



Mission Statement

Code Platoon is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit working to transform veterans into professional software developers through an immersive, educational bootcamp, and mentorship program.

Overview

Veterans ages 18 to 24 are the hardest hit by unemployment, having a 28.8% unemployment rate. A survey of Chicagoland veterans showed 65% of post9/11 veterans left the military without a job. Code Platoon provides software development training to help local veterans find meaningful careers as professional software developers. While some veterans do have bachelor's degrees, the only requirements of enrollment are a commitment to pursuing a career in coding, a positive work ethic, and tenacity.

Our approach at Code Platoon is innovative in that it provides a channel to full-time employment for veterans. 82% of Code Platoon veterans land lucrative jobs. While many veterans struggle with translating employment skills learned during their years of service to a civilian career, they shouldn't have to. Part of the Code Platoon program is showing veterans how the skills they honed while serving our country are transferable to the workforce and desired by employers. Through our programs, more employers are hiring veterans and it's easy to understand why. Veterans carry core traits such as discipline, problem-solving skills, and the ability to collaborate and meet deadlines that are tremendously valued by employers, as are the technology skills veterans acquire through the Code Platoon program.

Program Description

Code Platoon is the only software coding bootcamp in the Chicagoland area that focuses exclusively on teaching veterans to code and we do so for a reason. Veterans need work, they excel at coding, and top tier technology talent is in high demand. We employ a hands-on, in-person training with each group of students to teach them software design principles, modern software languages, and best practices. Our aim is to graduate students who are ready to hit the ground running to tackle the complex and immediate challenges that employers face.

The program consists of eight to twelve students per class who spend 60-80 hours a week together for 14 weeks. We refer to each group as a cohort. Instruction is a carefully curated mix of lectures, advanced coding training, and team projects. Classes are taught inperson Monday through Friday in downtown Chicago, but students can also opt to participate in the program remotely, so in that regard we are a national, digital organization. Students are currently taught the Ruby on Rails technology stack, an increasingly popular knowledge base in the software development field.

Mentors are also provided to each student during this rigorous training program. And, in Code Platoon's Beyond Tech curriculum, students learn the soft skills necessary to become a worldclass software developer, while also becoming an exemplary employee. Our students learn about team building, diversity in the workplace, personal financial security, and job and salary negotiations. Each Code Platoon student is paired with a professional software developer to serve as a mentor, helping to guide the students during their class time and as they embark on their new career as a software developer.

Finding Employment



While unemployment rates among veterans grows, the demand for software developers also continues to grow. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics posits there will be a shortfall of 1 million computer related workers by 2020, with a 17% growth rate from 2014 to 2024. The Code Platoon program helps to solve two of our nation's most pressing problems: veteran unemployment and technology talent shortages. Graduates of our program are typically matched with one of our corporate sponsors for a three-to-six month paid internship, which traditionally leads to a full-time salaried position. We are proud that the vast majority of our students go on to work in the coding field. Our corporate sponsorships model is designed to serve as a pipeline of talent to employers and to provide a pathway to promising career for our country's heroes.

Cost of Program: The GI Bill and Scholarships

Veterans are eligible to receive general scholarships and to use their GI Bill towards the program. The Code Platoon program is one of the most affordable and attainable for veterans. **Code Platoon's scholarships are some of the most generous available, averaging \$10,000 per scholarship.** We also strive to help close the technology gap for women through our Woman in Technology scholarship. We strive to encourage more women veterans to become software developers.

Application Process

Applicants to our program initially provide introductory personal information including branch of service, discharge status, and previous educational experience through an online application. Once this application has been approved by our admissions team, potential Code Platoon students are required to complete 4060 hours of online code camp exercises. These 40 exercises are carefully chosen by our faculty to introduce software development to an incoming student, allowing them to fully understand and prepare for the rigorous nature of our program.

After these exercises are successfully completed, a longer application is required from each potential student that includes a video interview, personal statement, and ten more logic problems. While this application process may seem arduous and lengthy, it is essential that potential students understand the time commitment and complexity of Code Platoon before joining a class.

Funding and Corporate Sponsorship

A cornerstone of Code Platoon is our corporate sponsors including: Change Healthcare, Grainger, Power Reviews, and Raise.com. Our corporate sponsors contributed \$130,000 to our program in 2017. These sponsors donate \$10,000 in tuition money toward the cost of one veteran for as many veterans as they could employ.

We also enjoy generous grant support from Boeing (\$100,000), Motorola Solutions Foundation (\$10,000), The NBCUniversal Foundation (\$50,000), DRW Foundation (\$25,000), Amazon (\$10,000), and Capital One (\$5,000). Our 2017 year end appeal yielded over \$25,000 in individual donations, further diversifying our funding sources. We are growing fast because the program delivers what it promises and provide solutions to two of our most vexing problems: veteran unemployment and technology talent shortage.