



ANNUAL REPORT 2019 – 2020

Successful Transition During Pandemic

- Transitioned to remote learning/evaluations
- Coders used new tools and learned new skills

29 New Coders Certified

- New evening program for Veterans a success
- 66% of enrollees were certificated

Graduate Job Placements: Coping With a Challenging Job Market

- 10 coders employed at average salary of \$41,000
- Continued efforts to place the remainder
- 5 coders working part time at MS CodeWorks

Mississippi CodeWorks Launched

- For-profit subsidiary of MS Coding Academies
- Software development services using our coder graduates
- Work experience for coder graduates

Employer Engagement

- Performance evaluations
- Guest lecturers provide real-world perspective
- Stellar feedback on coder employees
- 20+ public and private sector partners

Program Funding: Continued Evolution to Private Sources

- New USDA grant for remote learning “TechShare”
- Private funding in 2019-20 from:
4 County Electric Foundation | Mississippi State University | Appalachian Regional Commission | AT&T Comcast | Entergy | Ergon | W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Successful Transition During Pandemic

Both Jackson and Starkville (GTR) fully transitioned to remote training and employer evaluations using remote software such as Discord, Microsoft Teams, Slack and Google Classroom. We have begun new cohorts with remote only operations until the pandemic stabilizes and have been very impressed with how our instructors and coders have acclimated to the “new normal.”

In addition to providing our daily training, we were able to host employer evaluations remotely, giving our coders exposure to a broader set of productivity tools.

29 New Coders Certified

We have now certified our third cohort of 24 entry-level full-stack coders from the GTR and Jackson Academies with five more full stack coders certified from our pilot evening program (Comcast Veterans Code) located in Jackson. The pilot evening program also produced 16 graduates who earned a certificate in either front end or back end development. Most of our coders come from underrepresented communities in the software industry.



Graduate Job Placements

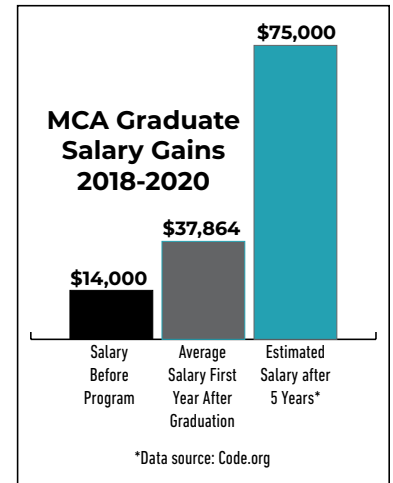
Coping With a Challenging Job Market

Eight recent third year coders have been placed so far at the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency, Babel Street, Peak Solutions, RegionalHomes.net and Netlink Voice at an average starting salary of \$40,775.

With the impact of the pandemic to the economy and job market, we continue our work to aid our graduates in finding employment.

Economic Impact for Graduates

The average starting salary across hires to date is \$37,864. This number is based on data acquired from 43 graduates hired over three years. This salary is an estimated increase of \$23,864 over incomes before completing the program. The estimated salary for one of our graduates should be \$75,000 after five years, based on data from Code.org.



Mississippi CodeWorks Launched

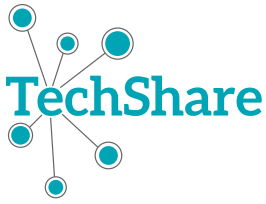
Our new for-profit initiative, MS CodeWorks, will provide contract coding services to clients providing employment to our coder graduates. Active projects include website development for a liberal arts college, a job portal, and website work for minority-owned small businesses in the city of Jackson. Five coders have already begun part-time work on these initial projects, and we anticipate continued growth in our book of business. This work experience will improve coder competitiveness for full-time employment as the job market improves.

COMCAST Veterans Code

Evening Program

Comcast funded and has recently renewed an after-hours pilot program targeting military veterans and family in the Jackson metro area. The program began in June of 2019 and concluded at the end of the year. The pilot was a huge success with 14 participants awarded a certificate for front-end development and another 7 awarded back end certificates. Five achieved a full stack certification equivalent to our full-time day program. Many of these participants were already employed and used this program to expand their options for career advancement.





New Initiative - TechShare Program

Lessons learned from three years exposed a need to evolve our paradigm to address challenges faced by our participants and program. Many eligible participants lack transportation, excluding a number of them. Finding industry-experienced personnel willing to serve as instructors in our learning environment requires a unique individual with both a love of teaching and a depth of real-world software development experience.

To address these challenges, we have begun the process of identifying "satellite" locations in nearby communities where coders will be synchronously connected and trained by existing instructors located in our physical training locations. We have already identified municipal school district partners in several communities near our Starkville location and are looking to launch a pilot program this year.

Employer Engagement

Partnerships Continue to Develop

In addition to our collaborations with Mississippi State University, the University of Southern Mississippi, and Millsaps College, we have close working relationships with tech industry partners represented by both established and entrepreneurial companies and public sector entities. Many of these stakeholders participated in multiple performance reviews and evaluations of our developers and their coding projects. This ongoing industry and public sector involvement is a critical element to our approach of developing coders who are job market ready!

Applied Technology Group · Babel Street
Belhaven University · Dogly · Hinds Community College
Howl Design · Jano Justice Systems · Kopis Mobile
Mad Genius · MS Department of Environmental Quality
MS Emergency Management Agency · MS Interactive
Mississippi State University · Netlink Voice · NSPARC
Pixetal Studio · Profound Logic · SchoolStatus
University of Mississippi Medical Center
US Army Corps of Engineers

Employer Feedback



"Stephen is a quick learner and is adapting very well to our work culture. Thank you so much for providing us a great fit for our needs!! We appreciate the Mississippi Coding Academies for all their training efforts!"

—Harini Vedala
Software Architect, Regional Enterprises, LLC



"The Mississippi Coding Academies provided us an opportunity to hire a graduate and give the next generation of students an opportunity to learn coding from an expert. Our Pre K—8 students have learned programming languages while using hands on devices that provide strategic thinking opportunities for students."

—Cherie Labat, Ph.D.
Superintendent, Columbus Municipal School District



"The caliber of individuals that we have hired from the Mississippi Coding Academies has been unmatched in our search for great candidates to employ. They come to work ready to get down to business and have a solid foundation of the skills that we like to see in our employees. They help us lead the nation in fintech innovation."

—Boyce Adams, Jr.
SVP of Financial Services, AvidXchange, Inc



"Chris Brownlee is adapting well at Babel Street since completing his stint with the Mississippi Coding Academy. We place a high value on the relationship we have with the Coding Academy and plan to continue working with them to help develop and identify talented software engineers like Chris in the future."

—Bryan O'Neill
SVP of Application Development, Babel Street



"We are so proud of Shoncurra and Rishard and how far they have grown in our organization. We hope they stay on for 30 years!"

—Matt Turner
I.S. Operations Manager, Southern Farm Bureau

CONFERENCES

Our coders attended the Innovate Accelerate Conference in November 2019 and the MagnoliaJS Developer Conference held remotely in May 2020.



“This is my first tech conference (MagnoliaJS). I’m learning a lot and really enjoying seeing all the different tools available!! Can’t wait to try something new!”

—Latoya Lofton



“During the Innovate Mississippi event, we attended all the different booths and learned how small companies get investors. We all went to different demos and talks from companies. I met a CEO of a VR company in Jackson, MS who is using VR for education [Lobaki]. We got to meet the Jackson cohorts and see their JavaScript programs.”

—Lamont Wilson



“I like that the speakers (MagnoliaJS) used memes, jokes, and other resources that allow us to interact efficiently from home”

—Charllieya Smith



Program Funding

We wish to express our sincere appreciation to our donors who funded the 2019-20 cohorts:
4 County Electric Foundation | Mississippi State University | Appalachian Regional Commission
AT&T | Comcast | Entergy | Ergon | W.K. Kellogg Foundation

New USDA Support for 2020-21!

In an exciting new development, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) has approved a grant which will fund operations at the GTR academy and, very importantly, provide the seed funding to develop an extended capability for distance learning. The concept, which we have dubbed “TechShare”, will be tested via the GTR academy this year, will allow us to better leverage our senior instructors by connecting them to participants working remotely in satellite locations located on supervised premises in nearby towns.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

