As part of the L.A. Tech Talent Pipeline partnership with Mayor Eric Garcetti and the Mayor’s Tech Council, Bixel Exchange launched the L.A. Tech Talent Challenge, an internship program that reached its goal of placing 100 low-income youth in paid tech internships in 2017. The program connects underrepresented young Angelenos to stable and lucrative careers in the rapidly growing L.A. tech industry.

Companies engaged with students in multiple settings to provide hands-on learning opportunities and inform them about the current tech landscape, skill demands, job roles and educational requirements.

600+ students applied to our internship programs in 2016-2017, resulting in:

- 283 students interviewed by Bixel Exchange

30% of interns hired for part-time or full-time work as a result of their internship

100 low-income students placed in paid tech internships

This program gave me my first experience in the IT field with my placement with the City of L.A. It was the Bixel Exchange program that opened this door for me.

Ricardo Huitrón
Pasadena City College
Intern @ ITA

“My experience at Snap has been life changing...Snap and Bixel Exchange believed in me and gave me the opportunity to work in IT.”

Jeran Boyd
Santa Monica College
Intern @ Snap Inc.

Student Diversity:
- 95% Low-income
- 85% Community College
- 10% African-American
- 18% Asian
- 1% Native American/ Native Hawaiian
- 42% Latino
- 59% Women

Gender:
- 58% Men
- 42% Women

Community College:
- 3% Formerly Incarcerated
- 7% Foster Youth
- 8% Home-Insecure
Interested in hosting interns or supporting this program?
Contact Lindsey Heisser, lheisser@lachamber.com, to learn how you can get involved.

27 DIFFERENT COMPANIES HIRED INTERNS IN 2017
Boingo Wireless • City of Los Angeles • CreatorUp • Data 360 • Diamond Labs • DIY Girls • Globemart • GreenCommuter • Headspace • Human IT • HyreCar • Information Technology Agency • LACI • LaunchMaps • LOQULES • Metro • Michelson 20MM • mitú • New Form • Perception Robotics • SAYA • Snap Inc. • Tastemade • Techstars • Two Bit Circus • VentureFuel • Xelligent

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OUR CASE
L.A. is the third largest tech ecosystem in the United States, and the fastest growing; however, talented but underrepresented L.A. youth, including community college students, don’t have access to medium to high-wage, skilled careers in this industry because:

- Employer misconceptions about skills and abilities in “non-traditional” pools of talent, such as community colleges.
- Students lack of exposure or proper preparation for tech careers.
- Students often don’t have social capital needed to get their foot in the door.

SUCCESS STORIES

Working with the Snapchat team at mitú, I realized that I have a hidden talent when it comes to direction and attention to details and that I very much enjoy it. I’m proud and very thankful for this program.

Blanca Renovato
Intern @ mitú

Last summer, Bixel Exchange placed Blanca, a graduate of Pierce College, into the mitú ACCELERATOR, a digital media bootcamp designed to empower young, emerging talent to tell authentic stories that represent their lives and communities.

Bixel Exchange’s internship program has completely changed my life. My internship has given me the opportunity to show top professionals at a big tech company what I can do.

Mario Esparza
Intern @ Snap Inc.

Mario earned an internship with Snap Inc. as a part of our 2017 L.A. Tech Talent College internship program. He was offered a chance to extend his internship into the fall, and is now a full time contract employee with the company. He has since successfully recommended classmates for jobs at Snap.