



Technology For Tomorrow

Empowering People in Need with Technology Education
A non-profit 501(c)(3) organization

2020 Quarter 1 Newsletter

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Message from the Program Manager



Greetings to all! We hope that you are all safe and healthy during this unprecedented circumstance of the Corona Virus outbreak. T4T is working hard to continue our programs where possible, where they make sense, and where they can engage students safely. Despite these circumstances, T4T has been off to a great start in 2020, not only with delivering programs but also by being recognized for our insights into workforce development for New Americans in Vermont. We were recently featured on the WCAX TV show *Across the Fence* to discuss our older adults program. Please read on for greater details and a link to the video segment.

Due to the Corona Virus outbreak and associated health concerns, we suspended all in-person classes beginning March 16, in favor of an online-only curriculum until further notice, to do our part in keeping everyone safe. We look forward to resuming normal activities as soon as possible and to continued growth in our programs here in Vermont and beyond. Thanks for your support and participation.

Bjorn Norstrom

Community Impact...



Total Participants:

In Quarter 1, 2020, T4T provided technology education to 284 individuals. Among these, 58% were older adults and 34% were New Americans. These numbers would have been significantly higher if we had not cancelled our older adults and New Americans programs in mid-March due to the corona virus situation.

2019 Impact Report

In 2019, Technology for Tomorrow had a great impact on many communities and community members. Please read our [2019 Impact Report](#) for more details. We served a total of 1,037 individuals. Of those, 69% were New Americans while 48% were older adults.

Meet Our Newest Board Member

Dipen Shah

Dipen Shah is joining the T4T board with the goal of replicating and extending the T4T mission to Texas, and ultimately helping make it scalable and sustainable across the USA. Dipen is a software



development leader with 16+ years of industry experience focused on building large scale solutions in the financial services domain. He lives in Austin, Texas with his wife and two daughters. He is currently working as Sr. Director of Software Development at Netspend (a Global Payments company). Dipen is a Computer Science graduate from India who has worked in Singapore and Malaysia prior to arriving in the USA. He is eager to apply his passion for technology to the T4T mission, to help broaden its reach and increase program effectiveness.

Program Updates

(All updates reference our impact prior to Stay Home, Stay Safe)

Older Adults

This quarter, we provided workshops and 1:1 tutoring to numerous Cathedral Square locations, including Thayer House (Burlington), 3 Cathedral Square (Burlington), Heineberg Senior Housing (Burlington), Holy Cross Senior Housing (Colchester), Wright House (Shelburne), and Grand Way Commons (South Burlington). We introduced our services to Whitcomb Woods and Whitcomb Terrace (Essex Junction) and Holy Cross Senior Housing (Colchester). In addition to providing services at the Champlain Senior Activity Center (Burlington), we also added the Winooski Senior Center as a new location. We also visit Allenwood and The Pines (South Burlington) regularly, and we have plans to visit Wake Robin (Shelburne) for a workshop in April.

New Americans

We are pleased to announce that we have received a \$625 grant from the New England Federal Credit Union (NEFCU) to provide technology training for classes in collaboration with our partner USCRI (U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants). Details are in our [press release](#). Thank you NEFCU for being a great supporter of technology education and New Americans!



We are also pleased to announce that [Mascoma Bank](#) has approved a \$1,500 grant to fund our New Americans program, in collaboration with the USCRI. Learn more about this opportunity in our [press release](#). A huge thanks to Mascoma Bank for being a great supporter of T4T!

Home Education

We continue to offer classes to the [home education community](#) in Vermont, across the US and around the world through the teaching platform [Outschool](#). Students have joined us from Turkey, Mexico, Spain, and Canada, as well as from a number of US states. As an additional service, T4T is approved by the Vermont Agency of Education as an end-of-the-year portfolio assessment organization for home educated learners in Vermont.

Workforce Development

We are currently customizing a class for clients of the Creative Workforce Solutions/VocRehab organization in St. Albans. Though this is currently paused, it will restart once the Stay at Home order is lifted. Classes will focus on Microsoft Office and Google Suite applications.

We are excited to announce T4T is now offering apprenticeship programs for people entering the IT and/or non-profit sectors. **If you're interested, contact us!**

T4T in the News

The Vermont Department of Labor recently released a report focusing on workforce development and [employment for New Americans](#). On page 20 of the report, recommendations made by Technology for Tomorrow around micro-credentials for this community are emphasized. Our hard work to bring awareness about barriers and our recommendations for overcoming barriers are having an impact beyond the learners we serve.

On March 3, we were featured on the [WCAX TV show Across the Fence](#) where we had the opportunity to present our organization with a particular focus on our older adults program.

During early spring, a graduate student and Apple employee in the state of Texas was doing her Capstone Project on Technology for Tomorrow and the opportunity for us to expand our operations in the Austin, TX area.

We are pleased that we are trusted to provide A/V support services for the Education and Enrichment for Everyone organization (EEE) during their Friday afternoon lecture series at the Faith United Methodist Church in South Burlington. Unfortunately, this program had to be cancelled due to the health situation but we hope it will be up and running in the fall again. We are also in the process of completely redesigning the EEE [website](#).

T4T Participant Story - New Americans

In our third story about Technology for Tomorrow participants, we are proud to introduce you to an incredible individual. She was a refugee in Nepal before moving to Germany, then ultimately the U.S.

To learn more about our New Americans program, please visit our [New Americans web page](#).

Meet Damayanti "Dee" Subedi



Damayanti "Dee" Subedi was a refugee originally from the nation of Bhutan. She was forced to flee her homeland in 1989 when the King of Bhutan enacted new oppressive laws around religion, language, and dress code. Leaving Bhutan, Dee traveled through India to a **refugee camp** in Nepal, where she lived between 1989 and 2002.

During her time in the refugee camp, Dee had the opportunity to **learn English but had no access to technology** other than a radio, which she used to listen to the BBC. Dee, whose mother tongue is Nepalese, got the opportunity to go to school in the refugee camp where several classes were held in the English language. In 2002, Dee was able to travel to Germany for an international student festival, but her family remained in the refugee

camp in Nepal.

In 2008, Dee's family in the Nepalese refugee camp was resettled to Manchester, New Hampshire. Dee now had the opportunity to pursue education in Germany, however, going to a university was still a struggle for because she was financially incapable. She decided to pursue a two-year vocational program on marketing and communication which led to a job for a maritime company as a fleet assistant in Hamburg, Germany. It was then, in 2013, that Dee began to learn and appreciate the **power of technology**.

Just like many other New Americans with a refugee background, Dee has experienced a fear of technology because of the fear of breaking something, so she completely understands how technology can be intimidating to many New Americans. However, after working as a Systems Analyst, Dee concluded that **people can learn technology if they are motivated and have the desire**. She points out that "**with a basic understanding of technology, one can do a lot of things**." Dee adds that many New Americans with refugee backgrounds, unfortunately, don't like to go outside of their comfort zone and that technology is outside many New Americans' comfort zones. However, she encourages New Americans to not be scared of technology and to not give up but instead to **pursue technology education such as the programs offered by Technology for Tomorrow**.

Dee points out that people "**should value what's in front of them, stay positive, and keep going**," including pursuing technology education. Dee concludes that **Technology for Tomorrow offers great opportunities for New Americans**, and she has chosen to work with T4T to help bring their services to other New Americans.

A Word from the Board:

Featuring USCRI Teacher Corinne Johansson



Corinne is a USCRI Vermont English language teacher who has been teaching English to New Americans in the Burlington and Winooski communities for the past three years. Corinne connected with Bjorn at Technology for Tomorrow in the spring of 2019 when USCRI began exploring the possibility of integrating technology skills training into their English language classes. Corinne says, "Computer skills seemed so important to empowering New Americans to navigate their world." Bjorn and Corinne started brainstorming possibilities for an integrated English and tech skills curriculum and, soon thereafter, piloted a six-week "Introduction to Computer Skills" program in conjunction with an English class at the Family Room in Burlington.

Since that initial launch, Corinne and Bjorn have collaborated on three different integrated technology and English programs for New Americans - bringing technology to New Americans who are enrolled in USCRI Vermont's community English classes - and Corinne has developed a 20-hour "Basic Technology Skills for English Language Learners" curriculum which she and Bjorn facilitate together. As an experienced English language teacher, Corinne develops student-centered lessons with her knowledge of her students' individual language levels and preferred learning-styles. In each class, she reviews previously learned skills, pre-teaches important English vocabulary and expressions, and identifies an authentic task for students. Bjorn brings his mobile laptop lab to class and models the featured tech skill of the day. Students engage in the day's task with 1:1 support from Corinne and Bjorn. The result is that students gain 30 essential tech skills by the end of the 20-hour program.

This successful collaboration between USCRI Vermont and Technology for Tomorrow is opening doors for New Vermonters. Corinne notes, "Most of us don't realize how dependent we are on technology to interact with our world. This program helps students learn the essential skills they need to communicate with family and employers, navigate websites, complete job applications, engage in online banking and shopping, and access the U.S. citizenship online portal."

When asked how she knows that this Technology Skills for English Language Learners program is a success, Corinne responds, "I can tell by the smiles on their faces, their enthusiasm and dedication to keep coming back to class, and their growing confidence in the classroom." Basic technology skills are a real game-changer for helping New Americans survive and thrive their new community.

Thank you,

Jennifer Borch, T4T Board



In Closing

We hope that everyone is able to stay safe and healthy during these uncertain times. We look forward to renewing our regular services as soon as possible.

We want to thank all of our generous donors. You enable us to maintain our current programs as well as to develop new and exciting ones. If you are not yet a donor, we encourage you to learn more about us at our [web site](#), and to make a donation to our organization (below).

We also want to thank our collaborative partners that help us make our programs successful.

Make sure to visit our [social media channels](#) and [website](#) as we regularly post updated information about our developments as well as our dynamic calendar of events.

We graciously thank you for your support, and we look forward to unveiling even more programs throughout 2020 and beyond!

Sincerely,

The Technology for Tomorrow team

Thank you to everyone who has donated to support our mission of technology education for all.

If you are interested in donating, please click the button below.

Donate Today!

100% of your donation contributes to our efforts of making the greatest impact on the people and causes we support. We are a public charity; your tax-deductible donation, large or small, will make a difference.

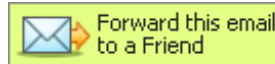
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OR

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