was founded more than a quarter century ago to advance economic equity through high quality training, professional development, and employment in the technology sector. We have experimented with methods for furthering this goal throughout the years—developing bridge programming, adding to the array of supportive services provided in-house, and partnering with high schools to expose more young people to careers in technology, among other strategies. Our most recent experiment is perhaps our boldest to date; the Satellite model embeds Per Scholas programming within a partner organization’s physical location and harnesses that entity’s connections within the community, complementary services, and staff to expand access to high quality tech training and careers.

With the support of Barclays, we share in this report an early assessment of the Satellite model’s structure, promise, and learnings. The Satellite model is designed to tap into and uplift both the New Yorkers that are far too often overlooked as potential talent, as well as the rich but fragmented ecosystem of workforce organizations and programs operating in areas of the city that are less accessible geographically to Per Scholas’s campuses.

“

The class has been challenging but good. We had the right instructors between Manny in Brooklyn and Leo in our classroom.

“

A lot of what we learn is rudimentary and there are different ways of learning it. [Our instructor] Edmond provides one way of learning. What Per Scholas offers is so much more than instruction.

“

Listening to both sides - Brooklyn and our classroom in Queens - was kind of weird at first, but we adjusted. It became a daily habit.

“

I plan to take advantage of both Commonpoint and Per Scholas to find a job; the more networking and connections you have can help you get into better places.

Introduction

In mid-2021, Per Scholas launched the **Satellite training model** in New York City. The hybrid approach to training offers remote instruction from Per Scholas's Bronx or Brooklyn campus to learners in attendance at a partner organization's location, and taps into the organization's continually growing relationships with businesses seeking diverse and well-prepared tech talent. The reflections above from learners enrolled in Satellite cohorts in early-to mid-2022 at Commonpoint Queens and the Jewish Community Center of Staten Island illustrate the promise and importance of next generation workforce programs designed to expand access to high quality career pathway training opportunities.

Through the generous support of Barclays, Per Scholas is examining early implementation of the Satellite model in New York City. Not only does the model hold potential to scale the organization's programming in its flagship city and expand access to tech-driven careers for a broader swath of the population, but it also stands to serve as a blueprint for building similar partnerships in other sectors between skills training and community-based organizations. Early outcomes, lessons, and observations from the Satellite model can serve as a tool for policy makers, funders, workforce program leaders, and others to leverage one another's skills and grow in efficient and impactful ways.

Drawing on stakeholder interviews and classroom observations conducted throughout early 2022, program documentation and data, and context relevant to workforce development, this report provides an overview of Per Scholas and its history of expansion in New York City; describes Satellite model elements; introduces Satellite partners; and presents an analysis of Satellite model benefits, broader applicability, and aspects of the model to monitor over time.

“

Per Scholas can focus on how best to prepare job seekers for specific types of interviews, and they don't have to worry about being out in the street recruiting or making sure learners can put food on their tables in the evening, because Commonpoint does that. And together, we can turn to employers and say, 'you have a DEI problem, and we have a solution'.

Danielle Ellman, CEO of Commonpoint Queens

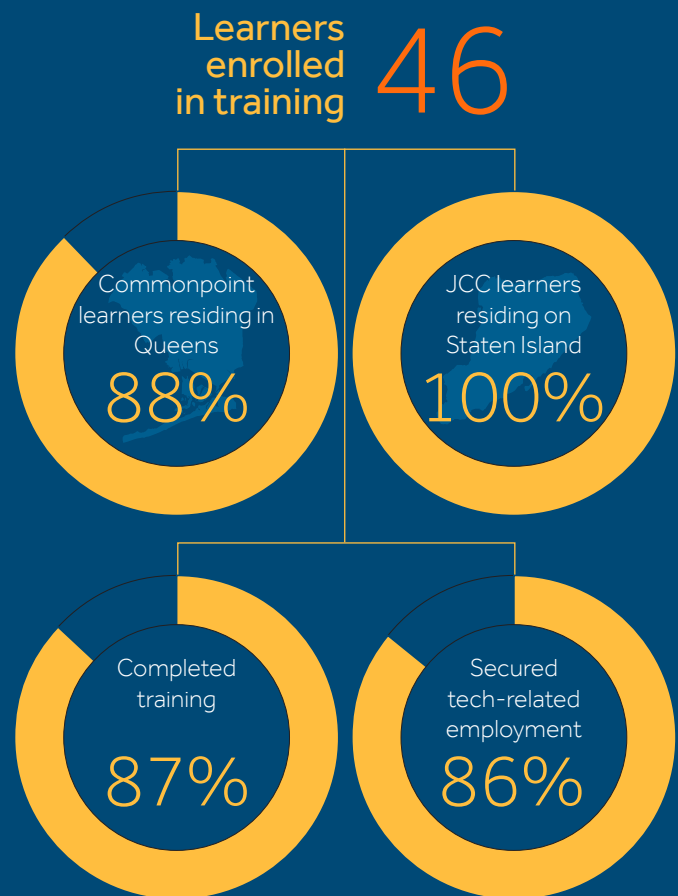
Per Scholas Overview

Per Scholas has sought to advance economic equity for more than 25 years through access to high quality training, professional development, and employment in the rapidly-growing technology sector. The demand for workers with tech skills and expertise spans nearly all industries, yet pathways into preparatory training and education programs, and subsequently into tech jobs, are not equally accessible or welcoming to all populations, including people of color and women. By providing tuition-free training that equips learners with in-demand technical and professional skills, Per Scholas sets graduates up for long-term careers with tech and tech-adjacent companies, many of whom partner with Per Scholas in part to access new and diverse talent pipelines. Headquartered in New York City, the organization engages learners and businesses across the nation at more than 20 campuses. Per Scholas has trained more than 16,000 individuals to date, and is on course to prepare 4,000 more nationwide in 2022 alone.

In addition to continued geographic expansion, Per Scholas offers a growing array of trainings beyond its signature **IT Support** program. Per Scholas learners in various markets can access **Software Engineering, Cybersecurity, and Amazon Web Services (AWS) re/Start** courses, as well as tailored training in partnership with select businesses. These programs impart valuable skills, industry-recognized certifications, and access to employment opportunities offering lucrative salaries and opportunities for career advancement. Additionally, the organization has developed “bridge” programs in partnership with community-based organizations in New York City to prepare individuals for the IT Support training by bolstering the math, reading, and comprehension skills necessary for successful program completion and entry into a tech position.¹

Satellite Program – Early Outcomes at a Glance

Per Scholas partners with community-based organizations to recruit and engage learners interested in technology careers in a hybrid training model. Between October 2021 and June 2022, Per Scholas’s first two Satellite partners, Commonpoint Queens and Jewish Community Center of Staten Island, have each implemented two IT Support cohorts. Results to date:



¹ See “Models of Success: TechBridge and CodeBridge” text box on page 6 of [Bridging New Yorkers into Good Jobs: A Toolkit for Expanding Bridge Programs in NYC](#).

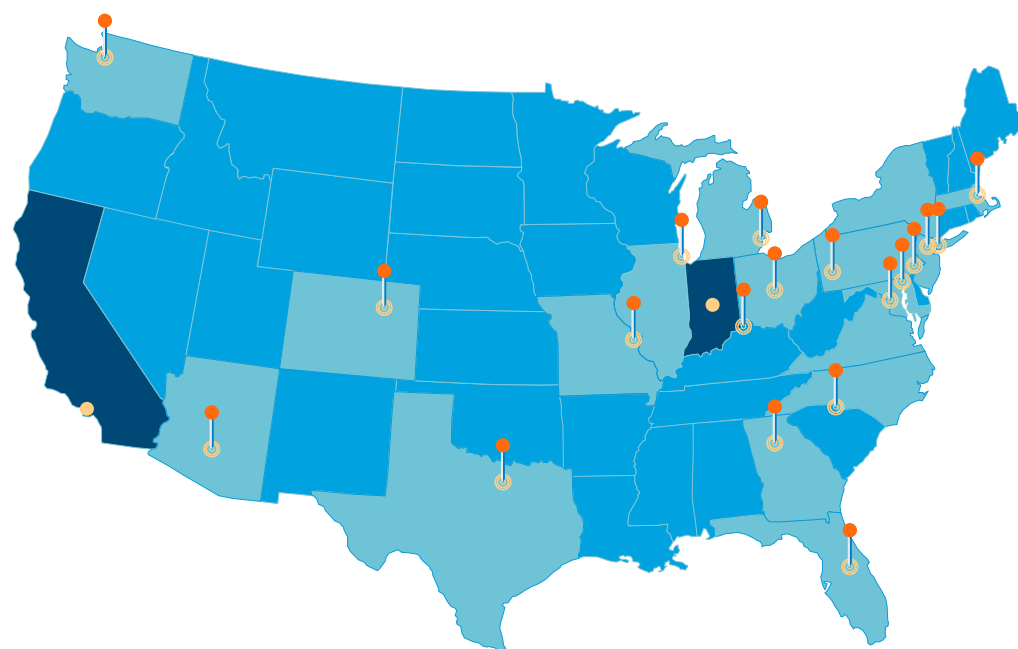
Per Scholas works with more than 650 enterprises nationwide to continually inform training content, develop programs and supportive services responsive to their needs, interact with learners, and match graduates with employment opportunities. Over the course of the decade-long relationship between Per Scholas and Barclays, for example, hundreds of the firm's employees have volunteered to participate in mock interviews, speak with training cohorts, or serve as mentors to Per Scholas learners and alumni. Moreover, dozens of Per Scholas graduates have participated in apprenticeships and accepted positions at Barclays. These employer partners run the gamut of localized tech start-ups through multinational Fortune 500 companies in the tech, finance, healthcare, and media and communications industries, among others. Not only does Per Scholas work to meet business hiring needs; through initiatives like Diverse by Design, the organization provides valuable tools and frameworks for empowering businesses and other partners to make positive strides toward increasing diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in the tech industry.

As an organization that places equal emphasis on setting both learners and businesses up to

achieve positive outcomes, Per Scholas measures success and its impact in multiple ways. The organization successfully attracts individuals of color to its programs, with 87 percent of learners enrolled in 2021 representing diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. Through a thorough and competitive recruitment process and access to a comprehensive array of supports during training, Per Scholas consistently achieves strong outcomes, with 85 percent completing training and 80 percent of graduates securing employment in a position related to training. Those who secure employment tend to stay employed throughout the first year post-training. Graduates earn on average \$21 per hour in their initial positions, putting them on the path toward jobs with family-sustaining wages.

Per Scholas views the growing centrality of technical prowess to an increasing proportion of jobs as an opportunity for continued expansion of its evidence-based, efficacious model. The organization's accelerated growth plan calls for Per Scholas to serve 10,000 learners annually through the expansion of training locations to 25 cities by 2026 and the addition of more remote and hybrid learning opportunities.

Per Scholas National Footprint | 2022



Per Scholas Locations

- Atlanta, GA
- Baltimore, MD
- Greater Boston, MA
- Chicago, IL
- Greater Cincinnati, OH
- Columbus, OH
- Dallas, TX
- Denver, CO
- Detroit, MI
- The National Capital Region
- Newark, NJ
- New York, NY
- North Carolina
- Orlando, FL
- Philadelphia, PA
- Pittsburgh, PA
- Phoenix, AZ
- Seattle, WA
- St. Louis, MO

2022 Expansion Locations

- Indianapolis, IN
- Los Angeles, CA

New York City's Tech Sector

More than two years into the COVID-19 pandemic, New York City's economy is on the upswing, though resettling in ways that continue to exacerbate long-standing inequities. The city's unemployment rate in July 2022 was 6.1 percent — down from a high of 21 percent reached in May 2020 but in excess of the historically low rate of 3.7 percent that persisted from mid-2019 through early 2020.² The rate is still nearly double the national average of 3.5 percent, as of July 2022.³

A closer look at who is represented in the city's unemployment rate — and who is not in the labor market — reveals troubling trends. A May 2022 COVID-19 Economic Update from the New School Center for New York City Affairs posited, "Black, Latinx, less-educated, and young workers will bear the brunt of high unemployment that will erode incomes for many low-income families, possibly reversing the significant progress made in the five years before the pandemic."⁴ Only 50 percent of working-age Black New Yorkers were employed during the first quarter of 2022, and nearly half of currently unemployed Black New Yorkers qualify as long-term unemployed (more than six months).⁵ The percentage of working-age Asian-Americans in the labor market has dropped considerably during the pandemic, falling from 60 percent employed in 2020 to 52 percent by early 2022.⁶ Previous gains in employment rates among young adults were wiped out by the pandemic; the unemployment rate for 16-24 year olds by the end of 2021 was nearly 21 percent.⁷

Tech has been and continues to represent a high growth industry with opportunities for thriving wage jobs available for individuals with a broad array of educational and experiential profiles. While COVID-19 has continued to exacerbate unemployment and low wages, over 82,000 tech roles were available in the New York City metropolitan region in the first quarter of 2022 alone.⁸ Of those positions with salary ranges posted, wages start at \$55,000 per year — a living wage salary for an individual New Yorker — and average \$110,000 annually. This volume of tech job postings indicates growing demand in the sector; an analysis of job posting data between April and November 2020 placed tech in the lead relative to other sectors, with nearly 68,000 postings, but lagging by 37 percent compared to the same period in 2019.⁹ On any given day in March 2022, there were roughly 7,000 to 8,000 more unique tech job postings than in the year prior.

Compared with other well-paying professional positions, many roles in tech are unusually accessible. While all tech jobs require some post-secondary skills, nearly half of the job postings referenced above do not specify a minimum level of education, and 45 percent do not require prior tech experience. Tech jobs are projected to grow by at least 1 million in the next ten years. It follows that one of the most promising economic mobility strategies for many New Yorkers, especially those economically displaced by COVID-19, is to enter high-quality technology careers.

² U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. [Local Area Unemployment Statistics - New York City](#). Accessed August 24, 2022.

³ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. [Civilian Unemployment Rate](#). Accessed August 24, 2022.

⁴ Parrott, James A. "Considering the recent economic turmoil, three problems are likely to beset the city's job market for the next year or two." The New School Center for New York City Affairs. May 12, 2022.

⁵ Parrott, James A. "New York City has gained back 100,000 jobs during the firsts four months of this year, but employment in face-to-face industries is still nearly 10 percent below pre-pandemic levels." The New School Center for New York City Affairs. June 2, 2022.

⁶ *ibid*

⁷ "New York City's Uneven Recovery: An Analysis of Labor Force Trends." Office of the New York State Comptroller. Report 3-2023. May 2022.

⁸ "Job Posting Analytics: Emsi Q1 2022 Data Set. New York-Newark-Jersey City." Prepared for Per Scholas. April 2022.

⁹ Amandolare, Sarah, and Eli Dvorkin. "Preparing New Yorkers for the Tech Jobs Driving NYC's Pandemic Economy". Center for an Urban Future and Per Scholas. May 2021.

Expanding the Per Scholas Footprint in New York City

Throughout Per Scholas's more than 25 years of operations in New York City, the organization's capacity to prepare more learners for careers in tech has grown, both incrementally and in bursts. Per Scholas gradually increased the number of learners engaged annually in its initial years, adding a new cohort when possible. In 2012, Per Scholas began adding to its roster of training offerings beyond IT Support.¹⁰ The 2016 opening of a Brooklyn campus allowed Per Scholas to serve more New Yorkers, followed by the addition of remote training options in 2020. Per Scholas trained more than 600 individuals in New York City in 2021, and demand for the organization's training offerings continues to exceed available seats.

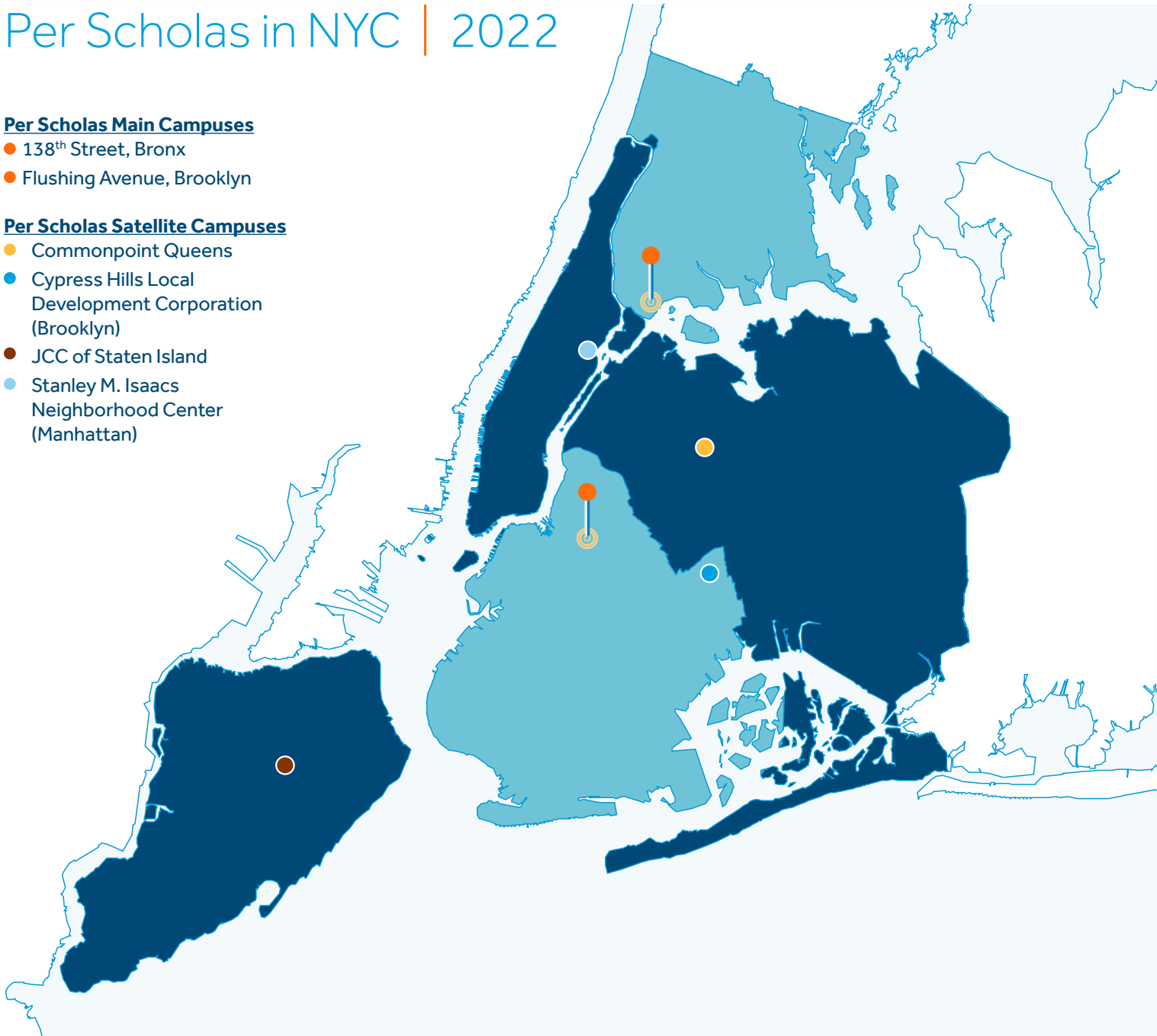
Per Scholas in NYC | 2022

Per Scholas Main Campuses

- 138th Street, Bronx
- Flushing Avenue, Brooklyn

Per Scholas Satellite Campuses

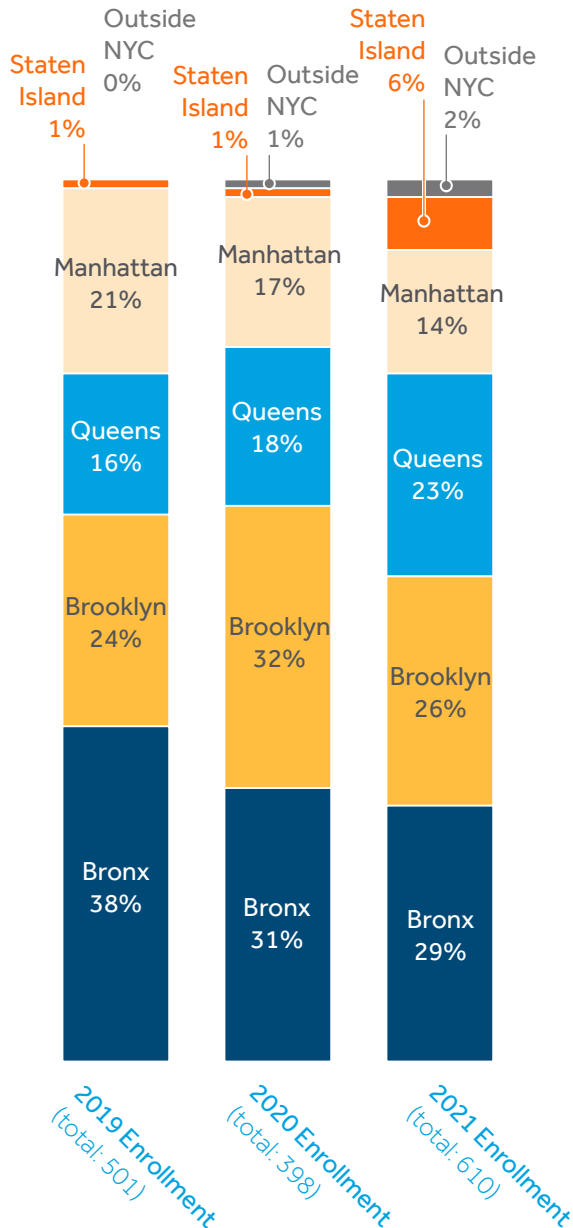
- Commonpoint Queens
- Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation (Brooklyn)
- JCC of Staten Island
- Stanley M. Isaacs Neighborhood Center (Manhattan)



¹⁰ In 2012, Per Scholas also opened its first location outside of New York City, establishing a site in Columbus, Ohio.

As a data-driven and informed organization, in addition to its dedication to increasing diversity in the tech industry, Per Scholas leadership and staff regularly review data on learners and applicants to guide strategy and decision making. Analysis over the years on where learners reside revealed some consistent patterns and insights into where Per Scholas has built a foothold. While learners hail from across the five boroughs, not surprisingly they come primarily from the Bronx and Brooklyn, the boroughs where Per Scholas campuses are located (see below).

Learner by Borough Breakdown 2019-2021



Diversity in the Tech Industry

Diversity in the workplace has garnered attention, research, pledges, and some hand-wringing in recent years. Beyond calls for ensuring that a company's or industry's workforce more accurately reflects the demographic composition of a local market, a more diverse workplace confers other advantages. Documented examples include greater innovation as a result of drawing upon different perspectives and life experiences, better customer service, and higher rates of employee retention.

The technology sector, in particular, has attracted attention for its relative lack of diversity. A 2014 report produced by the U.S. Employment Equal Opportunity Commission found that the sector's workforce was disproportionately white (68.5 percent) and male (64 percent) relative to the composition of the overall working-age population (63.5 and 52 percent, respectively). The imbalance was even more glaring at the executive level, with 83 percent of positions occupied by white workers.¹¹ Recent analyses on New York City's tech sector point to a predominantly white (46.6 percent) and Asian (29.7 percent) workforce—groups that comprise just half of the city's overall population—with underrepresentation by Hispanic and Black populations. Similarly, New York City's tech sector is dominated by men, who hold three-quarters of the city's tech positions.¹²

Organizations like Per Scholas exist in part to expand and diversify talent pipelines into industries like tech. This aspect of the organization's mission appeals to firms, like Barclays, that make a habit of conducting analyses on the composition of their workforce, using that information to set and work toward goals for achieving greater diversity company-wide. Meaningful progress toward ensuring workplaces better reflect the composition of their surrounding communities will not occur absent honest reflection on what factors systematically exclude or preclude some from accessing employment in tech.

¹¹ [Diversity in Tech](#). U.S. Employment Economic Opportunity Commission. 2016.

¹² Richling, Billy and Jonathan Bowles. [New York's New Jobs Engine](#). Tech NYC and Center for an Urban Future. July 2022

Notably, these patterns hold for in-person as well as fully remote course offerings. Per Scholas, in spite of concerted efforts to make courses accessible to New Yorkers citywide, confirmed through data limitations of the organization's ability to broaden geographic reach on its own.

A relatively small percentage of learners are from Staten Island.¹³ This is not surprising. An individual taking the Staten Island Ferry to lower Manhattan and the subway to Per Scholas's Bronx location would need to allow for at least 90 minutes to board and take the ferry, disembark and walk to the subway, take the subway to the Bronx with one transfer, and walk to Per Scholas — and this does not factor in the time it takes for that individual to travel from home to the ferry terminal. Driving can reduce the commute time but increase the cost given tolls, gas, and parking. Travel time to the Per Scholas Brooklyn campus is also lengthy, in spite of the proximity of Staten Island to Brooklyn. A similar story takes shape for residents of Queens, especially those in the eastern areas of the borough with fewer public transportation options.

Increasing access to quality tech training has shaped Per Scholas's strategies and goals from the start, but the data on where learners live made clear to leadership and staff alike that traditional outreach methods to connect with potential learners across New York City were falling short. Per Scholas has built referral relationships with a broad

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A challenge is getting disadvantaged people to see themselves as part of the larger NYC community. The Staten Island ferry is free, but that's a big journey for some people, especially those who don't see themselves as part of New York City.

LauraJean Watters, Executive Director of the Staten Island Foundation



¹³ The increase in learners residing on Staten Island in 2021 (table, previous page) is attributable primarily to the establishment of the JCC of Staten Island Satellite site.

array of workforce, educational, and human service organizations across the city — both to redirect individuals who might not be a good fit for Per Scholas or ready to enroll in training and to establish recruitment pipelines with organizations that might come into contact with people interested in tech training. These linkages alone, however, only go so far in expanding Per Scholas's reach into some communities or populations less likely to happen upon its courses on their own.

Expansion Through Partnership: The Satellite Model

Recognizing limitations to growth in New York City absent opening new campuses, in mid-2021 Per Scholas sought to expand its footprint and increase access to its tech training programs by establishing Satellite locations in partnership with community-based organizations embedded in strategic locations. New York City is home to hundreds of community-based organizations and other nonprofits that work with job seekers to prepare for, secure, and succeed in employment. The strategies used by these organizations vary, but many of them have built deep roots in their immediate communities or boroughs, serving as trusted resources for assistance with employment and other supportive needs.

Key elements of the Satellite approach — embedded partnership and remote instruction — were not without precedent for Per Scholas. Expansion efforts in Denver involved, for the first time, a partnership with an existing organization possessing essential programmatic capacities and alignment with Per Scholas's goals and values. And Per Scholas began experimenting with remote-hybrid instruction in early 2020, engaging learners in Dallas through training provided by an instructor at the Bronx campus. The organization's relatively smooth transition to a remote environment in response to the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated

thinking about the Satellite concept and instilled confidence in leadership, staff, and key external supporters to test it.

Per Scholas conceptualized the Satellite model partially in response to continued and growing demand for tech talent in New York City and beyond. But the model that has emerged is also responsive to conditions within the local workforce ecosystem. As Per Scholas CEO Plinio Ayala reflected, "The Satellite model is a way to combine what we're learning in Denver and in Dallas. How do we find best-in-class workforce development programs in New York City and enlist our best-in-class staff to provide support?" The Satellite model, described in the next section, is poised as a next generation workforce strategy designed to take advantage of advances in technology and remote learning modalities, open training and careers in technology to a broader portion of the city's diverse population, and ultimately yield cost savings overall by leveraging the expertise, community relationships, and excess capacity of partner agencies and Per Scholas.



The Satellite model allows Per Scholas to meet the growing demand for tech training and will help more individuals launch upwardly mobile careers. Critically, Per Scholas will be able to further break down barriers and create access for learners across New York City and beyond.

Deborah Goldfarb, Global Head of Citizenship for Barclays

The Per Scholas Satellite Model

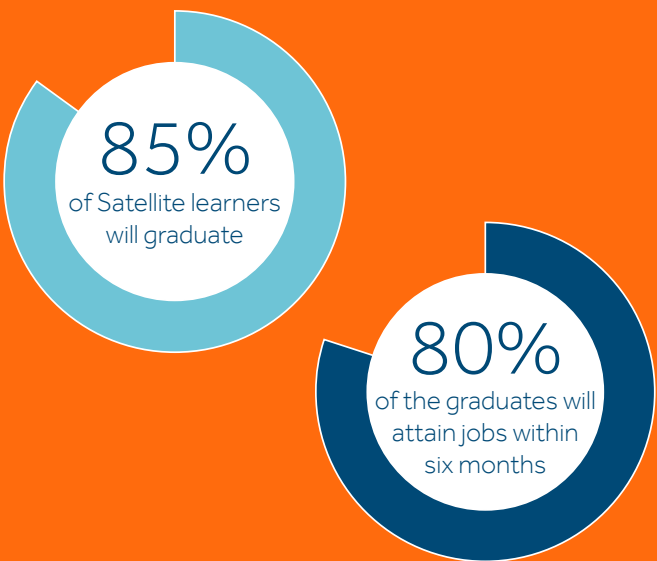
Through the Satellite model, Per Scholas identifies and selects partner organizations to recruit candidates to participate in a hybrid learning training model. Satellite partners host training on-site in a classroom designed and equipped by Per Scholas with high-definition cameras and microphones, smart boards, and large LED screens. Instructors and teaching assistants from Per Scholas facilitate training simultaneously for two classrooms of learners — one cohort at a Per Scholas campus, and one cohort at a Satellite location — using teleconferencing and cloud-based learning management technology.

Learners enrolled at Satellite locations experience the same programming and are held to the same expectations as those enrolled at Per Scholas. Staff from Per Scholas and Satellite organizations work collaboratively to provide professional development curriculum, exposure to the tech industry (e.g., through mock interviews and guest speakers), and career planning and job search assistance. Each partner organization receives a one-time grant from Per Scholas to subsidize start-up costs.

Over time, Satellite partner organizations are expected to assume greater responsibility for program recruitment, career development and supportive services, and connecting learners to employment. These partners, to date, vary in terms of existing capacity to take on programmatic activities; as such, it is likely each site will adopt a customized timeline for moving into the lead on activities like business engagement and professional development. Similarly, partners will assume responsibility for raising the funding necessary to support Satellite programming, staffing, and related costs, though some fundraising will occur in partnership with Per Scholas.

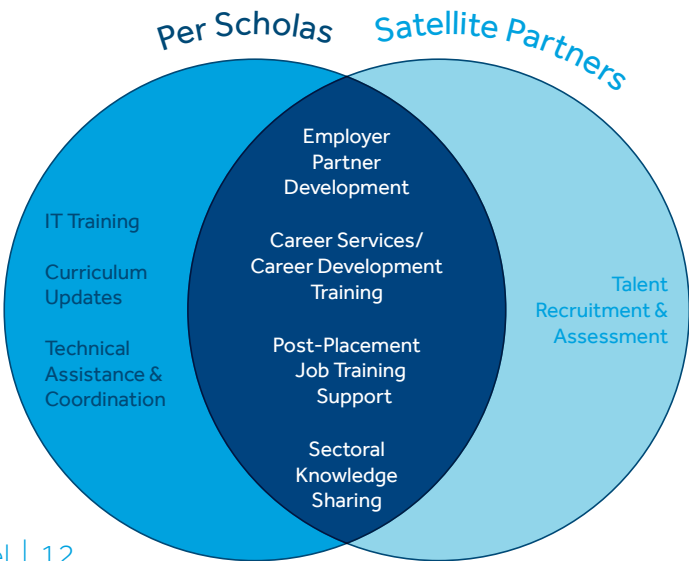
Per Scholas Performance Standards

Per Scholas holds each of its sites to high standards and extends these expectations to its Satellite partners:



Average wages of the placed graduates, their retention rates, and early career advancement will be comparable to that of learners who take the same course(s) in Per Scholas's traditional classrooms.

Per Scholas & Partner Roles



Satellite Partner Selection

Per Scholas drew upon its extensive experience and consulted with trusted peers and partners to develop a set of criteria to guide the identification and selection of Satellite partner organizations. While partner selection in reality relies on a combination of science and art — meeting objective criteria and passing a subjective “gut” feeling test — the following dimensions figure prominently into Per Scholas’s selection process to date:

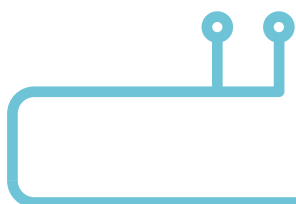
- **Leadership** buy-in to ensure effective communication, training quality, data-sharing, and continuous program and partnership oversight;
- **Organizational capacity**, including fundraising, data collection and analysis, partnership management, and overall adaptability to new modes of operating;
- **Adequate space**, specifically, a dedicated classroom that can accommodate a program cohort and training equipment, and high-speed internet or the ability to upgrade network quality; and
- **Programmatic capacity** to initially support and eventually lead aspects of program outreach and recruitment, professional development, learner support or wraparound services, and business engagement.

With these elements in place, Per Scholas is working from the hypothesis that each entity’s relative expertise can be harnessed to effectively expand the organization’s reach and impact in a more efficient manner.

Per Scholas Expansion vs. Satellite Initiative

Per Scholas’s growth strategy has been fueled in large part through expansion to new markets in cities across the country. The organization has honed a comprehensive process for identifying, vetting, and selecting a new location for program operations. Considerations include the types and quantity of tech jobs available in the area, the presence — or lack — of other tech training programs, and desire on the part of the existing community of service providers, philanthropic entities, businesses, and municipal agencies for an organization like Per Scholas to set up shop. The last consideration, in particular, carries weight for Per Scholas’s Expansion team: “We let the community opt in versus us declaring our presence,” Chelsea Clarke, Senior Director of Expansion Markets.

One significant distinguishing factor between the Expansion and Satellite approaches centers on the engagement of community partners; while Per Scholas strives to establish relationships with community-based organizations in other markets, it has not embedded itself in another organization in a manner similar to the Satellite model, with the exception of its partnership with ActivateWork in Denver. Per Scholas has also not yet established a hybrid classroom approach in its other markets or between either New York City campus and another market. Satellite, however, might prove applicable in a market covering a large geographic area with sufficient tech employment opportunities dispersed throughout. If an appropriate community organization in a remote suburban or even rural area, for example, can be identified to partner with the Per Scholas campus in the central business district, the Satellite model is one promising strategy for increasing access to training for more prospective learners.



Commonpoint Queens

MISSION

Commonpoint Queens is dedicated to sustaining and enhancing the quality of individual, family and communal life throughout Queens, through services to people of all ages, ability levels, stages of life and backgrounds.

WHY COMMONPOINT QUEENS?

A relationship between Commonpoint Queens and Per Scholas developed in 2019 through a program referral initiative supported by UJA-Federation. The opening of the Commonpoint Queens Hub in 2020 and efforts to house a broad array of technical training offerings sparked the organization's interest in tech training.

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTERISTICS (QUEENS COMMUNITY DISTRICT 4)

The area is home to a large and diverse immigrant population. Just over half of the community surrounding the Commonpoint Queens Hub is Hispanic, and one-third of residents are of Asian descent.

IMPLEMENTATION STATUS

The Commonpoint Queens Satellite pilot cohort launched in mid-October 2021. Three cohorts of the IT Support program are taking place in 2022, and Commonpoint Queens will run its first Cybersecurity cohort in late 2022.

commonpointqueens.org

Satellite Model Rollout

Per Scholas initiated its first conversations about the Satellite model with key stakeholders, including core business partners and longstanding philanthropic supporters, in early 2021. An enthusiastic reception on the part of members of New York City's private and corporate philanthropic community laid the groundwork for an official Fall 2021 pilot launch of the Satellite model with two partners, Commonpoint Queens and Jewish Community Center of Staten Island (JCC). In 2022, Per Scholas is running Satellite training cohorts at Commonpoint Queens and JCC, and has initiated Satellite programming with two additional partners, Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation and Stanley Isaacs Neighborhood Center. (See Satellite partner profiles).

In the lead up to launch, Per Scholas established a New York City Strategic Partnerships team to facilitate partner selection and lead the day-to-day operations of the Satellite initiative. Per Scholas Strategic Partnerships and other affiliated staff onboard their counterparts at the partner organizations and establish the collaborative working relationships necessary to support program implementation and operations across the sites. As will be detailed later in this report, a culture of reflection and continuous improvement has been critical to refining and improving the onboarding process and program implementation at current and new Satellite organizations.

The four initial Satellite cohorts operated by Commonpoint Queens and JCC of Staten Island enrolled a total of 46 learners.¹⁴ Across the two sites, 87 percent completed training and 86 percent have secured employment. Cumulatively, Per Scholas expects to enroll up to 120 learners at Satellite sites throughout 2022. This capacity is expected to expand in 2023 through the addition of a fifth Satellite site and operation of two to three cohorts per site annually. Altogether, Per Scholas's two campuses and four Satellite locations have expanded the organization's capacity to enroll 700 learners in 2022, an almost 30 percent increase over 2021 enrollments.

Benefits and Programmatic Adjustments Emerging from the Satellite Partnership Model

While Per Scholas, its partners, and supporters hypothesized multiple likely and potential benefits of the Satellite model, early implementation experiences are testing and refining those hunches in real time. It will take at least a couple of years to assess whether and how predicted long-term benefits of the model bear out, but the first year of the Satellite program points to promising outcomes and impacts for learners, businesses, Per Scholas, Satellite partners and their communities, investors, and the broader workforce ecosystem, along with some challenges or areas for improvement.

The content that follows draws on established best practices in workforce development and training generally, along with the experiences and reflections to date on Satellite program ramp-up, implementation, and early outcomes. Implementation-focused evidence derives primarily from experiences to date at Commonpoint Queens and JCC of Staten Island.

The Satellite model is broadening Per Scholas's reach into new communities and addressing unmet demand for locally accessible tech training. A

driving motivation for launching the Satellite model with Commonpoint Queens and JCC of Staten Island rode on their ability to engage prospective learners — and eventually employers — from their respective communities. Data on outreach and enrollment provides credence to this hunch; 88 percent and 100 percent of learners enrolled to date at Commonpoint and JCC, respectively, reside in the surrounding borough. The value of the partner organizations for getting new individuals through the door was underscored during focus groups with Commonpoint and JCC learners. When asked how

Joan & Alan Bernikow Jewish Community Center of Staten Island (JCC of Staten Island)

MISSION

JCC of Staten Island, one of the borough's largest social service agencies, provides social, recreational, and educational activities to help improve the quality of life for people on Staten Island and beyond.

WHY JCC OF STATEN ISLAND

JCC of Staten Island participated in a UJA-Federation referral network with Per Scholas. Simultaneously, Staten Island's dearth of tech training options prompted the Borough President's Office and the Chamber of Commerce to assess partnership opportunities with established tech training providers, like Per Scholas. These entities, in partnership with local philanthropic support, advocated for bringing the Satellite model to Staten Island and worked together to identify a local implementation partner.

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTERISTICS (STATEN ISLAND COMMUNITY DISTRICT 2)

The community where JCC of Staten Island is located is predominantly white (61 percent), though it houses sizable Asian and Hispanic populations (18 and 14 percent, respectively).

IMPLEMENTATION STATUS

JCC of Staten Island's pilot cohort launched in November 2021. The organization is hosting two IT Support program cohorts in 2022.

sijcc.org

they heard about the training and whether they were familiar with Per Scholas prior to enrollment, only one person had heard of Per Scholas independently; Commonpoint and JCC served as pivotal doorways into the training.

Learners to date receive what appears to be an equal training experience. A paramount concern of Per Scholas and many of its stakeholders is ensuring that learners enrolled at the partner site of a blended cohort undergo a training and employment experience similar to that of learners enrolled at Per Scholas. Achieving parity holds financial, reputational, and equity implications for all stakeholders involved — learners, employers, investors, partner sites, and Per Scholas — in the immediate and long-term. Time will tell whether and in what influential ways the experiences of learners at a partner site differed from that of their Per Scholas-based counterparts, but early indicators and reflections lend credence to the assertion learners are receiving largely equal experiences. Learners in the inaugural Commonpoint and JCC

cohorts completed training at rates exceeding Per Scholas's standard (85 percent), and an equally high percentage passed industry certification exams. In fact, these learners secured employment at an accelerated rate, with nearly 80 percent accepting job offers within four weeks of graduation. Per Scholas will monitor employment retention rates, career advancement, and wage gain for up to two years, paying close attention to any differences between learners on these longer-term outcomes.

The Satellite model incorporates an extensive scaffolding of capacity building supports to set partner organizations — and the partnerships — up for success. While the Satellite model emerged first and foremost as a strategy for expanding the number and geographic scope of learners Per Scholas engages in New York City, it is also acknowledged as a way to collectively strengthen the capacity of partner organizations to implement robust sector-focused programming. To address both goals, the Per Scholas Strategic Partnerships team has developed and invested in a broad array of capacity building offerings for partner



organizations up front and throughout the course of the partnership. In addition to imparting specific technical approaches to the work, these offerings contribute to ongoing efforts to develop or enhance organizational cultures supportive of continuous improvement, DEI and access, and collective impact.

A Satellite “ecosystem” is taking shape, linking Satellite partners to one another as well as to Per Scholas. Overall success of the Satellite model depends not just on Per Scholas or on the individual partnerships; as the size of the program grows, the potential for Satellite partnerships to impact one another for better or worse increases. Satellite expansion is, in part, premised on decreasing the amount of time the Per Scholas Strategic Partnerships team spends with the first set of partners as those organizations take on more programmatic responsibilities and internalize the approaches modeled by Per Scholas. Those shifts are starting to occur; during the second round of Satellite trainings in early 2022, Commonpoint Queens took nearly sole responsibility for outreach, recruitment, and admissions duties, and JCC staff felt better prepared to anticipate learner needs and what professional development concepts are more likely to require reinforcement and practice.

Another way in which these transfers are taking place involves cross-organization communication and troubleshooting. Some of this exchange is facilitated by Per Scholas, for example, through a four-part Sector Bootcamp developed by Workforce Professionals Training Institute and offered to

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We speak with Commonpoint a lot. They’ve been amazing and were able to tell us what works and doesn’t work. This will help us recruit the right candidates. They’ve also shared some of their forms and processes.

Shayla Simpson, Director of Education and Workforce at Stanley M. Isaacs Neighborhood Center

Stanley M. Isaacs Neighborhood Center

MISSION

The Stanley M. Isaacs Neighborhood Center (Isaacs Center) is a non-profit, multi-service organization located on the Upper East Side of Manhattan focused on the needs of children and low-income families, out-of-school and out-of-work youth, and aging New Yorkers, including isolated and homebound elderly neighbors.

WHY THE ISAACS CENTER?

Per Scholas and the Isaacs Center have a history of making client referrals to one another, lending familiarity with each other’s programming and approach up front. Additionally, the Isaacs Center is located in a neighborhood geographically accessible to multiple areas of the city, including the Bronx and Lower Manhattan. The organization’s recent merger with Goddard Riverside Community Center positions the newly combined organization with footholds on the east and west sides of Upper Manhattan to provide access to an even broader swath of the city’s population.

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTERISTICS (MANHATTAN COMMUNITY DISTRICTS 8 AND 11)

The Isaacs Center is located at the northern tip of Manhattan’s Community District (CD) 8 and draws clientele from the neighboring CD11. While CD8 is nearly three-quarters white, CD11’s population is predominantly Hispanic and Black (45 and 28 percent, respectively).

IMPLEMENTATION STATUS

The Isaacs Center launched its pilot IT Support Satellite cohort in early June 2022 and will enroll a second cohort in November 2022.

isaacscenter.org

Satellite partners in mid-2022. But many of the Satellite partner organizations possess pre-existing relationships with one another and are leveraging these relationships to provide and request advice, support, and camaraderie while taking part in a novel approach to workforce development. This ecosystem can and should figure into casemaking efforts with funders and other stakeholders interested in supporting and expanding the impact of scalable models like Satellite.

Per Scholas and its Satellite partners are building a compelling story about collaborative outcomes and impacts. Satellite partnerships hold potential to yield multiple positive outcomes for learners, businesses, the surrounding communities, and the partner organizations. Commonpoint Queens provides its Satellite learners with access to free lunch, prepared by participants in the organization's culinary training program; Alanna Hughes, Per Scholas's Senior Vice President of Implementation Strategy, commented that this and other supportive offerings "brings so many things to the table we wouldn't have known can make a difference...it sets a high bar." Per Scholas, in turn, brings strategies and practices around outcomes measurement, learner engagement, and building a compelling narrative about the program for various

audiences, among other assets, to bear in its interactions with its partners. The Satellite model is making good on the promise of partnerships becoming greater than the sum of their parts.

The Satellite model holds promise for achieving greater efficiencies in staffing and costs in the long-run, but will necessitate Per Scholas staff to play significant roles in program implementation and administration for longer than anticipated.

Standing up and supporting Satellite relationships consumes full-time attention for the Per Scholas Strategic Partnerships team, but also requires significant investments of time and talent on the part of other staff from across the organization — Development, Administration, Training and Technology, Business Solutions, Learner Support, and the Executive team, to name a few. As Per Scholas accumulates experience and continues to codify and institutionalize practices, the draw on organization-wide staff time will potentially lessen with each new partnership. With a long-term focus on lowering the cost of training through the Satellite model, ensuring that the administrative costs that are less easy to estimate are fully accounted for will be critical to demonstrating where cost efficiencies can be gained over time. The same goes for partner organizations.



Early Implementation Learnings from the Satellite Model for the Workforce Field

The Satellite model is premised on a set of assumptions informed by Per Scholas's past two-and-a-half decade track record, learnings, and evolution. Even with substantial evidence supporting the design of the Satellite model, Per Scholas, its partners, and supporters took something of a leap of faith starting in mid-2021 with the first contracts drawn up, classrooms outfitted, staff onboarded, and learners recruited into a new hybrid model. The organization's early learnings yield valuable information and insights for other organizations considering partnership-driven models for expanding reach and impact.

The applicability of Satellite partnership selection criteria and necessary organizational capacities transcend Per Scholas's specific use. Many of these criteria draw upon validated principles of partnership and further account for the hybrid nature of class instruction. The Per Scholas Satellite program centers on tech training, necessitating access to relevant equipment and tools to facilitate instruction. However, trainings in sectors beyond tech make use of computers and similar tools, rendering the tech-focused training distinction less meaningful when considering applicability of Satellite model tenets and partner capacities to trainings in other sectors.



We're conscious from a budget perspective that the Satellite approach will be less expensive than starting a new brick and mortar, but that there are costs for the Satellite site that won't be reflected in the Per Scholas budget.

Rose Schapiro, Senior Program Officer at The Tiger Foundation

Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation

MISSION

With community residents leading the way, the mission of Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation is to build a strong, equitable East New York, where youth and adults achieve educational and economic success, secure and preserve affordable housing, and develop leadership skills to transform their lives and community.

WHY CYPRESS HILLS LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION?

The organization's long-standing presence and embeddedness in the East New York section of Brooklyn position Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation as a trusted local resource.

Additionally, Cypress Hills is the co-developer of Chestnut Commons, an affordable housing complex and community center where the Satellite program and other workforce offerings are housed. Selection as a Satellite partner coincided with the development of Chestnut Commons, allowing Cypress Hills to design an optimal training facility for the program.

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTERISTICS (BROOKLYN COMMUNITY DISTRICT 4)

The Cypress Hills neighborhood attracts a diverse population; as of 2020, half of the residents were Hispanic, nearly one-quarter white, and 15 percent Black.

IMPLEMENTATION STATUS

Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation began its first IT Support Satellite cohort in late summer 2022.

cypresshills.org

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At the most basic level there was an expectation of integrating physical technology to make the model operate. While this might not seem like something people have to deal with these days, it is a real issue; the digital divide is significant...When you're doing a program like this, you don't want to see glitches in the technology.

Greg Morris, former Executive Director of Stanley M. Isaacs Neighborhood Center

Per Scholas's emphasis on assessing prospective partner capacity and fit up front is critical to partnership launch and sustainability. Per Scholas established criteria for selecting Satellite partners including dimensions of leadership, organizational capacity, physical space specs, and programmatic capacity (see page 13). By and large these elements have helped to narrow the field of potential collaborators and provided substantive touch points for Per Scholas to continually refer to as the partnerships take shape and evolve. The experience of launching four partnerships and running multiple program cohorts has informed potential refinements and additional selection criteria. Suggestions offered by an array of stakeholders interviewed for this report include the following considerations:

- **Fundraising and development** - What is a prospective partner's history of and track record with securing philanthropic funding?
- **Past performance** - Do the prospective partner's programmatic outcomes — including program completion rates, ability to connect learners to employment, and business engagement success — approach or match those achieved by Per Scholas?
- **Staffing** - What is the level of experience and number of existing staff likely to play direct and indirect roles on the Satellite program? How will the prospective partner hire additional staff to support the program if needed?
- **External perception and relationships** - How

do employers, leaders, residents, and other stakeholders in the prospective partner's community perceive the organization? Is the organization a trusted institution?

- **Physical space** - Can the audio and visual equipment be installed away from the HVAC system? Are the room's outlets in good working condition? Is there any legacy equipment installed in the room?
- **Data collection and analysis** - Are there opportunities to align data systems or share access to facilitate more efficient data collection, entry, and analysis?

Many of these considerations are being incorporated into Per Scholas's rubric for assessing prospective new partners, as well as into materials being developed to guide new partner onboarding and ongoing partnership maintenance.

Establishing an impactful partnership requires clearly and honestly identifying each party's core competencies and any collaborative gaps up front.

The Satellite model is premised on the concept of the whole being greater than the sum of its parts. All parties involved bring strengths and unique value to the partnership; the cumulative effect is, ideally, something no one organization could achieve on its own. Building up to the Satellite framework required Per Scholas to make an honest assessment of its own strengths and weaknesses as an organization and set aspirational but realistic expectations for using strategic partnerships to address identified

gaps. With extensive validation of the organization's training model and learner outcomes,¹⁵ Per Scholas leadership could home in on the efficacy of historic efforts to increase diversity of and access to training and career pathways in tech. More formally leveraging the embeddedness of community-based organizations in locations relatively cut off from Per Scholas crystallized as a driving rationale for pursuing the Satellite model.

For Satellite partner organizations, a common reflection in interviews focused on the ability to play to each organization's respective strengths as a significant asset of the model. Lowell Herschberger, Director of Career and Education Programs at Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation, views the Satellite partnership as one that "brings us back to our roots: place-based and focused on specific sectors, but with an appreciation for what it takes to be a real sectoral leader." Recognizing the sweat equity invested by Per Scholas in becoming a credible leader in the tech training space, Cypress Hills gains access to a deep set of knowledge, connections, and reputation by partnering with Per Scholas in lieu of launching its own tech program, while Per Scholas benefits from the presence and trust built over decades between Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation and its surrounding community. Together, the organizations can focus on their respective core competencies.

Sufficient upfront investments of time and resources into Satellite partnerships cannot be underestimated — and may be instrumental to achieving cost and service efficiencies in the long run. Equipping partners to operate programming in line with the rigorous standards established and honed by Per Scholas requires significant upfront investment of staff time and resources. Satellite partners hired staff specifically to implement program elements; Commonpoint Queens, for example, brought on a Technical Bridge Instructor to handle the Professional Development component of the training, provide supportive services, and address learner and partner needs as they arise. Per Scholas's Strategic Partnerships team — itself established in large part to ensure the success of the Satellite model — conducts meetings with



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We tried to get into tech for awhile...but we realize we don't have the name or recognition to do it on our own.

Brynn McCormick,
Assistant Vice President
of Adult Employment at
Commonpoint Queens

¹⁵ See [Tuning into Local Labor Markets: Findings from the Sectoral Employment Impact Study](#) (Public/Private Ventures, 2010) and [Long-Term Effects of a Sectoral Advancement Study: Costs, Benefits, and Impacts from the WorkAdvance Demonstration](#) (MDRC, 2020).



Few funders take into account the staff time needed to make all of the inroads in a new community to recruit. [The Satellite model] really can save Per Scholas time, energy, and money in the long run.

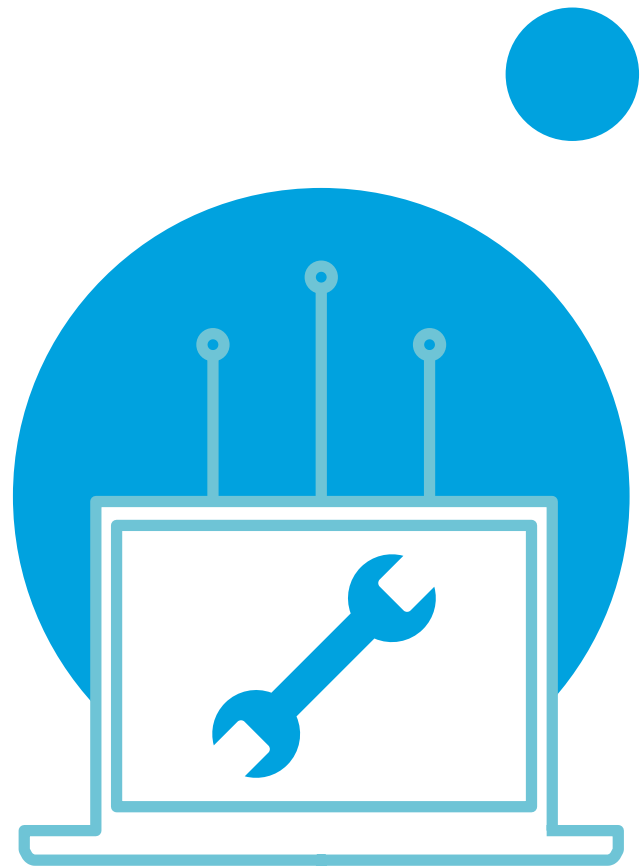
Jessica Champness, Vice President of Development (Northeast) at Per Scholas

partner staff at least once per week prior to the start of the first cohort, involving programmatic staff as relevant. Frequent touch points with partnerships, programmatic, and technical staff are put in place during recruitment and the 12-week duration of the first cohort; this “handholding” is a necessary cost of ensuring model fidelity and identification of valuable lessons to inform future program cohorts and partnerships.

Early learnings from the initial Satellite cohorts implemented with Commonpoint and JCC of Staten Island led Per Scholas to develop a more robust onboarding process inclusive of a broader array of staff; starting with Stanley M. Isaacs Neighborhood Center, the third Satellite partner, this involved inviting staff only tangentially affiliated with the Satellite program into a portion of the kickoff meeting to ensure greater awareness of the partnership and its potential relevance to their roles. The Strategic Partnerships team is focused on codifying onboarding and programmatic processes; this work ideally will support the eventual shift to fewer check-in meetings, more clear chains of command for flagging issues that do arise, and an increase in efficiencies gained over time on the part of Per Scholas and its partners.

Partnerships like those established for the Satellite model are not yet the norm, necessitating different approaches to the funding and reporting of outcomes. While partnership is frequently held up as an ideal vehicle for expanding impact or bringing programs to scale, funding and grant reporting standards often cut short the ability to fully execute

partnerships. A common sentiment among funders of the Satellite model was that “it would get messy if we were funding [a Satellite organization] and Per Scholas for the same program.” A subcontracting relationship, for example, between Per Scholas and Satellite organizations, where all outcomes roll up into those of the lead agency is more representative of how collaborative programs are typically funded. Subcontracting relationships constitute one component of Per Scholas’s engagement with Satellite partners, but are not intended to cover the full scope of funding necessary to operate the program initially or in the future. Telling the Satellite model story beyond the initial years will require some flexibility on the part of funders and creative engagement of these partners by Per Scholas and the Satellite organizations.



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People are influenced by what's around them. It's interesting how you hear people in the neighborhood talk about job opportunities - 'The court is hiring officers.' Now we're starting to hear kids ask, 'What's up with that tech program?'

Damion Samuels, Senior Director of Youth Services and Community Engagement at Stanley Isaacs Neighborhood Center

Tech Training Barriers to Access and the Satellite Model

A driving motivation behind the Satellite model pertains to its potential to address enduring barriers to expanding access to tech training for diverse populations. The Satellite approach will engage approximately 120 New York City learners in 2022, growing to more than 200 in 2023 and beyond; this approach, alone, will not make tech training for all possible, but holds promise for expanding access to training for currently underserved and underrepresented populations. The analysis that follows draws significantly on reflections from Per Scholas and Satellite partner staff regarding barriers to access and the promise of the Satellite model to mitigate them.

Information on Tech Training and Career Options:

The Satellite model is reliant upon identifying community-based organizations that have established themselves as trusted local entities in areas that are geographically distant from Per Scholas's existing campuses. Just as important, these organizations are in contact with or have the potential to engage individuals who may not be inclined to seek out training in tech or be aware of opportunities in the industry. The truism of "you can't be what you don't see" holds powerful sway



in this context, illustrating a pervasive barrier to access. When discussing what attracted Stanley M. Isaacs Neighborhood Center to the prospect of becoming a Satellite partner, Damion Samuels, Senior Director of Youth Services and Community Engagement, shared, “People are influenced by what’s around them. It’s interesting how you hear people in the neighborhood talk about job opportunities - ‘the court is hiring officers.’ Now we’re starting to hear kids ask, ‘What’s up with that tech program?’” Word of mouth on the street, influenced by a trusted community partner, is a relatively priceless recruitment tool for Per Scholas.

Geography and Local Training Options: New York City covers a broad expanse of space, and travel from one point to another within the five boroughs can consume an inordinate amount of time. Were quality training options in tech spread evenly throughout the city, Per Scholas might be less inclined to experiment with the Satellite model. But quality tech training programs are not evenly distributed across the city. While not the only example, Staten Island provides a salient one in favor of the Satellite approach. Nearly all stakeholders affiliated with the JCC of Staten Island Satellite partnership concurred that tech training options on the Island are scant and concentrated primarily in K-12 and college settings. Staten Islanders seeking tech training and certification by necessity have to leave the Island, seek out fully remote training, or commit to a college tuition-based program. Bringing the Satellite model, with its established training curriculum and employment strategy, to a location with a dearth of training options directly mitigates some of the issues related to geographic isolation and availability of training options.

Skill Remediation: Tech in recent years has been a bright spot in workforce development given the relative accessibility to thriving wage jobs and career pathways for individuals who do not possess a college degree. Even so, entry level opportunities still require a high level of reading and math comprehension, as well as strong interpersonal skills, to successfully perform the attendant tasks. It is these individuals Per Scholas regularly refers to

a broad network of community partners for basic skill remediation, the core constituents of programs offered by Per Scholas’s Satellite partners. Per Scholas has had success with and accumulated valuable lessons about skill remediation programs — often referred to as “bridge” programming — in partnership with various adult basic education providers. Yet, organization leadership is well aware of and candid about the challenges and sizeable cost of working intensely with individuals to prepare them for success in a Per Scholas training; the time and cost increases significantly with each additional level of remediation required. Workforce program leaders at both Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation and Stanley M. Isaacs Neighborhood Center indicated that the experience of seeing few enrollments in Per Scholas training by individuals their organizations referred over made them aware of the potential challenges ahead of recruiting enough candidates prepared to enter training; strategies will include broadening their outreach efforts and considering when bridge-like interventions might be necessary.

Satellite partnerships at present are not specifically funded to operate bridge programs into IT Support training. Staff from partner organizations, however, are considering ways in which they might leverage other basic skill-building programs in their portfolios to function as pipelines or bridges into the Per Scholas Satellite program. Cypress Hills, for example, drew upon its extensive experience operating adult basic education programs to pilot a two-week bridge-like offering for six Satellite program applicants; all participants improved their reading and math comprehension scores enough to qualify for the IT Support training cohort. Both Per Scholas and its Satellite partners have been and will be examining data on program applicants with each new cohort to gain a better understanding of who is expressing interest and where various levels of remediation might expand access to tech training to more people from the targeted communities.



The Future of the Satellite Model

The overview and assessment of the Satellite model presented to date should leave most readers with an optimistic view of this approach and its promise as a strategy for increasing the reach and impact of effective organizations through deep partnership. The model, however, is not without its unknowns or potential hitches, some of which may not emerge until much later in the life cycle of a given partnership or of the model generally. Drawing on stakeholder interviews, the following questions and program elements to monitor closely surfaced most frequently.

Is it desirable or recommended for Satellite partners to eventually take the lead on business engagement?

While Per Scholas intends to confer increased responsibility for business engagement and connections to employment on its partners over time, some stakeholders question the efficacy of this strategy. Per Scholas has earned a reputation within the workforce development field as an organization that implements robust and effective business engagement strategies, an area in which many workforce organizations struggle. By this token, the reasoning stands that the Per Scholas Business Solutions team should continually take the lead on business engagement. Lowell Herschberger of Cypress Hills reflected, “We can dedicate some staffing to business development, but don’t want to develop something they’ve already done. We do want to build capacity but we’ll never be a tech sectoral provider directly.”

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It’s easy to design for the rosy scenarios, but what do you do if a partnership is not going well? As Per Scholas expands the Satellite model, there will be things and partnerships that don’t work.

Charles Buice, President of the Tiger Foundation

How should Per Scholas address a Satellite partnership that does not pan out?

The second most frequently voiced unknown focused on putting steps in place to determine as early as possible when a partnership is showing signs of stress, is at risk for disintegration, or has simply run its course. Even in the midst of implementation road bumps and leadership changes, Satellite partnerships launched to date have not triggered warning signals; however, it is inevitable that at least one such partnership will cease to function effectively or may no longer meet its intended purpose. Establishing check-in points focused on long-term vision and sustainability, learning to identify warning signs, and keeping lines of communication open and honest between Per Scholas and Satellite partners should become integrated into the course of building out and maintaining these partnerships.

What do Per Scholas and its partners need to do to make the case to funders and other supporters for considering different ways of assessing success?

It bears repeating that the Satellite model reflects an idealistic mode of operating that, in reality, can prove challenging to support from fundraising and outcomes reporting perspectives. Resource attraction will require continued coordination between Per Scholas and each of its Satellite partners and may generate some tough situations between and within organizations — for example, if a Satellite partner is put in a position to choose whether to direct a grant toward Satellite or another program it runs, or if Per Scholas and a Satellite partner are both vying for limited funds on the same foundation’s docket. A strong demonstration of the additive collective outcomes will hopefully support the case for directing resources to both parties in a Satellite partnership, but also relies on some grantmaking taking shape in less than usual ways.

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