

Health Tech Alley Announces First Successful Cohort of SPARK Emerging Tech Pre-Apprenticeship Program

Howard County-backed initiative combines professional readiness, hands-on employer training, and industry certifications to launch local tech careers.

COLUMBIA, MD, UNITED STATES, August 28, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Health Tech Alley (HTA), a Columbia-based 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, today announced the successful conclusion of its pilot cohort for the SPARK (Skilled Pathways for Apprenticeships, Readiness & Knowledge) program. Sponsored by the Howard County Economic Development Authority (HCEDA) and the Office of the Howard County Executive, the initiative delivers an accelerated workforce pipeline in high-demand fields such as Artificial Intelligence, Quantum Computing, DevSecOps, and Clean Energy.



Interns Reavin Zhan, Jaleen Loving, Steven Galo and Nathan Garcia

Comprehensive Training & Real-World Experience



By combining real-world project experience with industry credentials, SPARK turns classroom knowledge into immediate, high-impact career opportunities."

Greg Miller

The SPARK program integrates three distinct pillars designed to bridge academic preparation and employer demand:

- **Professional Readiness Accelerator:** Participants completed targeted soft-skill development, focusing on problem-solving, team aptitude, and professional communication to ensure seamless workplace integration.
- **On-the-Job Employer Training:** Apprentices were embedded with premier local technology

employers—including RealmOne, DigiFlight, KemperSports, and Capital Energy Solutions—working directly on active projects ranging from LLM agent development to quantum hardware workflows.

- Industry-Recognized Credentials (IRCs): Students prepared for and attained high-value technical certifications, including the AWS Certified Cloud Practitioner and CompTIA Security+, validating their skills for immediate market value.

Immediate Employment Pathways

The inaugural cohort demonstrated exceptional performance across all partner sites. Highlighting the program's immediate economic impact, two candidates have already interviewed for full-time employment directly with their host employers—including candidate interviews for Systems Engineer and technical growth roles at RealmOne and DigiFlight. All participating students leave the program with increased career opportunities and practical portfolio experience to accelerate their professional trajectory.

Looking ahead, Health Tech Alley and its Howard County partners plan to scale the SPARK program tenfold over the next 12 to 24 months, expanding the regional tech talent pipeline to support 60 interns.

About Health Tech Alley

Health Tech Alley is a 501(c)(3) non-profit workforce intermediary headquartered in Columbia, Maryland. HTA acts as an employer of record, program manager, and workforce accelerator, collaborating with government agencies, educational institutions, and industry partners to build sustainable career pathways across Maryland.

Media Contact:

Health Tech Alley

6751 Columbia Gateway Drive

Columbia, MD 21046

Email: info@healthtechalley.org

Website: www.healthtechalley.org

Gregory Miller

Health Tech Alley

+1 202-558-8439

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[LinkedIn](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/937860253>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire,

Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.