



2021

ANNUAL REPORT

THE NEW BOHEMIAN INNOVATION COLLABORATIVE

NEWBO4CO

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome	1
Creative coworking	2
A big head start	4
K-12 Computer Science in Iowa	6
At your service	8
EntreFEST Diversity Committee	10
Girls Who Code	11
Iowa Startup Accelerator (ISA)	12
From student to teacher	14
Intrapreneur Academy adapting to the pandemic	16
Small loans grant big dreams	18
Donor Spotlight	21

WELCOME

Anyone who has heard me talk about NewBoCo, which I can't help but do frequently, has certainly heard the words: entrepreneurship, education, and innovation. The other word I like to mention often is **collaboration**. While 2021 saw the launch of a few new programs at NewBoCo, it was also a year of collaboration with great partners.

DeltaV partnerships grew significantly in 2021. CCR, Involta, Project Iowa, Kirkwood's Workplace Learning Connection, and Cedar Rapids Community School District all collaborated with us in utilizing Future Ready Iowa funding to launch new IT training programs. Fantastic examples of how nonprofits can work together with local hiring partners, school districts, and state funding to address the **tech talent gap** by helping Iowans that are looking for new opportunities.

NewBoCo also worked with all nine Iowa Area Education Agencies to nearly double the typical number of teachers who would participate in computer science professional development this past summer. And thanks to new state legislation that requires high schools to offer computer science instruction starting July 1, 2022, even more educators will have access to grant funding for training to prepare the **next generation** for high-demand careers right here in Iowa.

We were able to expand our support for entrepreneurs with great partners such as ISA Ventures who invests capital in Iowa startups across different stages of growth, and Kiva who maintains the microloan platform for NewBoCo's Kiva Iowa, the first **statewide** hub in the country.

As you read the stories in this annual report, I am convinced you'll be inspired to want to get involved. In 2022, we are looking to work with even more economic developers, nonprofits, and corporate partners across Iowa to bring the programming and resources we have built here in Eastern Iowa to your region to make an even bigger impact. If that's you, please reach out, we'd love to collaborate. After all, our mission is to accelerate world-changing ideas, **from Iowa**.

Aaron Horn

Executive Director





CREATIVE COWORKING

HOW VAULT KEPT ITS COMMUNITY ALIVE DURING A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

By their nature, coworking spaces allow individuals and businesses a way to share resources and network.

How does that model continue to work during a pandemic?

John Foster is the Community Manager at Vault Coworking & Collaboration Space, 415 12th Ave. SE in Cedar Rapids. For him, answering that question over the past year and a half has required some creative approaches. More importantly, he's had to trust that the coworking community would survive the long stretch of quarantine.

"It was an environment, and a community, that I really enjoyed," Foster says. "But as soon as the pandemic hit last year, and everyone started to work from home, we had a lot of members leave. But we had a handful of members who stayed with us, and we found some new ways to put the space to use."

Coworking spaces like Vault are available for rent on a daily or monthly basis. Vault features amenities like printers, conference rooms, a recording studio, and a large kitchen with complimentary cereal dispensers and coffee.

The space serves as a home for entrepreneurs, remote workers, and even entire teams and businesses like e-commerce agency 50 Pound Boson. Jo Miller, book author and CEO of Be Leaderly, has worked out of Vault since 2016.



"I think the Vault is the perfect spot for small business owners like myself," Miller says. "You never know when a random hallway interaction will turn into the opportunity to do a podcast guest appearance, meet a national political figure, or volunteer for a meaningful cause. ... I came for the Internet, but I stayed for the community."

When the coronavirus pandemic forced offices to shut down, however, Vault was left empty for months. Foster says the organization chose to waive membership fees for April and May while they figured out what to do next. Even with that waiver, there were some who opted to end membership and work entirely from home.

Videographer Fred Ebong wasn't one of them. As the owner of Fred Ebong Studios in Cedar Rapids, Ebong said that working from home simply wasn't an option for him.

"If I stay at home, I don't accomplish anything," he says. "For me, when you are home, the hours just blend together. I need to leave the house. So the moment the doors at Vault opened back up, I made sure I returned."

Others did as well, including graphic designers, 50 Pound Boson, and a few new clients who simply needed a space to work from now that their corporate offices were closed down.

"Like most people, I did what I could to limit time spent in the building," Miller said. "But I needed a place from which to deliver virtual workshops, keynotes, and book talks. And when I did come onsite it felt very safe. Everyone was respectful of social distancing, and it was nice to see some fellow humans."

To maintain safety, Vault maintained a mask policy for all shared spaces like hallways and the kitchen area, but allowed workers to remove their masks once at their desks.

Even with the limited numbers of people at Vault during the pandemic, Ebong says that being in a coworking environment has been critical for building his business.

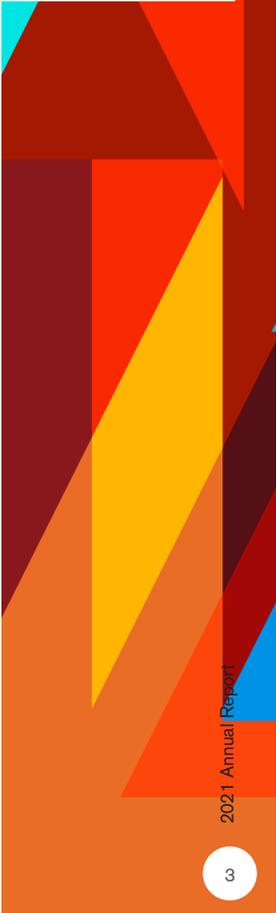
"The networking capabilities of this building are a big part of why I'm here," he says. "You have financial advisors, marketing agencies, website creators, graphic designers, people who write books ... just having that network there, I am not exaggerating when I say that 70 percent of the jobs I've gotten have been because of coworking."

Foster says that going forward, Vault aims to grow its community bigger and better than ever.

"I'm getting a lot more calls, and we've given a lot more tours," Foster says. "Which I'm really glad about. Because I've missed this community."

"You never know when a random hallway interaction will turn into the opportunity to do a podcast guest appearance, meet a national political figure, or volunteer for a meaningful cause. ... I came for the Internet, but I stayed for the community."

To learn more about Vault or to tour the space for yourself, email John Foster at john@newbo.co.





A BIG HEAD START

NEW COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP ALLOWS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO ATTEND COMPUTER TRAINING AT DELTAV ALONGSIDE ADULTS

When it was launched last year, DeltaV Code School's Computer Ops classes were aimed specifically at adults.

Last summer, it added something new: High school students.

With funding from Future Ready Iowa's "Summer Youth Internship Pilot Projects" grant, NewBoCo and DeltaV entered into a partnership with Kirkwood's Workplace Learning Connection and Cedar Rapids Community Schools earlier this year. Their goal? To find high school students who had an interest in computer careers, and put them in a program alongside adults. That way, they could get a firsthand look at what a career in tech could look like.

"We're always looking to innovate, and we're always looking for new partnerships," said instructor Dan Tuuri at DeltaV. "Thanks to this collaboration, we are really opening up doors to new opportunities to people, in a variety of career pathways."

DeltaV Code School started in 2017 with software development curriculum. In late 2020, DeltaV expanded to include an Ops program with one mission: Give Iowans a chance to launch a brand new career in computer tech support. Taking place over five weeks, the full-time program is designed to make students proficient in both computer software and hardware; to dive deeper into how computer work stations function; and to learn to perform basic computer technical operations within operating systems.

Along the way, instructors also assist students with preparing resumes, understanding how to work as a team, and other skills that are vital for a modern work environment. For the high school students, Workplace Learning Connection offered StrengthsQuest assessments to help students optimize their individual talents.

Classes are broken up into two classes, Ops 102 and Ops 201. It's five weeks of intense, full-time study with students collaborating on projects that are presented to the community on the final day.

When the opportunity came to add high school students to the mix, Tuuri says DeltaV opted not to water the program's intensity down, or to limit the students' learning.

"We made a decision really early on that we were going to teach the program the way we typically do," he said. "That means that the students had a lot of autonomy, and a lot of independence, in how they got their work created. We've got adults and high schoolers working alongside each other, just as they could in the workplace, and that's really cool."



Laurie Worden, the past Director of Workplace Learning Connection in Cedar Rapids, says the program is the brainchild of a conversation almost three years ago. Educators were trying to find ways to engage more underrepresented students in high-quality training for IT careers.

Worden cites the demand for IT workers in Iowa as a key reason for the project.

“We need to focus more effort on having underrepresented populations trained in some of these high-demand careers,” she said. “It’s our hope with this pilot program that we can expand and offer it to hundreds of students.”

Tara Troester with the Cedar Rapids Community School District brought the opportunity to students to get them enrolled, along with wrap-around support such as transportation and lunches throughout the program.

Patrick Turu, a senior at Cedar Rapids Jefferson High School, was one of the students that took part in DeltaV this summer. A self-taught coder, Patrick says that his love for gaming and programming led him to discover how he could build his own PC. That, in turn, got him interested in learning computer operations.

For Patrick, being part of the DeltaV Ops program allowed him to see the benefits of working in a group, as opposed to being on his own.

“When you’re by yourself, especially as a teenager, you don’t really have a lot of people around you with a similar mindset who are older,” he said. “So being here has allowed me to meet a lot of students and adults who are similar that way. I’d recommend this program to other students who have been curious about this field, because it gives you a good introduction to doing the same things that professionals would do.”

Patrick’s connection with the program has allowed him to continue beyond the classes he took this summer. He’s about to begin an internship with a pioneering sponsor of DeltaV’s Ops program, Involta in Cedar Rapids, letting him get an even better sense of how computer ops programs work in the professional world.

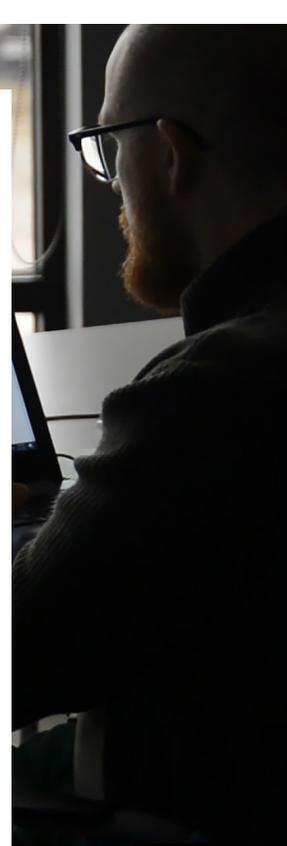
“They’re great to work with,” he says of DeltaV. “This program has made me more sure and more certain, now that I have seen that there’s a linear path to getting to where I want to go.”

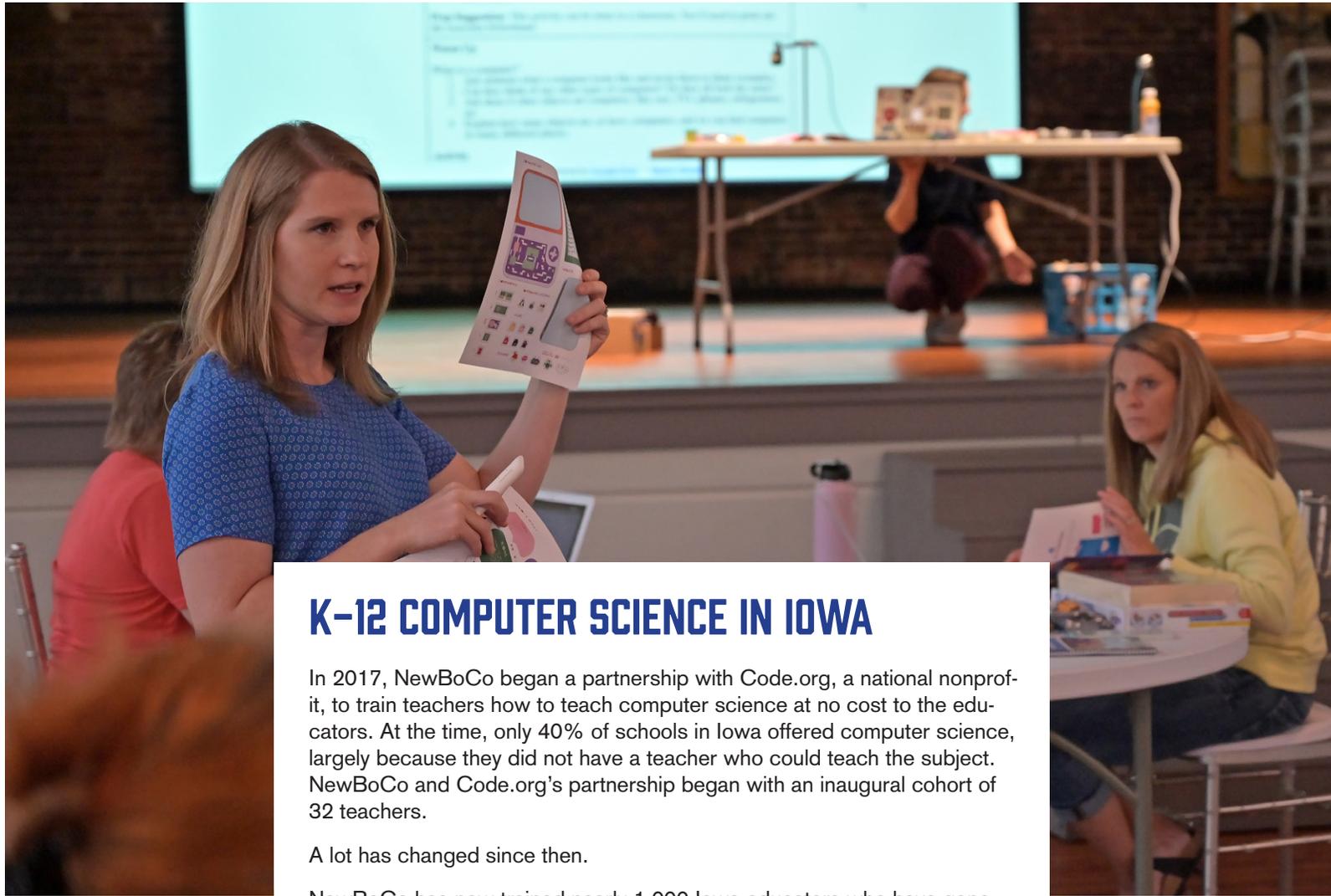
According to Tuuri, Patrick’s experience is exactly what he aims for as a teacher.

“It’s really exciting to see their passion come out, and their enthusiasm to learn,” he says. “The fact is that they could be at home during the summer, doing other activities, but they wanted to grow their abilities and start creating their futures instead.”

Worden agreed, and said she hopes more high school students will be able to participate in adult programs like DeltaV in the future.

“We’re very grateful to the Future Ready Iowa Innovation Grant funding for opportunities like this,” Worden said. “We hope that this is just the seed for greater things to come.”





K-12 COMPUTER SCIENCE IN IOWA

In 2017, NewBoCo began a partnership with Code.org, a national nonprofit, to train teachers how to teach computer science at no cost to the educators. At the time, only 40% of schools in Iowa offered computer science, largely because they did not have a teacher who could teach the subject. NewBoCo and Code.org's partnership began with an inaugural cohort of 32 teachers.

A lot has changed since then.

NewBoCo has now trained nearly 1,000 Iowa educators who have gone on to teach more than 40,000 students a computer science class. And this year, NewBoCo expanded their professional development options for educators.

"We recognized that a lot of our teachers who went through our professional development a few summers ago were ready for something more," said Alison Mohr, Assistant Director of K-12 Education at NewBoCo. "And there were other teachers who didn't fit our traditional offerings, and we wanted to be able to offer them training as well."

In addition to offering trainings on three Code.org curricula, NewBoCo also offered four new training options:

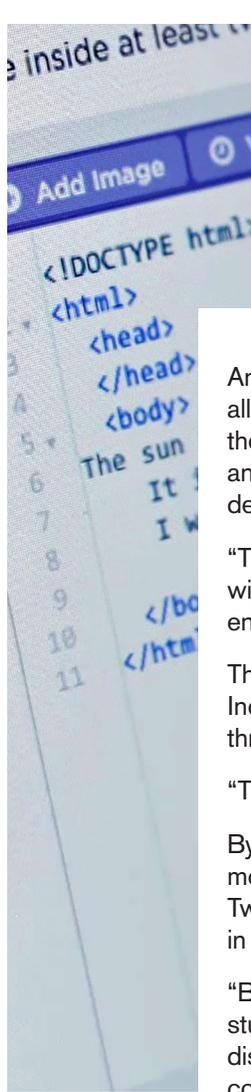
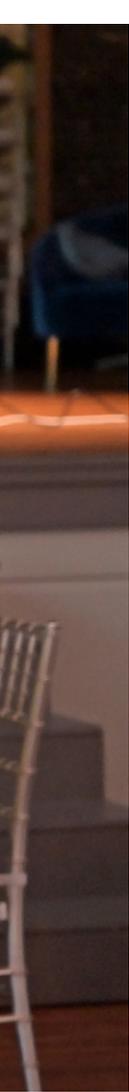
Tiny Techies, a NewBoCo-developed curriculum that shows early childhood teachers how they can integrate computer science in their classroom.

Project GUTS (Growing Up Thinking Scientifically), a science curriculum to help science teachers integrate computer science into their lessons.

AI, a high level overview of artificial intelligence, what it means, and what it could look like in education for K-12 teachers.

Agile in Education, a training that helps educators understand how they can use Agile methodologies used frequently in software development in their classrooms.

All trainings had virtual options to increase their accessibility for educators for both logistical and pandemic-related reasons. As a result, 150 teachers participated in professional development this year - nearly double the usual number NewBoCo sees.



Another reason for the increase in participation was a fruitful partnership with all nine of Iowa's Area Education Agencies (AEAs), organizations created by the Iowa Legislature to provide special education support services, media and technology services, a variety of instructional services, professional development, and leadership to promote school improvement.

"The AEAs this year were huge partners," said Mohr. "They helped us work with school districts and individual teachers to see what the computer science needs were at each school, building, and district."

The AEAs also used the Computer Science Professional Development Incentive Fund, a grant program through the State of Iowa, to help teachers throughout the state get funding for their training.

"They were a great resource for schools," said Mohr.

By growing their professional development offerings, NewBoCo hopes that more school districts will see results like Osage Community School District. Two teachers from Osage participated in NewBoCo's inaugural cohort back in 2017, and the district has seen a major transformation since then.

"Before I went [through training with NewBoCo], we had maybe 5-10 students in a Computer Science class," said Chis Kyle, an educator in the district. "Now we're up to seven different courses. I'll see 160 students in courses this year. It's really blown up here."

Superintendent Barb Schwamman agrees. "We've been on an amazing journey here at Osage with computer science," she said.

Computer Science is now a graduation requirement for Osage, and with seven different courses, including two AP level courses, students have plenty of options to choose from. Osage has also launched an ESports team to allow students to explore CS in their extracurricular activities.

Offering computer science courses has had a greater impact on students at Osage than just knowledge of coding.

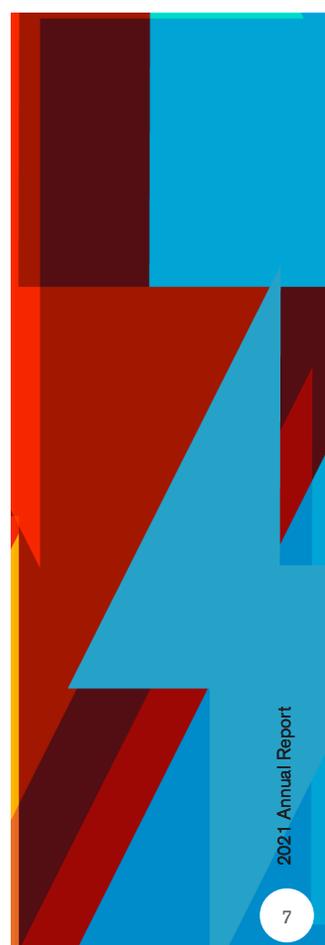
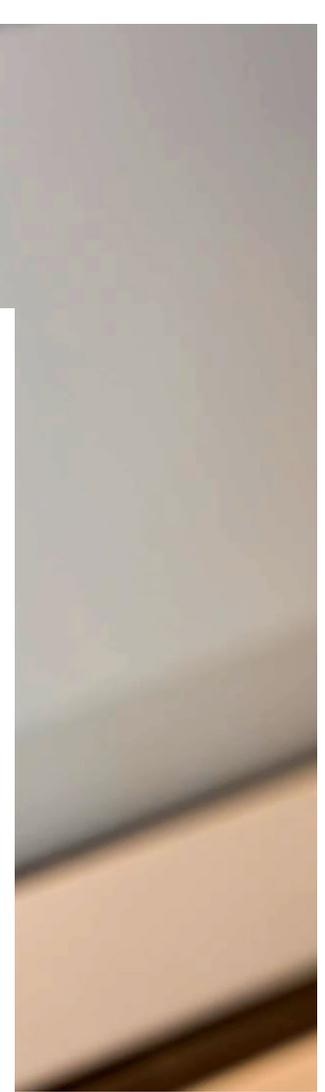
"One of the biggest things I see with the Code.org curriculum is that kids learn more about problem solving," said Kelley Moliter, a teacher, librarian, and media specialist with the district.

This increase in problem solving ability has helped students in other courses.

"We're starting to see it bleed into other areas. Like, in math classes, our students are doing better at proofs because they've built these logic and reasoning skills through computer science," said Kyle. "We're seeing kids collaborate better in labs. They work better in group settings."

"We don't have any of this without NewBoCo and Code.org," said Kyle.

NewBoCo's goal is that every school in Iowa will have a confident Computer Science teacher, so that all students and school districts can see results like Osage has. And with this year's increased participation and offerings, that future is even closer to becoming reality.





AT YOUR SERVICE

HOW NEWBOCO STUDIOS IS BRINGING ENTREPRENEURS' VISIONS TO LIFE

When Nora Crosthwaite founded Stagerie, she knew she faced an uphill battle.

Stagerie was envisioned as a nationwide marketplace for home staging. As CEO, Crosthwaite's goal was to create a strong online presence and generate organic paying customers. But as a new startup based in Des Moines -- currently in one of the strongest seller markets in recent history -- that would be no easy feat.

That's where NewBoCo Studios came in.

"NewBoCo Studios is a software team, it's a digital marketing team, and it's a creative team, all designed to provide services predominantly to startups," said David Tominsky, NewBoCo's Chief Relationship Officer.

It's also a small team, with a strong focus on startups -- which is exactly what made Crosthwaite choose them. Crosthwaite collaborated with NewBoCo Studios on a broad range of services, including marketing strategy, content creation, and video production.

For videos, she worked with NewBoCo on creating a series of walk-thrus of different home spaces and how they had been improved by Stagerie, allowing customers to get a firsthand look at what her company's services could do.

"I've been able to use those videos in so many ways and it's truly been outstanding," she said. "The reception has been good on those, and I can just cut links whenever I need them."



FROM DREAM TO APP

NewBoCo Studios, despite its size, has the power to turn an idea into a tangible application and business model. Jordan Taylor, creator of RumbleRank—a sorting algorithm, came to NewBoCo with nothing but a demo.

Taylor worked with Robbie Nesmith, one of NewBoCo's software developers, to create the app to be used on any device. Jess Bertling, NewBoCo's UI/UX Developer took Nesmith's application and designed the interface into a user friendly and presentable web app.

"It was really cool how I just picked up his work," said Bertling "And how I layered my work on top of it. We are really happy with how it turned out."

"There's the idea of a full stack of developers, but we have a full stacked team," said Nesmith. The team at NewBoCo Studios is diverse with various team members with backgrounds of testers, developers, and small business owners, presenting Taylor with not just a working app, but a full business model for RumbleRank.

Nesmith used his coworkers to beta test the app, trusting their assessment to move forward, "One of the tools that was very helpful, was that everyone who works here has a different experience from business owners to ranking enthusiasts, to software testers, everyone giving their own unique input. that feedback was very valuable in the development process."

"NewBoCo Studios is a software team, it's a digital marketing team, and it's a creative team, all designed to provide services predominantly to startups."

STILL GROWING

The scope of NewBoCo Studios has grown from the past 5 years.

It began with Bertling and Keith Dahlby, NewBoCo's Software Architect, building websites. Now teams with specialties have grown, and so have opportunities -- from startups to organizations that desire digital marketing, strategy, content creation, and software development.

What Bertling loves about working at NewBoCo Studios is the large scope of projects that she has been involved in. Every job has brought in different people, founders, users, and experiences, she says.

"There really is no size that fits all, but we are pretty equipped to handle anything you throw at us," she says. "We are pretty eager and curious, so we are open to what there is to build next."

Crosthwaite chose NewBoCo Studios over a larger corporation.

"Everyone at NewBoCo Studios and ISA is so dedicated to growing startups," she says. "I knew that anything I needed was going to be priority, and that we were working towards the same goal."



ENTREFEST DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

At EntreFEST, NewBoCo's two-day conference for entrepreneurs and innovators, nearly 50% of the 80+ speakers were women, and were people of color.

Attendees at the event frequently commented about the diversity of the speaker lineup.

EntreFEST's lineup is not the norm. An analysis conducted by Bizzabo, an event software company, of over 60,000 conferences found that 69% of speakers worldwide were male. At technology conferences, the statistics were even worse - only 21% of speakers were women.

EntreFEST's continually diverse lineup is the result of years' worth of intentional planning.

"Diversity is the foundation of what has made EntreFEST a special place for over 10+ years," said Jill Wilkins, NewBoCo's Chief Operating Officer and Events Director. "We value diversity on our planning committee, volunteers, speakers, and attendees. This includes gender, cultural background, and many other pieces that make up our community's unique puzzle."

EntreFEST's process begins long before a call for speakers is even announced.

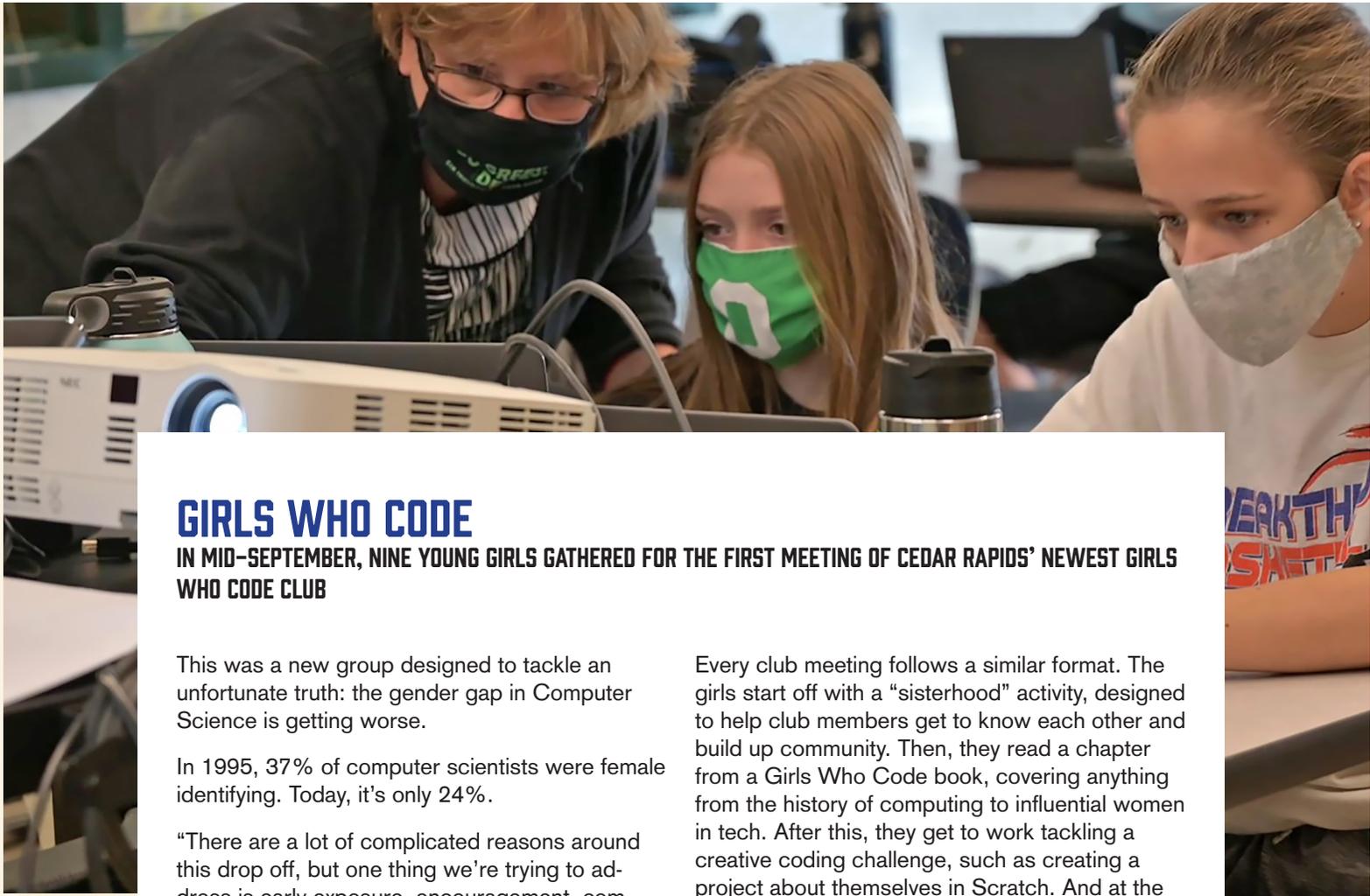
EntreFEST has a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) committee made up of nine community members from all backgrounds passionate about entrepreneurship and innovation. This committee meets year-round, and the planning process for the conference begins immediately after last year's conference ends. Not only does this committee help connect EntreFEST to a multitude of speakers and audiences, they also provide feedback on how to make marketing and branding materials.

"Our DEI committee provides really valuable, actionable feedback for the event," said Jourdan McChesney, NewBoCo's Events Coordinator. "For example, last year they helped us redesign our call for speakers to make it more inclusive."

This intentional effort and outreach leads to a diverse blend of speaker applications, but the work does not stop there. EntreFEST's DEI and Planning committees review the applications, and do extra outreach to recruit speakers from underrepresented backgrounds.

"With EntreFEST moving back to Iowa City in 2022, I'm really excited for new partnerships with different venues and organizations, such as Public Space One, to increase our outreach to new communities," said McChesney. "This will benefit our event and community for years to come."





GIRLS WHO CODE

IN MID-SEPTEMBER, NINE YOUNG GIRLS GATHERED FOR THE FIRST MEETING OF CEDAR RAPIDS' NEWEST GIRLS WHO CODE CLUB

This was a new group designed to tackle an unfortunate truth: the gender gap in Computer Science is getting worse.

In 1995, 37% of computer scientists were female identifying. Today, it's only 24%.

"There are a lot of complicated reasons around this drop off, but one thing we're trying to address is early exposure, encouragement, community, and support," said Samantha Dahlby, Director of K-12 Education at NewBoCo. "One of the big factors that is a part of this problem is that students who are female identifying are not encouraged to pursue computer science as often as boys are."

Addressing this gap is a crucial part of NewBoCo's work to ensure equitable access to computer science education, and it's why NewBoCo partnered with BAE Systems to start a Girls Who Code club in Cedar Rapids.

"I really enjoy that we can find gaps that exist in our community, region, and state and we can develop or partner to create programs that address those gaps," said Dahlby.

Girls Who Code is a national nonprofit working to change the gender gap in computer science. They provide training, support, and a one-of-a-kind curriculum spotlighting Women in Tech for volunteers and educational organizations to launch a Girls Who Code club in their community for 3rd-5th and 6th-12th grade girls and non-binary students. So far, 450,000 students have joined a club - now including several from Cedar Rapids.

Every club meeting follows a similar format. The girls start off with a "sisterhood" activity, designed to help club members get to know each other and build up community. Then, they read a chapter from a Girls Who Code book, covering anything from the history of computing to influential women in tech. After this, they get to work tackling a creative coding challenge, such as creating a project about themselves in Scratch. And at the end, the students share their successes from the day, celebrate their failures, and talk about what they want to do next. All lessons are facilitated by mentors and leaders from NewBoCo and BAE Systems.

"Early exposure to coding through NewBoCo's Girls Who Code club empowers girls in STEM and puts them on a technology career path," said Jade Groen, director of program management at BAE Systems' Electronic Systems sector. "The program's focus on our future female innovators to be problem solvers for themselves and the community is essential to the future of Cedar Rapids."

While this group of nine students has made great progress in their first few months as Girls Who Code club members, it's only the beginning for NewBoCo's work with the organization.

"We want to see this expand. These clubs can be hosted anywhere. It's really easy to set up and run," said Dahlby. "We want to be a resource to anyone looking to set up their own chapter, and we want to increase participation in ours."

If you want support starting a Girls Who Code club in your community, please reach out to our K-12 Education team at k12@newbo.co. We're excited to work with you!



IOWA STARTUP ACCELERATOR (ISA)

NewBoCo and Iowa Startup Accelerator (ISA) were built to help grow ideas, from Iowa. You may or may not be from Iowa, but you can get your start here and impact the entire world.

In ISA's 2021 cohort, six startups rose to the occasion: Curbicus, Lotus Razors, Presaj, Sevelyn Mental Health Services, Stagerie, and Steel Therapeutics. They covered a spectrum of bright ideas, from health services to home services.

CURBICUS

Curbicus's tagline is "Never Touch Dog Sh*t Again" — a strong opener from the high-end lifestyle hardware brand. Anna Gannon, the company's founder and inventor, attributes the inspiration for the device to years of watching New York City dog owners refuse to clean up their dogs' waste. Right now, Curbicus is taking pre-sales with its beta product, which is to be released at the end of this year or early 2022.

LOTUS RAZORS

Lotus Razors has completely reenvisioned what a woman's razor can be and how it can function. The company hopes to disrupt the more than \$18 billion global razor industry with its innovative and comfort-oriented design, which it is beta testing right now. The Lotus Razor is also available for pre-order now, with hopes of shipping products early next year.

PRESAJ

Presaj is developing software that aims to make life-saving changes to the way hospitals mitigate risk around major surgical procedures and other medical conditions. The program will use machine learning and data unique to each patient, facility, and care situation to advise clinicians and nurses on risk factors with personalized and targeted insights. Fully realized, Presaj hopes to save hundreds of thousands of lives and billions of dollars every year with their software.

SEVELYN

Sevelyn Mental Health Services is an inspiring platform designed to bridge the gap between Latin and Hispanic Americans and mental health services. Sevelyn utilizes the reach of the internet to overcome the barriers of language, cultural competency, and affordability by connecting care-seekers with mental health professionals in Latin America. Sevelyn's services are already available.

STAGERIE

Stagerie is an online home staging marketplace aimed at reducing the stress of selling a home for already-busy homeowners and realtors. The service connects sellers, realtors, and home stagers quickly and efficiently. Stagerie is currently available to consumers and adding new features.



Each of these teams set lofty goals and, as a result, took a great deal away from the ISA program. Matt of Steel Therapeutics highlights their key wins: “organization, confidence, funding, and credibility.”

These new strengths will continue to propel these teams as their impacts grow — as Curbicus and Lotus navigate product launches and seek additional funding next year; as Presaj applies for grants for its life-saving technology; as Sevelyn completes the Techstars Iowa Accelerator and seeks additional funding in the coming months; as Stagerie announces a partnership with a national real-estate firm; and as Steel Therapeutics enters Series A funding within the year.

Beyond the material and the curriculum, the teams learned a lot from each other — an impressive feat, considering this was ISA's first full-remote cohort. Anna of Curbicus attributed their cohort's cohesion to the small group size and the frequency with which they met.

“Everyone got to know each other despite the fact that it was virtual,” she says. “It is a very cooperative environment.”

“Interprofessional communication drives innovation,” Matt adds.

NewBoCo and ISA learned a lot from this cohort, as well.

“We learned that a hybrid approach is much healthier than 100 percent virtual,” says ISA Managing Director Alex Taylor. “The virtual environment allows ISA to provide regular programming and instruction to all corners of the state, as well as tap instructional resources from remote locations in Iowa's entrepreneurial ecosystem.”

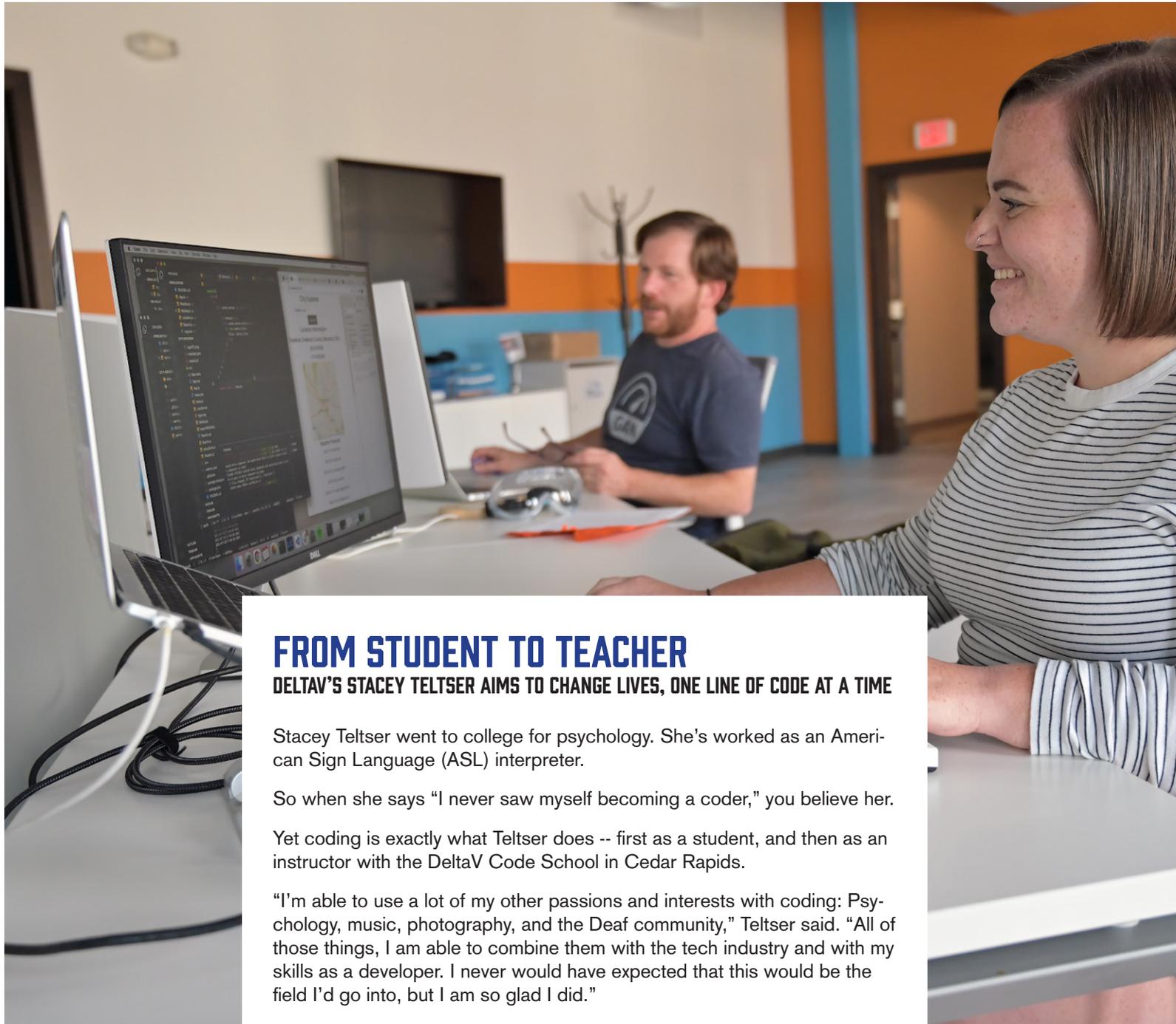
Alex notes that this flexibility also greatly benefits portfolio companies and potential investors.

In 2021, ISA has also expanded the program from three months to six, allowing for the curriculum to better serve participants.

“The first three months are focused on organizing, de-risking the business, building the MVP, and getting early sales traction,” Alex says. “The second three months are focused on sales growth and building the financial models that will accelerate success as well as attract investors.”

Watch these companies going forward; they just may change the world.

“The virtual environment allows ISA to provide regular programming and instruction to all corners of the state, as well as tap instructional resources from remote locations in Iowa's entrepreneurial ecosystem.”



FROM STUDENT TO TEACHER

DELTA V'S STACEY TELTSEER AIMS TO CHANGE LIVES, ONE LINE OF CODE AT A TIME

Stacey Teltser went to college for psychology. She's worked as an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter.

So when she says "I never saw myself becoming a coder," you believe her.

Yet coding is exactly what Teltser does -- first as a student, and then as an instructor with the DeltaV Code School in Cedar Rapids.

"I'm able to use a lot of my other passions and interests with coding: Psychology, music, photography, and the Deaf community," Teltser said. "All of those things, I am able to combine them with the tech industry and with my skills as a developer. I never would have expected that this would be the field I'd go into, but I am so glad I did."

Aiming to address the shortage of qualified tech talent in Iowa, DeltaV offers bootcamp-style classes to become full stack JavaScript developers or digital marketing developers in 20 weeks. Another DeltaV program teaches students to become Help Desk or Network/System Administrators in five to nine weeks.

DeltaV's programs are designed to teach computer skills to adults who have no previous experience in the industry -- which is precisely how it caught Teltser's attention. After graduating from Coe College, Teltser found herself working as an ASL interpreter in Cedar Rapids. It was through her work as an interpreter that she discovered DeltaV.

Later, she returned, but this time as a student rather than an interpreter.

"I dove right in, and I loved it," she said. "I loved the atmosphere. In the tech industry, there is constant learning going on, with people saying 'Hey, look at this cool tool' or 'Look at what this person did.' I loved that atmosphere of collaboration so much. As someone who wants to forever be a student of the world, continuing to learn, DeltaV seemed like the perfect place to do that."



Many of Teltser's fellow graduates went on to coding jobs after graduation. Teltser, however, found a different opportunity: Passing on what she had learned, by joining the DeltaV staff as an instructor.

"Stacey is a great communicator and truly someone who cares about people," said Aaron Horn, Executive Director for NewBoCo. "That was clear as a student when working with her peers, and it's very apparent as an instructor when she's working with her students. We are really fortunate to have her on our team."

Teltser is currently focused on a new DeltaV pilot program with the Iowa Correctional Institution for Women in Mitchellville. Partnering with the Iowa Department of Corrections, and funded by a grant from Google.org, DeltaV aims to teach inmates how to code. As a result, when they are released, they have software development skills on their resume.

"The hope is that this education will help them in their efforts to find employment once they are released," Teltser said. "We're working with inmates who are going to be released within the next year or so, because with the tech industry always changing, we want them to be able to have the freshest skills to be able to search for jobs."

Classes are conducted virtually over the Internet. While that presents challenges -- it's harder to point out where to fix a line of code when you can't just point at a student's screen -- Teltser's own experience as a DeltaV student helps. After all, it was halfway through her own education at DeltaV that her class was forced to switch from in-person to virtual classes, due to the 2020 pandemic.

Of course, another challenge with teaching coding to prison inmates is that Internet usage is heavily restricted there. Teltser says the enthusiasm of her students isn't the least bit dampened, however.

"They are so engaged, and ask such great questions," she said. "They are phenomenal."

Learning to code could make a huge impact for inmates upon their release. According to DeltaV alumni surveys, the average salary for software developers that complete its full program is \$60,399, and the average salary for help desk students is \$34,320.

Teltser says that's why a career switch to coding could make sense for more people just like her. In July of this year, she taught a free one-day Code 101 class in Cedar Rapids, and had two female students who said they'd tried to get into programming in the past, but actively stopped because of how inaccessible the field was -- or was perceived to be -- as a woman.

"Their experience doesn't come as a surprise of course, but it definitely hit me in the feels to hear that being said twice in just one class," Teltser said. "It makes me so happy that they decided to give it a try again, and that they felt our program was a place they could see themselves."

"DeltaV is an amazing resource, and an incredible opportunity," Teltser added. "Having been a part of that, and now helping other people's journey through that, I can say that it really does change people's lives."



INTRAPRENEUR ACADEMY ADAPTING TO THE PANDEMIC

Despite the hurdles the pandemic created, Jennifer Murphy Director of Innovation Services discovered that innovative ideas and intrapreneurialism can be just as impactful virtual, than if it were led in a traditional classroom.

To fit the unique situation of sessions going virtual, Murphy made the decision to turn the focus on one single company rather than merging multiple teams from various businesses. The company chosen was Collins Aerospace in Cedar Rapids. Collins had already adapted to large changes throughout the company, from acquisition to spinoffs to dealing with the impact of major weather events and the pandemic.

Collins has been a strong supporter of innovation with one Collins team participating in every cohort of Intrapreneur Academy. Despite its Global scale, Collins sends their leaders to Intrapreneur Academy to teach them the tools to refocus their mindset that allows them to think differently, and optimize what they already have, "It's taking that entrepreneurial mindset and applying it inside a company, hence the term Intrapreneurship," said Murphy.

Prior to the pandemic, sessions were held in day-long lectures with breakout teams and activities, but Murphy realized that productivity and progress were going to be difficult if they continued that way through Zoom. Sessions were cut from eight hours to four, and teams spent time on pre-work assignments and then coached individually.

"We have learned that there is some value in not having to make that commute," said Murphy. "Sometimes you can do exercises in a virtual environment that are impactful, if not more impactful than you can do in a room together."



Murphy discovered that discussions and conversations were smoother online than in person, “You’ve got completely different cues,” Murphy said. “So really having to make sure that in a virtual environment, doing smaller chunks of talking and increasing the number of interaction points versus in a classroom you can get away with longer lectures or discussion periods within those activities.”

Utilizing break out rooms has been beneficial for teams because of the lack of distraction and noise from the classroom. Murphy noted that most of the innovative ideas come from, “a pure place,” because it has not been influenced by the circumstances of the classroom or other people.

Jack Jordan, Senior Systems Engineer in the Advanced Systems Department, has been the lead coordinator on behalf of Collins Aerospace. Jordan had previously attended the Academy as part of its first cohort, and was eager to bring more teammates back with him.

“Intrapreneur Academy has been critical in shaping my mentality in everyday life, as well as my work life,” Jordan said. “It taught me that being innovative does not necessarily mean inventing the next, biggest breakthrough every day. There are mentalities that have to be kindled and maintained in order to drive innovative thinking forward.”

Individual coaching online has strengthened the feedback received. Murphy has found that the change has been positively received, “I invite them (students) to give me very candid feedback directly,” Murphy said. “I think that’s built an element of trust where teams know that they can just talk to me about what’s going on with the program...it’s really moving, helping people to move outside what they believe they know and help them see what’s possible.”

The pandemic has proven to businesses and organizations that preparation and innovation is key to weathering any storm. Intrapreneur Academy adapted to these challenges, and moving forward has impacted how training is delivered in the future. One of the topics that Murphy has noticed in her discussions with the teams has been how to work differently in this new office environment, and navigating larger changes that the pandemic has brought.

“Going forward what we would like to do is keep that same kind of flow with the pre-work and the shorter live session, then the coaching, but try to mix in quarterly in-person cohort meetings where people can get together and have that interaction,” Murphy said.

“It taught me that being innovative does not necessarily mean inventing the next, biggest breakthrough every day. There are mentalities that have to be kindled and maintained in order to drive innovative thinking forward.”



Kiva IOWA

SMALL LOANS GRANT BIG DREAMS

WITH AMIDST MAGAZINE, KIVA IOWA LOAN PROGRAM FUNDS ITS FIRST ENTREPRENEUR -- WITH MORE ON THE HORIZON

Early this summer, Jessica Pfohl Paisley of Dubuque was ready to launch her latest entrepreneurial adventure: AMIDST Magazine, a print and digital publication where creatives throughout the Midwest can connect with one another.

There was just one problem: She needed \$10,000 to cover printing costs for the first issue.

That isn't unusual; access to early capital is one of the biggest barriers to success for startups in Iowa. Without access to that early funding, many Iowa entrepreneurs have to close their doors before their business even has a chance to begin.

"Our team has spoken with hundreds of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial support organizations across Iowa," said Aaron Horn, Executive Director at NewBoCo, "We've found that there's a hidden step on the capital ladder that these businesses struggle to access before they're eligible for SBA loans, banks, or private investors."

For that reason, in 2021 NewBoCo partnered with Kiva to launch Kiva Iowa -- and Paisley became its first borrower.

"Becoming a borrower on Kiva was very straightforward," Paisley said. "I'm not going to say it was easy, but it was simple. Especially because you have someone walking you through the process."

Based in San Francisco, Kiva is a global nonprofit micro-lending platform. It offers loans that are zero interest, zero fees and range from \$1,000 to \$15,000. Lenders can support a Kiva microloan with an investment of as little as \$25.



Kaitlin Byers, Capital Access Manager

As the statewide hub for Kiva, NewBoCo facilitates the lending and due diligence process for Iowa-based borrowers on the Kiva platform and connects borrowers to other resources to grow their businesses. NewBoCo was able to pilot this program in 2021 because of grant funding provided by the Iowa Economic Development Authority's Entrepreneurial Investment Award program.

"This region needs more capital to create new opportunities for entrepreneurs, especially those who are financially excluded or historically cut off from accessing traditional means of capital," said Kaitlin Byers. "That's why, as a former entrepreneur myself, I was drawn to take on a new role with NewBoCo as Capital Access Manager with Kiva Iowa."

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Rather than asking for collateral or running a traditional hard credit check, Kiva uses a "social underwriting" process to assess credit worthiness. To be approved for fundraising, borrowers must provide financial and business information, a personal story, and high quality business photos. Then, Kiva reviewers look at social factors, such as whether a borrower has been endorsed by a local Trustee, before approving a loan for fundraising.

Once approved, the loan is posted on the Kiva website in a 15-day private fundraising period. During that time, the borrower must recruit a given number of lenders from their personal network to kickstart their fundraising.

After reaching the required number of initial lenders, the loan graduates into a 30-day public fundraising period, where it is publicly viewable by Kiva's worldwide community of lenders.

This unique process makes Kiva an accessible option for entrepreneurs, particularly women-owned businesses, minority-owned businesses, and lower income entrepreneurs. In fact, to level the economic playing field for entrepreneurs, Kiva requires that 80% of borrowers on their platform belong to these categories. NewBoCo expects that close to 100% of the borrowers we support will fall into these categories.

"This region needs more capital to create new opportunities for entrepreneurs, especially those who are financially excluded or historically cut off from accessing traditional means of capital."



Jessica Pfohl Paisley

Paisley got connected to Kiva Iowa at EntreFEST - NewBoCo's conference for entrepreneurs and innovators in the Midwest. Byers worked to get Paisley approved on the Kiva platform, and provided advice as she went through the fundraising process.

"When there was a day or two left [in my fundraising period] someone finished the final \$700," Paisley said. "It was absolutely amazing."

With a fully funded loan, Paisley had access to the funds she needed to print AMIDST Magazine's first edition in September. It met with so much success that the AMIDST team is already planning the spring edition of the magazine, and they're working to grow their digital edition and their online community for creatives.

'JUST THE BEGINNING'

Paisley isn't the only entrepreneur using Kiva Iowa. As of October, three Iowa borrowers have been fully funded, and many more are beginning their fundraising process. These entrepreneurs come from all across the state, and their businesses represent everything from model train manufacturing to beauty salons to farming.

Byers sees this as just the beginning of the program's journey. She's committed to growing Kiva Iowa throughout the entire state.

"Small businesses are the backbone of our communities," she said. "Our partnership with Kiva further confirms our dedication to supporting the dreams of entrepreneurs across the state of Iowa. When these entrepreneurs thrive, we all win."

Already a successful borrower on the platform, Paisley says she's now interested in giving back by becoming a Kiva Iowa lender.

"I'm actually going through the platform looking for different loans to support myself," said Paisley. "It's such an amazing, fulfilling thing to do. You can actually see firsthand the impact you're having."

To learn more about Kiva Iowa, visit www.newbo.co/kiva.

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

“When I moved back to Cedar Rapids from Chicago, I found that Cedar Rapids was in a prime position to become a hub for the sort of creative entrepreneurship that inspired me elsewhere,” said Bill Daly. “I started volunteering with NewBoCo because I wanted to be a part of making this happen.”

Bill joined NewBoCo as a mentor for the Iowa Startup Accelerator, and quickly became more involved with the organization as a donor and a board member.

“What keeps me involved at NewBoCo is how the organization grows and tackles challenges in our local community, region, and state that fit the organization’s mission and vision,” said Daly. “The results we see now are just a small preview of how impactful this organization will be in 5-10 years.”

Daly thinks there’s a place for everyone at NewBoCo.

“You can find programming that fits any passion you have here,” he said. “If you are interested in youth development and programming, they work on that. If you are interested in building a stronger business environment, they work on that. If you are interested in building a more diverse workforce and entrepreneurs, they work on that.”

And Daly hopes others join him as a volunteer and donor to NewBoCo because of his belief in the staff.

“When I invest in a cause, I always want to do it for organizations where the staff and leadership share the same values I do,” he said. “I am continually amazed at the work done by the staff at NewBoCo and listening to them talk about why they do what they do which makes it easy for me to invest my time, talent, and treasure.”

To join Bill as a donor and volunteer, visit www.newbo.co/engage.



“You can find programming that fits any passion you have here. If you are interested in youth development and programming, they work on that. If you are interested in building a stronger business environment, they work on that. If you are interested in building a more diverse workforce and entrepreneurs, they work on that.”

2021 ANNUAL MEETING

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 16

WELCOME

Aaron Horn: Executive Director, NewBoCo
Jill Wilkins: Chief Operating Officer, NewBoCo
Alisabeth Von Presley: Event Emcee



NEWBOCO K12 EDUCATION

Rachella Dravis and Wendy Bailey
Fort Madison School District



DELTA V CODE SCHOOL

Patrick Turu
Cedar Rapids Jefferson HS & Iowa Big



NEWBOCO STUDIOS

Nora Crosthwaite
Stagerie



IOWA STARTUP ACCELERATOR

Matt Stahl
Steel Therapeutics



KIVA

Jessica Paisley
AMIDST Magazine



CLOSING

Mike Heaton
Director of Development, NewBoCo

Thank you to our sponsors:

**Shuttleworth
& INGERSOLL**
ATTORNEYS AT LAW • ESTABLISHED 1854

ISAV
ISA VENTURES