

# Kentucky

## Preparing the next generation of tech talent in the Bluegrass State

Louisville leaders hoping to beef up the city's tech talent are starting a number of new initiatives.

One program will train youth in computer coding in an effort to prepare high school students for entry-level programming positions. Software development company InterApt launched the effort with the local non-profit Transform Education Kentucky with the aim of providing students with free training. Graduates will be qualified to fill the 10,000 technology job openings Louisville expects to have available by 2020.

InterApt is also supporting another state program — a joint initiative of the Kentucky Department of Education and the Kentucky Labor Cabinet called Tech Ready Apprentices for Careers in Kentucky (TRACK) — to train students and enlarge the pool of skilled workers. Employers who participate in the program can accept students who complete the course into Registered Apprentice positions.

Farther south in the state, the Paducah Public School District plans a 75,000-square foot innovation hub to give its students access to training in STEM fields such as engineering and information technology as well as skilled crafts including welding and carpentry.

The \$16.3 million hub will house classes including engineering, IT, automotive technology and health science. And, after the students have left for the day, the center will offer night classes for adult learners.

Sources: (WDRB) (WAVE3) (TechRepublic) (WKMS)

## WHAT DID WE DO RIGHT?

Kentucky saw more than 50 net jobs created per 1,000 residents from the middle of 2011 to the end of 2016.

## WHAT CAN WE DO BETTER NEXT YEAR?

A state law limits drone operation in areas where it is already restricted by the FAA, a redundant rule that lowers the state's 'A' grade in Drones to a 'C-' this year.

## WHERE HAVE WE MOST IMPROVED?

Short-term rentals operate in major markets, and Airbnb began collecting and remitting taxes in Louisville.

Best & Brightest	B
Fast Internet	D
Grants Advanced Degrees	C-
Tech Workforce	D
Tax Friendly	B-
Attracts Investment	D
Entrepreneurial Activity	B-
Ridesharing	A
Short-Term Rentals	B
Sustainable Policies	B
Self-Driving Vehicles	A
Drones	C-



## Self-Driving Vehicles

Kentucky imposes no restrictions on self-driving vehicles other than the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration's rules.



## Tech Workforce

Kentucky has about 27 tech jobs per 1,000 people, placing it a step behind other states in the region.



## Best & Brightest

Though a Right-to-Work state, Kentucky lacks a law protecting workers from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.



## Entrepreneurial Activity

Kentucky saw more than 236,000 net jobs created between Q2/2011 and Q4/2016, about 53 jobs per 1,000 residents.

## Training Workers to Jump from Coal to Coding in the Bluegrass State

In a refurbished Coca-Cola bottling plant, some Kentucky workers are making an improbable transition from coal mining to coding.

Software development startup Bit Source was founded in Pikeville — a community strained by the eroding coal industry — to take the same problem-solving and abstract thinking skills needed to run a mine and apply them to coding. "We found out that coal miners are really just engineers that get dirty," said Bit Source President Justin Hall.

When Bit Source first advertised, it received 950 applications for only 10 available spots, and the program has only continued to grow.

Farther west, the Danish manufacturing company LINAK will add more than 400 jobs to the Kentucky workforce with a \$33 million facility in Jefferson County. The expansion will double LINAK's presence in the state, creating jobs for engineers, assemblers and salespeople.

PHOTO CREDIT: U.S. Department of Labor | Sources: (Fast Company) (Courier-Journal)

