Focusing Philanthropy

Per Scholas Diligence Trip Report
Dallas, Texas
April 5, 2019

Focusing Philanthropy Staff
- Parnia Banki (PB)

Tech Mahindra Staff
- Manish Vyas, President - Communications, Media & Entertainment Business; CEO - Network Services
- Gunjan Vyas, Per Scholas Board Member (wife of Manish)
- Sumheet Chadha, Global Head of Recruitment
- Rahul Mali, Strategic Accounts

Per Scholas Staff
- Stephanie Valdez, Managing Director
- Iris Thompson, Senior Manager - Business Solutions
- Heather Small, Director of Individual Giving

Executive Summary
Parnia Banki coordinated the site visit for Manish and Gunjan Vyas and recruitment members of tech Mahindra team. We believe that Tech Mahindra could be a corporate partner to either core or platform programs. Manish was keynote speaker at the Per Scholas graduation that day.

Background
Per Scholas is a national nonprofit offering intensive, tuition-free classes, placement and career development services to prepare young people and adults for long-term careers in technology. Working closely with employers in each location, Per Scholas designs class curricula to teach students the technical skills they need for entry-level jobs in high demand locally. In 18 weeks or less, graduates have the knowledge and experience to apply for highly technical jobs at a range of companies. Per Scholas students are 90% people of color, one quarter are women, and before the program, all students report household incomes at 200% of the federal poverty level or below. After the program, Per Scholas graduates go on to earn first-year salaries between $33,000 and $49,000 with potential for more each year they continue in the industry.

Dallas program
Two programs on one floor:
- Core: consists of Network Support and IT Support
- Platform: Application Support, Quality Engineering, 45-50 students (funded by Cognizant)
- In 2018= Dallas site graduated 309 students in Platform and 118 students in Core
- In 2018= 86% of students in Dallas were placed in jobs within five months, after a 12-week program

- Students go from earning $14 to $16/hr. to $18 to $20/hr.

- Training is 450 hours total

- In 2017, Per Scholas started in Dallas with 80 students
- In 2018, Per Scholas trained 427 students in aggregate. 18 staff members required for this group.
- Staff works with students on resume building and mock interviews
- Soft skills training
- 1700 students graduate nationally

Admissions
- To be accepted, candidates must pass a basic aptitude test in reading and math and score at 10th grade level
- Obstacles to accepting gaining traction and accommodating students:
  - Platform side= more partners
  - Core= fundraising

Interviews
We had the opportunity to interview two students:
1. Dee Green used be a diesel mechanic. She thinks that students at Per Scholas have a drive, thirst and determination exceeding that of regular students.
2. Shea used was in the food service industry for 8 years. There was no room for growth. He said that students from Per Scholas would be more loyal to the companies that hire them.

Graduation
Network Support Program
The graduating class was very collegial. A strong sense of comradery and support was evident.

1. Number of students graduating on April 5 from 15-week Network Support Program
   a. 14 students

2. This class's graduation rate is only 78% due to several students leaving the class.
   2 left for attendance and grades, 2 left to relocate to other cities,

3. Student's previous educational backgrounds
   a. 62% High School Diploma/GED
   b. 19% Bachelor's Degree
   c. 12% Associates Degree
   d. 5% Master's Degree
   e. 2% Other

4. Average Age & Demographics
   a. Average age: 34
   b. 7 women, 7 men
   c. 48% African American
   d. 21% Asian
   e. 11% Caucasian

    f.   5% Native American
    g.   5% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
    h.   5% Other/Mixed

5. Network Support Program Description
Network Support prepares students to pass the CompTIA A+ and Network+ certification exams and equips graduates with the knowledge to fill a wide range of entry-level technology jobs as a support technician.
    a.   15 weeks, Monday-Friday from 9:00-4:00.
    b.   No prior IT experience needed.
    c.   No cost. All services are 100% paid for by supporters, not you.
    d.   Preparation to pass CompTIA A+ and Network+ certification exams
    e.   Hands-on instruction that thoroughly covers core competencies: network, hardware, security, software, server, virtualization, management, and mobile devices.
    f.   Professional coaching to prepare you for the job search, interview, and career advancement.
    g.   Customer service training to support end users with technical help.

6. Job placement info
    a.   Two students are actively interviewing
    b.   Typical job placement rate is 82% within one year of graduation

7. Top 5 employers in Dallas:
    a.   TEKsystems
    b.   Premier LogiTech
    c.   Cognizant
    d.   CompuCom
    e.   TelVista

Key Observations

How poor/disadvantaged are Per Schoals students if there is only a 10% acceptance rate? Does the selection process eliminate probably the neediest people? PS reports all their students are from under-resourced communities and qualify as below poverty level.

Serving minority students. With the exception or one or two white male students, the graduating class was comprised of minority individuals - but not only African Americans and Latinos. The students were mostly immigrants. Could be because Dallas is a city with a larger population of immigrants, and is #1 or #2 recipient city for refugees nationally.