**NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**
# AGREEMENT COVER SHEET

## Cover Sheet is an Internal Document for Business Office Use

## Please Type

Contractor full name: **District Arts and Education**

Doing Business As, if applicable: **District Arts and Education, Trimester 1**

Business Address: **470 James St. New Haven CT 06519**

Business Phone:    **315-404-3238**

Business email:    **patrick@transformnhv.org**

SS# OR Tax ID #:

Funding Source & Acct # including location code: ESSER II, #2552-6363-56697

Principal or Supervisor: **Ivelise Velazquez- Assistant Superintendent/Rosalyn Diaz-Ortiz, Multilingual Learner Supervisor**

Agreement Effective Dates: 12/14/21 To 6/30/22

Hourly rate or per session rate or per day rate. **N/A**

Total amount**: $200,000 (50 Students, Spring, Summer & Fall 2022, 273 hours for each of 2 cohorts or $366 per hour or $4,000 per student)**

Description of Service: District Arts and Education is a non-profit organization that manages a full stack computer science program and certifies students for advanced computer science jobs in industry. This project will provide funding for 50 NHPS 11th and 12th graders to complete one of three semesters, Spring, leading to a certificate program in their Skills Academy. Students develop knowledge in four core concepts and skill areas: Digital Live, Digital Foundation, Software Engineering and Content Creation. The students will be recruited from all New Haven Public School high schools and will attend the academy afterschool. One cohort of 25 students will attend Monday and Wednesday and the other 25 will attend Tuesday and Thursday. All 50 will have a lab day on Friday. The afternoon session will be 3 hours in length.

**NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

# Memorandum

| | |
|---|---|
| **To:** | New Haven Board of Education Finance and Operations Committee |
| **From:** | **Ivelisse Velazquez/Rosalyn Diaz-Ortiz** |
| **Date:** | **11/16/2021** |
| **Re:** | **District Arts and Education Agreement** |

Please *__answer all questions and attach any required documentation as indicated below__*.  Please have someone **ready to discuss** the details of each question during the Finance & Operations meeting or this proposal might not be advanced for consideration by the full Board of Education.

1. **Contractor Name**: District Arts and Education

**Description of Service**: District Arts and Education is a non-profit organization that manages a full stack computer science program and certifies students for advanced computer science jobs in industry. This project will provide funding for 50 NHPS 11th and 12th graders to complete one of three semesters, Spring, leading to a certificate program in their Skills Academy. Students develop knowledge in four core concepts and skill areas: Digital Live, Digital Foundation, Software Engineering and Content Creation. The students will be recruited from all New Haven Public School high schools and will attend the academy afterschool. One cohort of 25 students will attend Monday and Wednesday and the other 25 will attend Tuesday and Thursday. All 50 will have a lab day on Friday. The afternoon session will be 3 hours in length.

2. Cost: **$200,000**

3. Funding Source and account number: ESSER II, #2552-6363-56697

4. Continuation/renewal or new Agreement? **New Agreement**


   **Answer all questions:**
   a. If continuation/renewal, has the cost increased? If yes, by how much?
   b. What would an alternative contractor cost: **N/A**
   c.  If this is a continuation, when was the last time alternative quotes were requested? **N/A**
   d. For new or continuation: is this a service existing staff could provide. If no, why not? **This is a new service.**

5. **Type of Service**:

**Answer all questions:**
    a. Professional Development? **No**
        i. If this is a professional development program, can the service be provided by existing staff? If no, why not? **N/A**
    b. After School or Extended Hours Program? **After school program**
    c. School Readiness or Head Start Programs? **N/A**
    d. Other: (Please describe). *Computer Science Program*

6. **Contractor Classification:**
**Answer all questions:**
    a. Is the Contractor a Minority or Women Owned Business? **Yes**
    b. Is the Contractor Local? **Yes,**
    c. Is the Contractor a Not-for-Profit Organization? If yes, is it local or national? **Yes, it is local**
    d. Is the Contractor a public corporation? **No**
    e. Is this a renewal/continuation Agreement or a new service? **New Service**
    f. If it is a renewal/continuation has cost increased? If yes, by how much? **N/A**
    g. Will the output of this Agreement contribute to building internal capabilities? If yes, please explain: **N/A**

7. **Contractor Selection: N/A**
**Answer all questions**
    a. What specific skill set does this contractor bring to the project? If a new contractor, please attach a copy of the contractor's resume. **This nonprofit organization supports high school students in the area of digital and computer science area.**
    b. How was the Contractor selected? Quotes, RFP/RFQ, Sealed Bid or **Sole Source**? **Sole Source**
    c. Please describe the selection process including other sources considered and the rationale for selecting this Contractor: **This is the only contractor in the New Haven area who offers this service to students.**

8. **Evidence of Effectiveness & Evaluation**
**Answer all questions**
    a. What specific need will this contractor address and how will the contractor's performance be measured and monitored to ensure that the need is met? **Provide instruction and different workshops in the different areas of digital foundations and computer science including software engineering. Attendance and completion rate of students' work will be used as evaluation criteria**
    b. If this is a renewal/continuation service attach a copy of the evaluation or archival data that demonstrates effectiveness.

How is this service aligned to the District Continuous Improvement Plan? **Academic learning goal 1.4 College and Career Readiness: ...Increase student enrollment and success in college if they decide to go into this area. In addition, prepare them into Career readiness.**

9. Why do you believe this Agreement is fiscally sound? **This agreement will support all high school students in our district who would like to have a certification or gain**

**knowledge in the area of computer science. It will also benefit ALL students in the district so that they can have access to these certifications after graduation and can enter in these technological careers.**

10. What are the implications of not approving this Agreement? **If this agreement is not approved, high school students will not have any access to this computer science program because none of our high schools are offering any of these certifications at this time.**

**NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

# AGREEMENT
## By And Between
## The New Haven Board of Education
## AND

## (District Arts & Education)

FOR DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM:

## *(Academic Office)*

This Agreement entered into on the 17th day of November 2021, effective *(no sooner than the day after Board of Education Approval)*, the 13th day of December, 2021 , by and between the New Haven Board of Education (herein referred to as the "Board" and, District Arts & Education, located at, 470 James St, Ste 002, New Haven, CT 06513  (herein referred to as the "Contractor".

**Compensation:** The Board shall pay the contractor for satisfactory performance of services required the amount of $34,000 per month for 5 months, with a final payment of $30,000 for a total of $200,000.

The maximum amount the contractor shall be paid under this agreement: Two Hundred Thousand Dollars  ($200,000.00).  Compensation will be made upon submission of an itemized invoice which includes a detailed description of work performed and date of service.

**Fiscal support** for this Agreement shall be by  ESSER II **Program** of the New Haven Board of Education, **Account Number:** 2552-6363-56697 **Location Code:** 0000.

This agreement shall remain in effect from December 14, 2021 to June 30, 2022

**SCOPE OF SERVICE:** *Please provide brief summary of service to be provided.*

District Arts & Education is a non-profit organization that manages a full stack computer science program & certifies students for advanced computer science jobs in industry. One cohort of 25 students will attend Monday and Wednesday and the other 25 Tuesday and Thursday.  All 50 will have a lab day on Friday.  The afternoon sessions will be 3 hours in length.  If a student drops the program and new student can join the next trimester to bring the cohort back to 50.

***Exhibit A: Scope of Service:*** *Please attach contractor's detailed Scope of Service* <u>*on contractor letterhead*</u> *with all costs for services including travel and supplies, if applicable.*

***Exhibit B: Student Data and Privacy Agreement:*** *Attached*

**APPROVAL:** This Agreement must be approved by the New Haven Board of Education ***prior to service start date***. Contactors <u>may begin service no sooner than the day after Board of Education approval.</u>

**HOLD HARMLESS:** The Contractor shall insure and/or indemnify the Board and its members, employees and agents against all claims, suits, and expenses, including reasonable attorney's fees, in connection with loss of life, bodily injury or property damage arising from any neglect act or omission of the Contractor or its employees or agents. Further, the Contractor covenants and agrees that it shall hold the Board and its members, employees and agents harmless against any and all claims, suits judgments of any description whatsoever caused by the Contractor' breach of this agreement or based upon the conduct of the Contractor, or its agents or its employees or arising out of in connection with their activities under this agreement.

**TERMINATION:** The Board may cancel this agreement for any reason upon thirty (30) days' written notice sent to the Contractor by certified U.S. mail, return receipt requested; provided however, that the Board shall be responsible to the Contractor for all services rendered by the Contractor through the last day of thirty (30) day notice period, as long as the Agreement was approved by the Board prior to the start date of service.

Type text here

_____
Contractor Signature

President
New Haven Board of Education

11/17/2021
_____
Date

_____
Date

A.M. Bhatt, CEO
_____
Contractor Printed Name & Title

Revised: 8/2021

## EXHIBIT B

### STUDENT DATA PRIVACY AGREEMENT
### SPECIAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

For the purposes of this Exhibit B "directory information," "de-identified student information," "school purposes," "student information," "student records," "student- generated content," and "targeted advertising" shall be as defined by Conn. Gen. Stat.§10-234aa.

1. All student records, student information, and student-generated content (collectively, "student data") provided or accessed pursuant this Agreement or any other services agreement between the Parties are not the property of, or under the control of, the Contractor.

2. The Board shall have access to and the ability to delete student data in the possession of the Contractor except in instances where such data is (A) otherwise prohibited from deletion or required to be retained under state or federal law, or (B) stored as a copy as part of a disaster recovery storage system and that is (i) inaccessible to the public, and (ii) unable to be used in the normal course of business by the Contractor. The Board may request the deletion of any such student information, student records or student- generated content if such copy has been used by the operator to repopulate accessible data following a disaster recovery. The Board may request the deletion of student data by the contractor within two (2) business days of receiving such a request and provide to the Board confirmation via electronic mail that the student data has been deleted in accordance with the request, the date of its deletion, and the manner in which it has been deleted. The confirmation shall contain a written assurance from the Contractor that proper disposal of the data has occurred in order to prevent the unauthorized access or use of student data and that deletion has occurred in accordance with industry standards/practices/protocols.

3. The Contractor shall not use student data for any purposes other than those authorized pursuant to this Agreement.

4. A student, parent or legal guardian of a student may review personally identifiable information contained in student data and correct any erroneous information, if any, in such student data. If the Contractor receives a request to review student data in the Contractor's possession directly from a student, parent, or guardian, the Contractor agrees to refer that individual to the Board and to notify the Board within two (2) business days of receiving such a request. The Contractor agrees to work cooperatively with the Board to permit a student, parent, or guardian to review personally identifiable information in student data that has been shared with the Contractor, and correct any erroneous information therein.

5. The Contractor shall take actions designed to ensure the security and confidentiality of student data.

6. The Contractor will notify the Board, in accordance with Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-234dd, when there has been an unauthorized release, disclosure or acquisition of student data. Such notification will include the following steps:

   Upon discovery by the Contractor of a breach of student data, the Contractor shall conduct an investigation and restore the integrity of its data systems and, without unreasonable delay, but not more than thirty (30) days after such discovery, shall provide the Board with a more detailed notice of the breach, including but not limited to the date and time of the breach; name(s) of the student{s) whose student data was released, disclosed or acquired; nature of and extent of the breach; and measures taken to ensure that such a breach does not occur in the future.

7. Student data shall not be retained or available to the Contractor upon expiration of the contract between the Contractor and Board, except a student, parent or legal guardian of a student may choose independently to establish or maintain an electronic account with the Contractor after the expiration of such contract for the purpose of storing student- generated content.

8. The Contractor and Board shall each ensure their own compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C. § 1232g, as amended from time to time.

9. The Contractor acknowledges and agrees to comply with the above and all other applicable aspects of Connecticut's Student Data Privacy law according to Connecticut General Statutes §§ 10-234aa through 10-234dd.

10. The Parties agree that this Agreement controls over any inconsistent terms or conditions contained within any other agreement entered into by the Parties concerning student data.

Revised: 10/2/18

# NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Data Sharing Agreement

between

District Arts & Education

and

New Haven Public Schools

This data sharing agreement allows the New Haven Public Schools (NHPS) to share individual student or staff data and/or personally identifiable student information (hereafter "PII") from education records to District Arts & Education (DAE) for the following purpose(s):

- To implement the DAE instructional resources for New Haven Public Schools

This agreement authorizes DAE access to the data in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 34 CFR §99.31, in order to provide access to instructional resources on behalf of NHPS. Disclosing data/information from education records to DAE in no way assigns DAE ownership of the data/information or records; therefore, the data/information and/or records may be re-disclosed only with written permission from NHPS or otherwise in compliance with FERPA and its regulations.

Attached to this data sharing agreement is Exhibit B – Student Data Privacy Agreement Special Terms and Conditions.

1. Start Date: Upon full execution of this agreement.

2. End Date: 1 year from start date

3. Specific data authorized for sharing:
   NHPS will share the following data with DAE under the "school official" exception in FERPA, 34 CFR §99.31(a)(1):

We, the undersigned, agree to adhere to the terms and conditions specified above.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Dr. Iline Tracey**<br>**Superintendent, New Haven Public Schools** | Date |

**District Arts & Education (DAE)**

11/17/2021

Date

Name: A.M. Bhatt

Title: CEO

# NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## District Arts and Education Projects

Ivelisse Velazquez- Assistant Superintendent

Rosalyn Diaz- ML Supervisor

| Project | # Students | $ Student | Deliverable |
|---------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| Skills Academy | 50 | $4000 | 2 sessions per week (Jan-December) and summer Students receive a completion certificate |
| **Total** | **50** | $200,000 | |

To: New Haven Public Schools
From: District Arts and Education
Date: November 23, 2021
Re: Funding Proposal for District Arts and Education

We appreciate the opportunity to submit this proposal to New Haven Public Schools to further expand the incredible offerings and educational work you already take part in. As a non-profit, District Arts and Education focuses on serving the needs and aspirations of historically and systemically under-resourced communities. Our focus has been on New Haven since our inception and our long-term commitment is to build a lasting presence in the city's broader educational ecosystem.

**The Urgency that Moves Us**

There is little doubt that students of color, economically disadvantaged students, young women, and LGTBQ+ individuals are under-represented in STEM and Computer Science instruction and occupations. National data show that preparation at the secondary level is lowest in poor and urban areas. In the next decade, one billion jobs— almost one-third of jobs worldwide—are expected to be transformed by technology. Nearly 40 percent of Connecticut employers cited the lack of needed skills and expertise as the key challenge to finding qualified young workers.

Broadly, computer science education has suffered decades from a lack of diversity and access. There roughly 13,000 white male computer science majo 1992; in 2016 there were nearly 31,000.



During this same timeframe, the curve for white wor Black and Hispanic women, and Black and Hispanic remained almost completely flat, starting and endi approximately 5,000 Computer Science majors i groups. This highlights a major disparity in representation of BIPOC, Female, and LGE individuals in the professions with the highest ear potential and the greatest opportunity to have an impact on shaping society for the next hundred years.
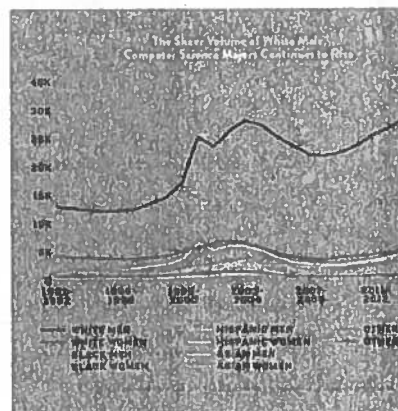
District Arts and Education is designed specifically to support, mentor, and meet the needs of under-represented groups in training for, and entering, computer science professions. Creating resources for these specific communities, along with giving high school students a place to expand their interests in digital technologies, increases the likelihood of a more diverse world of computer scientists. A more diverse world of computer scientists will lead to better informed technology, able to better serve a larger population of individuals whose needs are not being met by the present supply of products and resources.
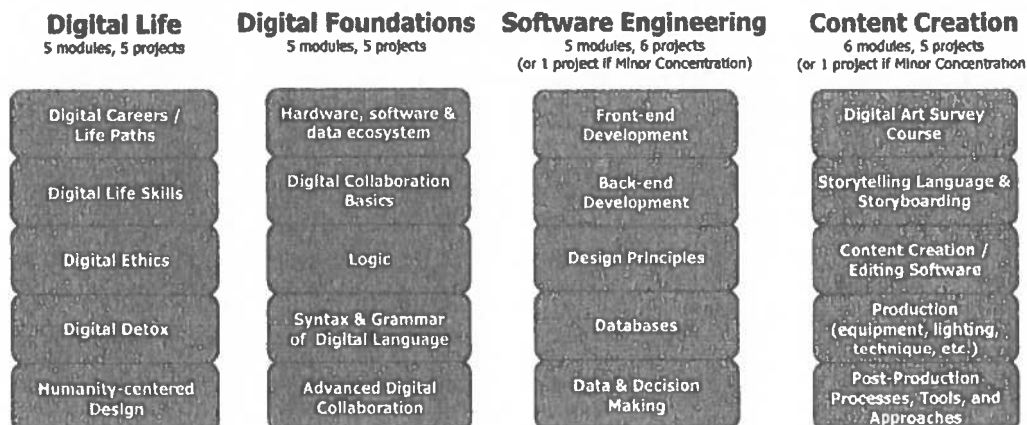
## 2022 NHPS<>DAE Program

Given the success with NHPS students in our 2021 programs, we would like to extend our reach in the New Haven community with a project aimed at juniors and seniors in New Haven Public Schools.

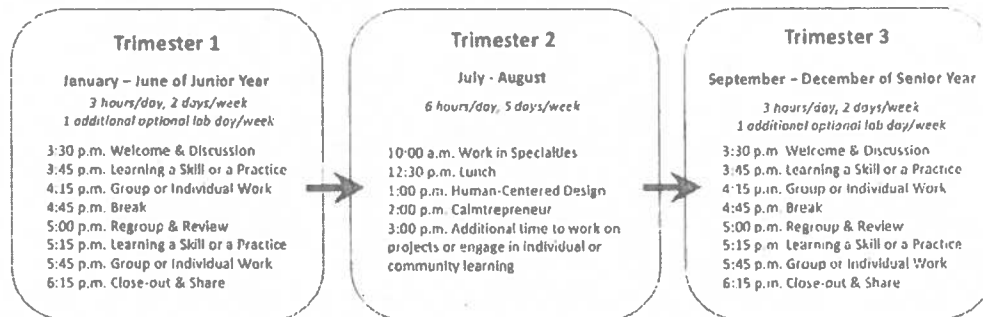At its core, our program is designed around the principles of:

- **Personal Vision**: Learner-centric experiences that teach skills and invite the student to express their own vision for a project or product
- **Tangible Output**: Creating portfolio projects that students can use as tangible demonstrations of skill in future endeavors
- **Collaboration & Community**: Learning, working, and playing in mutually supportive groups

**The Skills Academy** is designed to provide juniors and seniors with experiences that develop the mindsets, skills, and tools required to secure and succeed in entry-level positions in digital careers. Instead of a collection of grades or assessments, students develop a portfolio of projects that demonstrate their ability to add value in the workplace. The curriculum contains the following core concepts and skills:

| **Digital Life**<br>5 modules, 5 projects | **Digital Foundations**<br>5 modules, 5 projects | **Software Engineering**<br>5 modules, 6 projects<br>(or 1 project if Minor Concentration) | **Content Creation**<br>6 modules, 5 projects<br>(or 1 project if Minor Concentration) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Digital Careers / Life Paths | Hardware, software & data ecosystem | Front-end Development | Digital Art Survey Course |
| Digital Life Skills | Digital Collaboration Basics | Back-end Development | Storytelling Language & Storyboarding |
| Digital Ethics | Logic | Design Principles | Content Creation / Editing Software |
| Digital Detox | Syntax & Grammar of Digital Language | Databases | Production (equipment, lighting, technique, etc.) |
| Humanity-centered Design | Advanced Digital Collaboration | Data & Decision Making | Post-Production Processes, Tools, and Approaches |

[NOTE: For the 2022 pilot, we will focus on the Software Engineering concentration only and 2022 students will complete a Minor in Content Creation. Assuming the pilot is successful, we will offer both Major concentrations to future years' cohorts.]

In addition to these digital skills, students can be expected to achieve a new level of human and organizational competence. This allows them the ability to be significantly more present and comfortable with themselves and others than most other high school-aged students. Students will gain skills in teamwork and collaborative problem solving, interpersonal communication, and management of stress and anxiety. The Skills Academy has three distinct trimesters:

| Trimester 1 | Trimester 2 | Trimester 3 |
| --- | --- | --- |
| January – June of Junior Year | July - August | September – December of Senior Year |
| 3 hours/day, 2 days/week | 6 hours/day, 5 days/week | 3 hours/day, 2 days/week |
| 1 additional optional lab day/week | | 1 additional optional lab day/week |
| 3:30 p.m. Welcome & Discussion | 10:00 a.m. Work in Specialties | 3:30 p.m Welcome & Discussion |
| 3:45 p.m. Learning a Skill or a Practice | 12:30 p.m. Lunch | 3:45 p.m. Learning a Skill or a Practice |
| 4:15 p.m. Group or Individual Work | 1:00 p.m. Human-Centered Design | 4:15 p.m. Group or Individual Work |
| 4:45 p.m. Break | 2:00 p.m. Calmtrepreneur | 4:45 p.m. Break |
| 5:00 p.m. Regroup & Review | 3:00 p.m. Additional time to work on projects or engage in individual or community learning | 5:00 p.m. Regroup & Review |
| 5:15 p.m. Learning a Skill or a Practice | | 5:15 p.m Learning a Skill or a Practice |
| 5:45 p.m. Group or Individual Work | | 5:45 p.m. Group or Individual Work |
| 6:15 p.m. Close-out & Share | | 6:15 p.m. Close-out & Share |

trict-wide. At the end of the 12-month program, students leave with not just strong technical skills and a formal certificate of completion; they will leave with a tangible portfolio of projects that demonstrates those marketable skills to potential employers.

Note that, if some students drop off for whatever reason after Trimester 1, new students can enter at Trimester 2 to bring the cohorts back to 25; drop-off from Trimester 2 to Trimester 3 will also open up new seats for students to enter in Trimester 3. Students who enter in either Trimesters 2 or 3 will then complete the trimester(s) they missed in the following cohort. **We will ensure at any given time, we are developing 50 NHPS students and that attrition will not dilute NHPS's investment.**

This program will launch on Monday, January 24th.

## SECTION 3: Investment

**Skills Academy**

Components:

- Trimester 1 (January – June), Trimester 2 (July – August, all day), Trimester 3 (September – December), 2 cohorts of 25 students (grades 11 & 12)
- 546 instructional hours per student, per year
- All materials, faculty, and equipment to support program as outlined above
- DAE facility
- Lunch and snacks during 8-week summer intensive
- Student portfolio management
- Investment: $400,000 ($8,000 per student for the entire year of programs, including a FT program over the summer – note that this can drop to $7,500/student with a commitment of 100+ students per year)

**Total investment: $400,000 (total students served: 50)**

## Appendix I: Student Testimonials

This program made me realize who I want to be better than school ever did. The staff actually invests their time to help me find my interests and then helps me with what comes up along the way, like time management.

- Yedi, Wilbur Cross High School '21

Everything is interactive here. I'm not just listening to people talk; instead, I get to do the things I am learning about.

- Lyn, Amity Regional High School '22

The people are caring and they do their best to help me learn what is important to me. It is a great place to come when you are trying to acquire new skills, and it's a productive way to spend your time

- Jorge, Wilbur Cross High School '21

I want to be a videographer, so the skills that I learned here plus the skills I already had is making me a bigger force.

- Ashlynn, Hamden High School '23

I've had so much fun and learned so much and really grown an interest in film making and coding and web design, which I had never thought were really that interesting before. You'll learn things that will be useful in the future.

- Skylar, New Haven Academy '23

To be honest going into it I was a little skeptical—I was like, "maybe I already know how to do all this stuff," but no. Turns out I was wrong. Everything was new to me. I definitely would encourage you to try it out.

- Sayed, Hill Regional Career High School '22

It let me explore not only what I'm capable of doing, but things I might be interested in.

- Sergio, Hill Regional Career High School, '23

The program immediately caught my attention as someone who is looking into film as a career. I signed up almost immediately. It's a lot of fun and you learn a lot.

- Jose, Cooperative Arts & Humanities High School '22

I learned a lot, actually! Everything I learned was new to me and useful. This has opened my eyes.

- Sophia, Engineering and Science University Magnet School '23

# Full-Stack     Program     Student     Testimonials

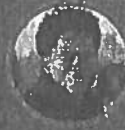(Full-stack is our post-High School computer science program)

DAE has provided technical and professional training while helping me realize I really am capable and that I can create a successful future for myself.

-Michelle, Cohort 10

When I step foot on campus, I know I'm at a place that is only going to make me better—nothing tops my experience here.

-Mohameth, Cohort 8

I've been in the program for nine months and have not been disappointed. DAE has helped me progress my career much faster than if I had chosen a different route.

-Jose, Cohort 9

The sense of community and camaraderie is truly what keeps me engaged and accountable.

-Jennifer, Cohort 10

## Appendix II: Community as a critical component of Education



# Holding Space

For 15 years, University of New Haven professor and alumnus Alpesh Bhatt '89, M.A. '90 has met monthly with current students and alumni from the University's graduate program in industrial/organizational psychology, cultivating a community whose members remain loyal to him — and to each other.

BY CHRISTOPHER HANN & PHOTOGRAPHY BY DON HAMERMAN

n a sunny afternoon on the first Saturday in October, on a brick patio in a verdant suburb a half-hour drive from the University of New Haven's main campus, a dozen people — most of them alumni of the University's graduate program in industrial/organizational psychology (I/O psych) — sit in a circle talking about, well, whatever comes to mind. And what comes to mind next is the subject of failure.

It's the first such meeting for Tanner Ross '19, a first-year student in the program. Ross didn't expect to contribute much to the conversation, but the topic of failure hit a nerve. When he was in high school, he tells the group, his teachers told him not to bother applying to college. Ross was a fine student however, he was also something of a class clown. Apparently that meant he was not college material.



AL BHATT '89 M.A. '90

Nonetheless, Ross enrolled as an undergraduate at a university in his home state of Wisconsin. The first month of his sophomore year, a series of heart breaking personal crises struck. Ross struggled and his grades sank. He should have been expelled, he says, but he was given a second chance. He made the most of it, finishing with three straight semesters with a GPA of 4.0

Five years later, as he sits on the patio and recalls these memories aloud to the group, Ross is reliving his teachers' admonition and the tough times that followed. The memories scrape open old wounds. The words catch in his throat. Soon his head is in his hands and he's wiping away tears, unable to continue. It's an awkward, lingering moment. All eyes are on Ross — or quite purposely cast away. No one steps forward to comfort him. No one picks up the

conversation and carries it to another place. In fact, no one speaks at all.

Seated next to Ross is Aipesh Bhatt — known to everyone as A, — a practitioner in residence in the I/O psych graduate program. The gathering is taking place behind Bhatt's home in a quiet neighborhood in Monroe. Bhatt started the monthly meetings 15 years ago when some of his students asked if they could continue the conversations he had inspired during a course known as Psychology 6638, or "The Psychology of Opinion Change," which Bhatt has taught for nearly 20 years.

The one night a week the students could agree on was Tuesday. Bhatt, who harbors a happy addiction to caffeine, would serve tea. The gatherings came to be known as Tuesday Tea, though in time they were moved to the first Saturday of each month.

As an undergraduate, Bhatt double-majored in engineering and world music — world music because it was his passion, engineering to please his parents — but has also a student of religion and philosophy, which might explain some of the language that permeates the conversation among Tuesday Tea



"It's creating space where students and alumni can all be in conversation with each other."

DANIELLE FRANKEL '10

members. They talk about "holding space" for one another, about "making a commitment." Bhatt refers to Tuesday Tea as a "century community," meaning he expects the group to continue meeting long after he's no longer at the helm — yes, even 100 years after.

So what, exactly, is Tuesday Tea? Perhaps the best explanation is Bhatt's own criteria for inclusion. He says two "core commitments" are required before he'll extend an invitation. "One is that you're dedicated to ongoing personal and interpersonal awareness," Bhatt says. "The second is that you're interested in work that has some sort of impact on humanity."

The meetings, Bhatt says, are about "creating space where others can create their state of being." This is necessary because the participants — including many of the alumni — are still searching for their place and their path in the world. "The community holds them to the highest standard of true inquiry," Bhatt says, "and gives them unlimited space to explore."

Bhatt noticed a change in the group following the economic collapse of 2008. Members weren't focused on high-paid careers. They wanted something more. "These guys have the same social

awareness and consciousness that the baby boomers had in the 1960s," Bhatt says, "and they're channeling that optimism and desire to change the world through their work."

A good example is Danielle Frankel '10. At the University of New Haven, Frankel took most of Bhatt's classes and once interned with his consulting firm, Koanetic Consulting International (Bhatt's title: founder and chief paradox officer). These days she sits on the faculty with him at the Graduate Institute in Bethany, Connecticut, where she leads courses on service and social impact. Two years ago she left her job at PwC, the global accounting firm — she was a manager in the People and Change Practice — to start an online retailer, As We Rise, which empowers poor populations in third-world countries. Frankel traces the move directly to her experience with Tuesday Tea.

"Creating community in this space and time means it's not just a question of being in conversation with AI," she says. "It's creating space where students and alumni can all be in conversation with each other."

Bhatt, who is 51, says his work at the University of New Haven is in part about repaying his "karmic debt." Born in India, Bhatt came to the United States with his mother, Mina, in 1972, when he was 6 years old. His father, Madhusudan, had come three years earlier to study in the University's graduate engineering program. For more than six years, Bhatt and his mother lived as illegal immigrants while his father stayed in school to maintain his student visa (eventually racking up three engineering degrees and an MBA). A handful of professors, Bhatt says, "knew what was going on and provided cover." One helped his father find a job and later qualify for legal residency and then citizenship. Bhatt became a U.S. citizen in 1980. "It was that handful of professors who truly cared about the human beings in the classroom," Bhatt says. "So I'm paying that back."

Bhatt spent most of his professional life consulting with businesses such as Facebook, Pfizer, and Deutsche Bank — "working with folks who are trying to create things that have never existed before," he says. These days, he also teaches at Chicago Theological Seminary and the Graduate Institute, where he designed the organizational leadership program. He began at the University of New Haven in 2001, where he previously completed his master's degree in organizational psychology. "We get kids at the University of New Haven for whom life isn't a given, for whom career isn't a given," Bhatt says. "So they're willing to lean in, to take accountability for themselves in a way that I don't see at other institutions."

When Bhatt is asked how he perceives his role with Tuesday Tea, he points to a nearby potted plant atop a low wall along his brick patio. "That plant doesn't derive anything from the pot," he says. "However, absent the pot, there isn't a form in which it can exist."

Bhatt invokes the potted plant analogy to describe what happened to Tanner Ross at the October meeting. He says it was critical that the group not try to comfort Ross as he struggled with his composure. "I was really moved by how well the whole group held space for Tanner without trying to do anything," Bhatt says. "Some things just need to get experienced, and they need a place to be experienced."

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