Dear vtTA Members & Supporters,

One of the top concerns the Vermont Technology Alliance has heard from the tech business community is the problem of finding and attracting employees for job openings. The Vermont Technology Alliance is developing a tech job recruitment and marketing plan to help promote tech job openings and opportunities in Vermont. We are asking businesses to complete a survey about employer demographics and hiring that will help us in this effort. Representatives from tech businesses, as well as non-tech businesses with tech employees, are encouraged to participate.

Please use the following link to take the survey:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/vttajobRecruitmentSurvey

We'll share the overall results of the survey, but all individual responses will remain confidential.

The vtTA provided testimony to the House Commerce and Economic Development committee on legislation to change the definition of an independent contractor vs. regular employees, as it affects workers' compensation and unemployment insurance requirements. We support changes to the current definition, including the ABC test, which tends to classify nearly all contractors as employees. We noted that the current guidelines create problems for tech employers and lost work opportunities for independent contractors, and we shared some anonymous examples from our members.

The vtTA partnered with The Vermont-Quebec Enterprise Initiative, managed by the Lake Champlain Chamber of Commerce, and the Federacion of Chambers of Commerce (Quebec), for a meeting with tech businesses from Vermont and Quebec. The goal is to help support a technology business corridor between Vermont and Quebec, where businesses
could benefit from collaboration and partnerships. The vtTA invited several member businesses that aligned with three visiting Quebec tech companies to participate in the discussion. You can find out more about the Initiative and opportunities for cross-border business connections at our Feb. 18 Lunch & Learn event.

Jeff Couture
Executive Director, Vermont Technology Alliance

Upcoming Events

vtTA Lunch & Learn: The Vermont-Quebec Enterprise Initiative
[February 18, 2016 - Community College of Vermont, Winooski]

Vermont Technology Alliance's Feb. Lunch & Learn focuses on the Vermont-Quebec Enterprise Initiative, an effort to increase business partnerships, employee recruiting opportunities, and business expansion activity between Vermont and Quebec. Guest speakers Tom Torti and Marla Woulf will discuss potential opportunities for tech and other Vermont businesses. This Lunch & Learn session is sponsored by Paul Frank + Collins.

For more, click here.

Green River Hosts Brattleboro Area Tech Meeting
[February 18, 2016 - Green River, Brattleboro]

Software company Green River hosts the March Brattleboro Area Tech meeting. Green River builds software for sustainability, environmental protection, school improvement, and public health. CEO Michael Knapp will speak about the work of Green River, its choice of technologies and his experience running an IT company in Vermont. Brattleboro Area Tech is a networking group for those interested in or working in technology in the greater Brattleboro area.

For more, click here.
LaunchVT Collegiate Competition  
[February 19, 2016 - Champlain College, Burlington]  
Teams from nine colleges across the state will compete in the first-ever LaunchVT Collegiate Competition for a first-place prize of $7500 and an automatic finalist spot in the LaunchVT competition.

For more, click here.

Vermont Climate Economy Summit: Ideas to Action  
[February 22, 2016 - Vermont Technical College, Randolph Center]  
The Vermont Council on Rural Development will host the second Summit on Vermont's Climate Economy at Vermont Technical College in Randolph to share the action platform of the Vermont Climate Economy Council and discuss common ground for action. The focus is identifying steps that will reduce carbon emissions while stimulating economic development opportunities in Vermont.

For more, click here.

Vermont Peak Pitch 2016  
[March 3, 2016 - Vermont Technical College, Randolph Center]  
Hosted by FreshTracks Capital, Peak Pitch Vermont, now in its 11th year, is a skiing, networking and fundraising event held at Sugarbush Mountain. Entrepreneurs are paired on a chairlift with an investor or advisor, and provided the chance to deliver their elevator pitch on the way up the mountain during a fun and active day out on the slopes.

For more, click here.

Generator presents Biomechatronics for the Masses  
[March 3, 2016 - Champlain College, Burlington]  
Whether for injured victims of war-torn Sierra Leone, veterans, or accident victims, developing a better-fitting prosthetics has been a consuming passion of David Sengeh for the last decade. He has pioneered a method that combines high resolution MRI scans with mathematical stress models to produce a digital design that can be 3D printed almost anywhere, by almost anyone. Meet David for an inspiring evening of big ideas.
For more, click here.

**7th Annual Central Vermont Job Fair**
[April 6, 2016 - Barre Auditorium, Barre]

Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation and the Vermont Agency of Human Services VocRehab Vermont are hosting the 7th Annual Central Vermont Job Fair at Barre Auditorium. The deadline to register for a table is March 18.

For more, click here.

**UX Burlington 2016**
[April 29, 2016 - Main Street Landing, Burlington]

UX Burlington is a single day, conference-style gathering, focused on what it really takes to build a great user experience on the web.

For more, click here.

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**Vermont Technology News**

**Leahy: Raise Minimum Broadband Speeds for Rural States**
[February 10, 2016 - Source: Vermont Business Magazine/press release]

Senator Patrick Leahy has asked Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack to raise the minimum broadband speed that determines funding eligibility for the Farm Bill broadband loan program. Leahy cited data from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) which found that only 53 percent of rural areas have access to speeds of 25 Mbps download, a measurement that is more than 6 times higher than the minimum standard set by the Farm Bill.

For more, click here.

**Burlington Business Crowd Talks Cloud Technology**
[February 11, 2016 - Source: Burlington Free Press]

Technology expert John Burton enlightened a Burlington business crowd about the benefits of online data storage and systems at a session sponsored by FreePressMedia. Burton, president of Network Performance Inc. in South Burlington, said that 90 percent of technology-related spending for
businesses over the next six years will be poured into cloud-based computing, including some $200 billion this year.

For more, click here.

**Credit union, Milk Money Forge Partnership**  
[February 10, 2016 - Source: Burlington Free Press]

VSECU announced a partnership with Vermont-based equity crowdfunding company Milk Money L3C, designed to empower entrepreneurialism and drive local business development. The partnership includes an equity investment in Milk Money through VSECU's subsidiary, Vermont Heritage Financial Group. Milk Money was founded last year to take advantage of the Vermont Small Business Offering regulatory changes that allow Vermont entrepreneurs to solicit equity/debt investments from any Vermont resident.

For more, click here.

**UVM Adds Majors in Biomedical Engineering and Data Science**  
[February 8, 2016 - Source: Vermont Business Magazine/press release]

The University of Vermont announced the addition of new Bachelor of Science degrees in biomedical engineering and data science. The new programs support UVM's efforts to expand STEM education, with a goal of doubling enrollments in STEM-related programs by 2020.

For more, click here.

**State Cancels Two Health Care Tech Projects**  
[February 4, 2016 - Source: VTDigger]

Vermont will change course on two major components of a health care information technology suite that were originally planned to interact with technology that backs up Vermont Health Connect. The Human Services Agency will restart the bidding process on two major IT projects: an integrated eligibility system and core management of the Medicaid Management Information System.

For more, click here.

**Vermont Tech Announces Gender Equity Initiative**  
[February 3, 2016 - Source: Vermont Business Magazine]
rates among women in several historically male-dominated fields. The college has set new annual female enrollment growth targets of nearly 40% each year for the next three years for its technology programs starting in the fall of 2016. Vermont Tech is collaborating with Vermont Works for Women and Change The Story to support the college in reaching its enrollment goals.

For more, click here.

**Report Says Vermont Businesses Are Key 'In Age of Climate Change'**
[February 2, 2016 - Source: Vermont Public Radio]

After a year of deliberations, the Vermont Climate Change Economy Council, a group of business and public policy leaders, has come out with a report on how the state's economy should adapt to climate change. The central theme of the report, "Progress for Vermont," is a call to make Vermont globally known for providing a hospitable environment to green and innovative businesses and entrepreneurs.

For more, click here.

**Report: Young people do leave Vt., but they move in**
[January 31, 2016 - Source: Times Argus]

A new report from a Montpelier think tank counters the popular narrative that Vermont is hemorrhaging young people. Either because of a real or perceived lack of opportunity, young would-be workers leave the state in droves, the narrative goes. And that's partly true, a Public Assets Institute report released Friday says: Many do leave. But, basically, just as many move in.

For more, click here.

**Vernon Looks to Fiber Optic Future**
[January 26, 2016 - Source: VTDigger]

In Vernon, struggling to reinvent itself after the December 2014 closure of Vermont Yankee, some say building an information superhighway could be the key to the town's future. For nearly a year, a group of residents has been investigating the possibility of creating a town-owned fiber optic network that could bring lightning-fast Internet speeds and much-needed economic growth.

For more, click here.
Panel: Vermont Should Embrace, Shrink Info Tech Projects
[January 24, 2016 - Source: VTDigger]

A group of three private-sector leaders is telling the state government to embrace information technology as a core part of operations and drastically improve the way it manages projects along the way. The committee issued a 20-page report outlining the state's strengths and weaknesses, including a strategic plan for the state's 132 IT projects, and cautioned that its recommendations were "a starting point for action and further exploration, not the end."
For more, click here.

Featured Member

Generator

Generator is a 6,000 square foot member-driven makerspace in the heart of Burlington, Vermont's 100 percent renewables-powered gigabit city. Generator opened in March of 2014 as a "pop-up" space and has since grown into a permanent shared shop environment. Generator's geographic market is concentrated in the greater Burlington region (Chittenden, Essex and Addison counties).

Generator is home to a vibrant, growing community of more than 200 engineers, artists, programmers, hobbyists, designers and educators who share access to one another and to tools that support creativity, learning and fabrication. It serves independent designers and fabricators, moonlighters, college students and recent grads, and mid-career professionals looking to advance creative projects and launch new enterprises.

Workshops and tool-sets at Generator support self-directed design, fabrication and learning by members as well as directed instruction through certification, workshops and multi-week classes.
Generator is unique for its hybrid "accelerator within a makerspace" model. New ventures are built around products developed or produced on site using Generator's shared facilities and equipment. There is presently no other accelerator program in Vermont targeted toward arts, design and consumer product innovation.

To learn more, visit Generator's website at:  
http://generatorvt.com

Would you like to see your company highlighted? Know of a company the vtTA should be talking about? Send us an email at newsletter@vtta.org

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New Member Update

The Vermont Technology Alliance welcomes Comcast Business as a new member.

We welcome individuals and businesses as vtTA members. Members benefit from vtTA's advocacy, programs and services, including discounts on our sponsored events, job postings in our Career Center, and networking and business opportunities. Sign up to be a new member here.

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Useful Information & Links

Comcast Business Announces Innovations 4 Entrepreneurs Competition

Comcast Business is seeking the nation's most innovative startup companies and entrepreneurs to participate in its Innovations 4 Entrepreneurs competition. Current and aspiring business owners can enter the competition for a chance to win up to $30,000 and participate in a day of mentoring with teams of business experts.

Applicants are asked to submit a 250-word essay to answer the question: How could your business use technology to help
enhance your business? Startups and entrepreneurs are encouraged to visit the Comcast Business Community to submit their applications and essays and review the full program details. Entries are due by March 12, 2016.

Two winners will be selected in each of the 15 Comcast Business Regions: one winner for startup companies (in business two years or less) and one winner for entrepreneurs (in business for more than two years). The 30 regional winners will each earn $10,000 in cash.

From the regional winners, six grand prize winners will be selected - three startups and three entrepreneurs - who will earn an additional $20,000 in cash, plus a trip to Philadelphia to spend a day attending group sessions with industry experts.

For more information, click here.

LaunchVT Competition Accepting Applications

LaunchVT, Vermont's statewide business pitch competition, is accepting applications. The LaunchVT competition will award more than $80,000 in cash and prizes to two winners in May. The application deadline for LaunchVT is March 13, 2016.

To learn more, click here.

SCORE Small Business Roundtable Series: How to Run My Business on the Internet

Champlain Valley SCORE continues its small business roundtable series on the first Tuesday of each month with "How to Run My Business on the Internet," Tuesday, March 2, 5:30 - 7 p.m. at the New England Federal Credit Union in Williston.

Whether a brick and mortar or an online business, your consumers are checking you and your business out on the Internet. As a small business owner, it is important to understand how customers navigate to find the right business to meet their needs, but also to connect, learn and relate to you and your product or service. A panel of experts will offer insights into websites, social media, and e-commerce, as well as how to understand how your business is viewed on the Internet.

For more and to register, click here.

vtTA's Career Center

Visit the Career Center tab on the Vermont Technology Alliance website. Member companies can post open positions, while job seekers can search positions and sign up for new posting notifications.

Software Developers - Inntopia
Senior Systems Engineer - Virtual Desktop - Competitive Computing (C2)
Systems Engineer - Competitive Computing (C2)
Director of Information Technology - The Howard Center
CRC Pro Technology - Workforce Education Instructor - Community College of Vermont

For more, click here.