Editor’s Note
Creating Tech Prosperity for All
By Eric Nee
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The technology industry is one of the primary engines of growth globally and the source of many of the highest-paying jobs offering the best opportunities for upward mobility. But people from disadvantaged communities have largely been cut off from the tech cornucopia. That is as true in the United States and France as it is in Vietnam and Brazil.

One of the primary reasons the wealth generated by the tech industry has not been more widely shared is that the educational system in disadvantaged communities does not prepare young people for tech jobs. But it goes well beyond that. People from those communities often lack role models who show that it is possible to have a successful tech career. Tech companies do not recruit people from those communities or from the schools that serve those communities. And the jobs are often located far away from the disadvantaged communities, making it difficult for people to commute to work.

Even when people from disadvantaged communities overcome those hurdles and get a job at a tech company, it is often difficult to thrive or even keep the job because of the subtle and overt forms of racism and classism (and sexism) in the workplace.

The results of this system of exclusion are clear. In Silicon Valley, where I have lived for more than 45 years, Black, Latino, Pacific Islander, and Indigenous people make up a small fraction of the technology workforce.

The vast majority of the people working at Silicon Valley companies are white or Asian.

It doesn’t have to be this way. The tech industry can be a source of wealth for all parts of society, but it requires individual companies, the tech industry, government, and civil society organizations to take a new approach that is deliberately inclusive.


The authors of the article, Linda Jakob Sadach and Smadar Nehab, are from Israel, where a collaboration of organizations from across society, including the Jewish and Palestinian communities, have broken through the barriers to create a more inclusive tech industry in Israel. In 2008, before these efforts began, there were only 350 Arab engineers employed in the Israeli tech industry. By 2020, just 12 years later, the number had grown to 8,500.

The key to their success was to bring the tech industry to the Arab Israeli community, not require the Arab community to come to the tech industry. There are many aspects to this approach, ranging from creating companies and opening offices in Arab communities, to reaching out to parents and community leaders to convince them that young Arabs could successfully pursue careers in technology.

The tech industry needs to do more to bring the wealth and jobs it creates to all parts of society. It certainly has the financial resources to take on this challenge. And it would no doubt find willing partners among civil society organizations and government. The question is, does it have the will to do this.

—ERIC NEE