

RESTART:

GROWING COMPUTER SCIENCE LITERACY AMONG INCARCERATED AND FORMERLY INCARCERATED MEN AND WOMEN

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BENNINGTON, VT

Target Participants: >40

Studio Overview

- Centrally-located, near public transportation, partner agencies, and ample free parking available.
- Flexible, dedicated office/work/lab space.
- Secure storage, dedicated offices for Restart Fellow and project administration.
- Bennington is home to the largest number of formerly incarcerated people in VT.



Project Infrastructure

- Studio space established and prepared.
- Assessment and referral instruments created and in use.
- Next-generation prison lab system developed - approved by NYS ITS and NYS DOCCS for deployment to in-prison Restart sites.
- Participant referral in-progress with VT DOC and local community partners.



Photo: A. Cencini

In-Prison Work

- Approval and deployment of Restart lab platform to Great Meadow Correctional Facility.
- 8-seat lab, freely available to all participants.
- Programming tools, library, projector, printer.
- CS1 (Python) class to begin 3/7/2019.



Photo: A. Cencini

Site Status

- ✓ Studio space / VT DOC engagement.
- ✓ In-prison resources ready to share.
- Fellow hiring process and bootstrapping referral process have been challenges.



Photo: BPI

THE PROJECT

Project Goals

- Broaden inclusion** in computer science through informal education of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated men and women.
- Build a bridge** between in- and after-prison informal CS education.
- Help incarcerated and formerly incarcerated participants **attain valuable technology skills** at all skill levels and **regain dignity**.
- Assist formerly incarcerated individuals in **rebuilding home communities, pursuit of further education, employment and entrepreneurship opportunities**.
- Learn and share what works and what doesn't** in informal CS education in and after prison through rigorous assessment and refinement - resulting in a transferrable approach.

In-Prison Deliverables

- New and upgraded computing resources for informal and formal CS education.
- Development of informal coding communities among participants.
- Regular jump-off sessions and visiting experts to Bennington and BPI in-prison sites at multiple skill levels.



Photo: BPI

After Prison Deliverables

- Community-based Restart Studio sites in Bennington and NYC, staffed by Restart Fellows.
- Open-access sessions and jump-off sessions led by Restart Fellows and industry/academic experts.
- Coding community formation and exposure to educational/employment opportunities.

Project Timeline & Status

- Year One**
 - Space preparations, hire Restart Fellows, create network of experts.
 - Deploy in-prison upgrades and library resources.
 - Ongoing open-access sessions and jump-off sessions, gather and analyze assessment data.
- Year Two**
 - Refine programming and resources based on assessment and feedback.
 - Ongoing programming, analyze second-year data and disseminate findings.
- Working Very Well**
 - NYC Restart Fellow & programming.
 - Bennington studio & partnerships.
 - In-prison computing platform & resources.
 - Dual-track (open-access/advanced) modality forming organically in NYC.
- In-Progress**
 - Bennington & NYC intake & programming.
 - Expert/catalyst network is growing.
- Challenges**
 - Bennington Restart fellow hiring.
 - Delayed project start.



Photo: BPI

Future Work

- Refine Restart approach based on participant / evaluator feedback.
- Expand Restart to additional sites and begin building a national network.

NEW YORK, NY

Target Participants: >160

Studio Overview

- Restart Fellow Ornell Caesar (BPI '16) manages NYC studio site and events.
- BPI NYC offices for administration; events at BPI Brooklyn Public Library and Kaplan sites.
- Programming underway, building out infrastructure and events schedule.
- BPI alumni network is significant feeder.



Photo: D. Bond

Events & Schedule

- Workshops**
 - 2 open-access workshops / month.
- Jump-Offs**
 - First jump-off session to be led by Angel Martinez - March 8-9, 2019.
- Facility Site Visits**
 - Andrew Cencini and Ornell Caesar to Woodbourne CF - April 2019.



Photo: D. Bond

In-Prison Infrastructure

- Upgrades to Woodbourne lab (next-gen platform).
- Streamline update and resource request process.
- Bard to adopt Bennington lab platform and share in-prison lab resources.



Photo: Matt Jones

Site Status

- ✓ Restart Fellow hired, major contributions to programming and participant recruiting.
- ✓ 4 open-access sessions (December, February) with growing interest, serving 14 participants.
- ✓ Strong and growing expert/catalyst network for jump-off sessions.

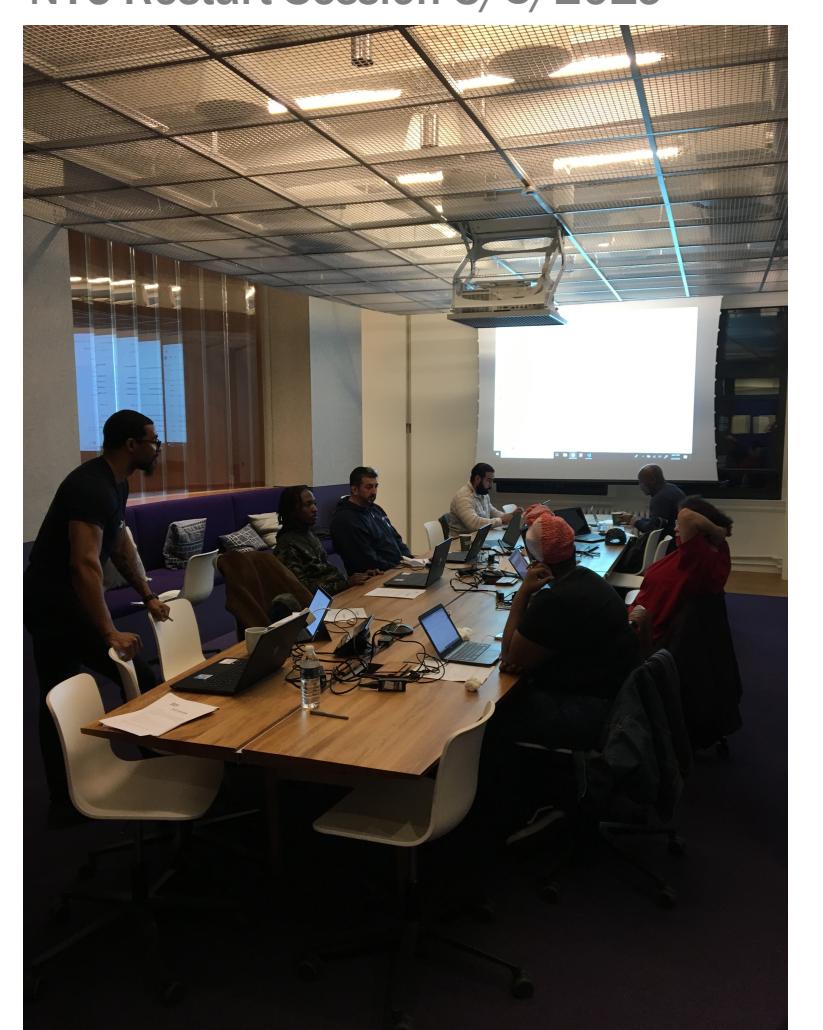


Photo: Matt Jones