

SPARK Workforce Development Program announced at the Howard County Innovation Summit

Health Tech Alley unveiled the SPARK (Skilled Pathways for Apprenticeships, Readiness & Knowledge) workforce program to build technology career pathways

COLUMBIA, MD, UNITED STATES, March 11, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The SPARK (Skilled



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Greg Miller

Pathways for Apprenticeships, Readiness & Knowledge) workforce development program made its debut at the Howard County Innovation Summit. The initiative, developed by Health Tech Alley on behalf of Howard County, expands the organization's efforts to build practical technology career pathways for Maryland residents, with a focus on early-stage talent development.

SPARK is designed as a pre-apprenticeship program that prepares participants for careers in technology-driven fields, including artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, quantum, clean energy and related digital disciplines. The program introduces a structured learn-and-earn model

that combines foundational instruction with applied experience.

The Howard County initiative aligns with regional workforce development efforts focused on expanding access to emerging technology career opportunities, and includes local recruitment and partnerships with County-based employers.

"We are pleased to be supporting the County Executive's vision for Howard County as an innovation hub. The Howard County Economic Development Authority is a great sponsor and partner on numerous initiatives," said Greg Miller, Executive Director at Health Tech Alley.

SPARK follows a three-phase structure design to move participants from foundational preparation to job-relevant skills. The first phase centers on Related Technical Instruction (RTI), where participants develop professional and technical foundations, and teaming and collaboration skills. The second phase provides paid On-the-Job Training (OJT) with employer

partners, allowing learners to apply skills in real operational environments. The final phase emphasizes credential attainment and career transition.

Health Tech Alley's expansion into SPARK builds on prior workforce initiatives. The organization previously launched the Data Science Youth Apprenticeship program, which focused on developing applied analytical and technical capabilities among participating learners. That program was supported in part through philanthropic investment, state labor and education agencies and employer collaboration.

Health Tech Alley is a Maryland-based organization focused on connecting education, workforce development, and technology innovation. The organization works with employers, public sector stakeholders, and training partners to design programs that align skills development with evolving industry needs.

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