El Paso Innovation Hub Pre-Apprenticeships

Linking individuals to app development education and career opportunities in El Paso, Texas

Redefining App Development Career Preparation

Careers in technology application development are here to stay, and through strategic partnerships and pre-apprenticeship programs, Workforce Solutions Borderplex is supporting the next generation of app developers. Through the El Paso Innovation Hub Pre-Apprenticeship Program, aspiring app and web developers gain valuable experience and skills to support them in obtaining meaningful employment in the tech field.

The pre-apprenticeship program is divided into two phases of training: an eight-week web development training and a ten-week app development training. Through funding provided through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Workforce Solutions Borderplex provided up to $50,000 to support 15 candidates in completion of the program. After completion of the pre-apprenticeship program, candidates moved onto a yearlong apprenticeship program with the El Paso Innovation Hub.

About the El Paso Innovation Hub

The El Paso Innovation Hub, an initiative led by the El Paso Community Foundation and in partnership with Microsoft, is a nonprofit program dedicated to supporting cultural change in the borderplex region by fostering opportunities for innovation and collaboration. They accomplish this through community support initiatives, providing opportunities for digital education, fostering economic prosperity by advancing opportunities for employment support, supporting innovation and entrepreneurship in the borderland, and empowering transformational education. To achieve this mission, The El Paso Innovation Hub offers a wide variety of tech-based courses designed to support those delving into careers in tech, including the courses that make up this pre-apprenticeship program.

Phase One Training – Full Stack Web Development Pre-Apprenticeship

Phase one, which consisted of an eight-week Full Stack web development training, took place from November 2024 to January 2025. Fourteen participants enrolled in phase one, and 13 completed the program. Full Stack web developers are trained in both front-end and back-end web development that allows them to use both server- and client-based software, such as popular coding languages HTML, CSS, JavaScript, Python, C++, and more. Partners from the Philosophic Systems Institute, FabLab, and Pioneers21 provided instructors for this phase. Seven transitioned to phase two.

Phase Two Training – App Development Pre-Apprenticeship

Prior to taking the course, participants were asked to complete a React-101 course, where they learned to build interactive applications using popular coding language JavaScript, with Code Academy, one of the leaders in coding education. This course prepared them to engage with the materials presented in the training. Participants learned to use app development programs such as Chrome Devtools, Typescript, Git, Axios, and more. Of the seven who transitioned to the phase two training, three dropped due to new employment and three withdrew due to personal reasons. ElPasoLabs and Philosophic Systems Institute provided app development instruction during this pre-apprenticeship. One individual went onto the apprenticeship phase.

Phase Three - One-Year Apprenticeship

Phase three of the program involved a one-year apprenticeship with various employers i the field in the field with the goal of securing full-time employment in the field. Participants received benefits and four stages of wage increases throughout the program, starting at $15 per hour up to $22 per hour. ElPasoLabs collaborated with the program to provide the apprenticeship. One individual completed the apprenticeship and received one year of employment with the company.

Success & Challenges Overcome

The program initially began with 14 candidates, who participated in phase one of the pre-apprenticeship training. However, by phase two, this number was reduced to seven, as three individuals received employment outside of the program and others withdrew their candidacy for personal reasons. However, as the program continued, the total number enrolled continued to dwindle.

Looking to the Future

As the program continues in future years, Workforce Solutions Borderplex aims to innovate the distribution of the program to better meet the needs of participants, including potentially offering the web development training through local businesses and find other ways to consolidate aspects of the program to better meet their needs.