

Certiably useful (updated)

NPower New Jersey provides technology training to young adults and veterans

By: [David Hutter](#)

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Bea Tassot, the executive director of [NPower New Jersey](#), is recruiting corporations to help fund the nonprofit workforce development organization that offers free technological training programs. "We are training people who do not have the opportunity to go to college," Tassot said. "They will have a great future with great jobs. We have many success stories. Young adults and veterans who live in their cars come to us. They leave our program with a job that pays \$40,000 or \$50,000."

According to NPower, technology job growth in New Jersey is outpacing access to technology talent. Tassot sees increasing demand for homegrown workers. NPower provides free training to young adults, minorities and military veterans in Newark. She opened NPower in 2014-2015 in Jersey City with JP Morgan Chase Bank as the sole financial backer. She expanded to Newark in 2019. In addition to JPMorgan, the organization is now funded by Atlas Consulting, investment management firm BlackRock and the state Department of Labor and Workforce Development.



Bea Tassot, executive director, NPower NJ. (Photo by Aaron Houston) – AARON HOUSTON
"First we serve those students for life," Tassot said. "Some students have earned bachelor's degrees but cannot find jobs."



NPower trains high school graduates who are ages 18 to 25, military veterans who are at least 21 years of age, and people who committed crimes and have served their time.

The students study in a classroom with an instructor for 16 weeks and take part in a paid internship for seven weeks. They graduate with a certification in Comp ITF and CompTIA A+. Students learn cybersecurity, tech fundamentals and security technician skills. Each class has 24 students. Upon graduating, they work for information technology departments of companies and nonprofit organizations. Graduates work for Mars Inc., Verizon, TD Bank, Gadget Software, KPMG, SHI International Corp., the City of Jersey City and the City of Newark, Broadridge Financial, Pearson Education, Accenture and Bank of America.

NPower also provides professional development training: interviewing skills, résumé writing, LinkedIn profile creation and dressing for the workplace. The organization pays travel expenses, exam fees, and certification fees, she said. "We have a rigorous enrollment process, because it is one thing to enroll students but we want them to be the right fit," Tassot said. "And we want them to be able to stay for 23 weeks to be successful." Tassot said she has people waiting to enroll. "Everybody on our team wants our students to be successful," Tassot said. "They need to show us their commitment and we are tough because life is tough."

Andrea Paz, 21, enrolled at NPower after her brother completed the program in Jersey City two years ago. She is a junior at the New Jersey Institute of Technology and a native of Clifton. Her brother was working as a valet driver before he enrolled. He completed an internship and is now working at technology company Ricoh. "He became motivated to get a better job," Paz said. "I thought this would be a good compliment to learn more about information technology." Paz wants to learn about computer hardware and hopes to work in the technology field.

Jermie Bowen, 40, enrolled at NPower after serving in the Navy. He was an electrician technician for six years and was discharged in 2006. He grew up in Montclair and East Orange. "I normally pay my child support online and something popped up about free tech classes," Bowen said. "I decided to sign up." He is currently working as a handyman, landscaper and in construction. Bowen earned an A+ certification before he enrolled at NPower and wants to update his professional credentials to get the ITF certification. "The material on the A+ certification has changed over time, because technology is advancing so rapidly," Bowen said. "I want to look in the cyber-security program and see what that is about."

Editor's note: A previous version of this story said NPower provides training to former convicts, it does not and that reference was removed from the post at 10:57 a.m. EST on Feb. 3, 2020.