



Championing LGBTQ+ Inclusion in Tech: CareerCircle and TransTech Social's Alliance for LGBTQ+ Empowerment



Introduction

CareerCircle and TransTech Social have partnered with a shared goal: to create opportunities for LGBTQ+ individuals in the tech industry.

Founded in 2014 by Angelica Ross, TransTech Social was established with a clear mission: to provide the LGBTQ+ community with the tools and support needed to thrive in tech. Having taught herself essential tech skills that changed her life, Angelica saw technology as a means to break barriers and foster economic independence. Their mission is to help some of the most marginalized among us find stability and success through education and employment.

TransTech Social and CareerCircle share a commitment to transforming lives through opportunity and empowerment. With Executive Director E.C. Pizarro III at the helm, TransTech has forged a meaningful partnership with CareerCircle to expand its impact.

E.C. recalls when CareerCircle reached out, noting, "CareerCircle has a warm spot in my heart because the pitch was very specific for my community. People often come to work with us to check a box, but I could tell there was more intention behind CareerCircle's approach." He added, "What stood out to me was that it's not just the person you're talking to at CareerCircle; it's the whole company. When the Managing Director joined the call to reinforce their commitment to our organization, I knew we were partnering with a team that truly understood and supported our mission."

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The Beginning of a Meaningful Partnership

TransTech Social focuses on job training and leadership development, centering on transgender and gender-nonconforming individuals.

By offering practical career-ready skills, TransTech helps its members overcome systemic obstacles and strive toward financial stability.

E.C. Pizarro III joined TransTech as a volunteer in 2017, initially maintaining a low profile about his trans identity. “I started as a volunteer, keeping my identity private,” he explained. “But as I grew with the organization, I realized the power of leading by example.”

In 2021, E.C. became the Executive Director, steering TransTech toward new horizons. Under his leadership, TransTech has expanded its reach and influence, building a network that supports its members at every step of their journey.

CareerCircle’s proposal resonated deeply with E.C. because it focused on real solutions rather than superficial promises. With this partnership, TransTech was poised to tackle the unique challenges facing transgender individuals, addressing systemic barriers with targeted solutions and genuine support.



Challenges Faced by TransTech

Before partnering with CareerCircle, many TransTech members struggled with housing and employment insecurity, compounded by barriers to accessing technology and education. E.C. Pizarro III recalls, "At first, there was skepticism. With tech industry layoffs and the barriers our community faces, like access to technology and financial stress, initially starting this program felt like a long shot."

CareerCircle stepped in to provide critical support by offering 10 laptops to TransTech members, removing significant barriers to entry and expanding access to training and resources. This effort is a reflection of CareerCircle's commitment to equity. As Kim Sneider, Managing Director at CareerCircle, explains, 'Access to education is the first step toward meaningful employment, and in today's digital age, that often starts with something as basic, yet vital, as having a computer. While we may not always be able to directly provide resources like laptops, we are committed to leveraging our network whenever possible to support our partners, like TransTech, in helping their members build brighter futures.'

CareerCircle is invested in understanding and addressing the root causes of barriers faced by many marginalized communities. "CareerCircle met us where we were," E.C. says. "They didn't just offer a program; they offered a partnership that eased the burden on our members." This genuine commitment to tackling systemic issues resonated with TransTech and aligned perfectly with its mission to empower the community through education and employment opportunities.

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Creating Lifelines to Employment

With trust and shared goals established, CareerCircle introduced the CareerReady and CareerAdvocacy programs to TransTech members, providing a comprehensive support system designed to foster real change. CareerReady focuses on equipping individuals with relevant, in-demand skills through targeted training programs—making tech skills accessible by drawing parallels to everyday tasks.

One story stands out—a participant who transformed their knack for social media into a thriving digital marketing career. E.C. remembers, “They had been monetizing social media on their own. We helped them see it was more than just a pastime—it was a career waiting to happen. He goes on to say, “If you can manage your life, you can manage a project.”

E.C. highlights the importance of this approach, stating, “Our community needs that extra accountability—someone to check in and guide them through the process.” For TransTech, the partnership with CareerCircle creates a direct pipeline to equitable employment. This holistic support ensures that participants develop valuable skills and secure positions that align with their ambitions, all without the financial strain often associated with job placement services.

By fostering these connections, CareerCircle empowers TransTech members to achieve their career aspirations. As E.C. shared, “I feel like CareerCircle is one of the most valuable resources we have from beginning to end... It’s literally a direct pipeline for high-performing employees to get into tech and for trans people to have access to a resource that does not put them in a financial strain or burden.”

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Creating Lifelines to Employment: CareerReady & CareerAdvocacy



CareerReady

This component of the program equips individuals with the skills they need to thrive in the tech industry. CareerCircle's CareerReady and CareerAdvocacy program offers tailored training that aligns with participants' goals and interests, ensuring they gain relevant, in-demand skills.

Participants enroll in certificate programs that boost their employability and equip them with the essential competencies employers seek. High completion rates are achieved through the ongoing support of a dedicated Member Experience Advisor, who provides encouragement and guidance, helping participants stay focused and motivated throughout their learning journey. The CareerCircle platform also allows participants to update their progress digitally and engage in real-time with a support system designed to help them reach completion.



CareerAdvocacy

CareerCircle's Job Advocacy program connects job seekers from traditionally marginalized communities with organizations committed to diversity and inclusion. What sets this program apart is its dedicated recruiter support, which plays a crucial role in helping these job seekers secure meaningful employment opportunities in the tech industry.

Unlike many organizations that claim to support diversity but fail to address the specific challenges faced by underserved communities, CareerCircle goes beyond generic job search assistance. Their recruiters serve as member experience advisors, providing comprehensive support—from resume building and interview preparation to personalized mentorship and networking opportunities.

Real Stories, Real Impact: Changing Lives

Since April 2023, the collaboration between TransTech and CareerCircle has yielded impressive results. TransTech members have reached a 67% certificate completion rate, then going on to secure employment more aligned with their career goals. “We’ve seen members go from uncertain futures to thriving in their chosen fields,” E.C. shares. CareerCircle’s influence extends beyond job placement, inspiring many TransTech members to pursue further education and use their newfound knowledge to enhance their entrepreneurial endeavors.

For many TransTech members, the journey with CareerCircle has been a turning point, opening doors to new beginnings and instilling a profound sense of self-worth. E.C. reflects, “I’ve seen people go from navigating the streets to earning a tech certification and securing a rewarding job.” This profound change speaks to the core of what CareerCircle and TransTech strive to achieve: turning obstacles into opportunities.

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This transformation illustrates the power of believing in one’s potential and the impact of having a partner like CareerCircle, who sees beyond barriers to the opportunities that lie ahead. Through this partnership, members are not just finding jobs; they are discovering new paths and writing their own success stories.

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Lessons Learned and Looking Ahead: Strengthening the Journey

Together, TransTech and CareerCircle are breaking down barriers that have historically limited opportunities for transgender individuals in the tech sector.

E.C. acknowledges the importance of flexibility and understanding in supporting members through challenges such as housing insecurity and natural disasters. CareerCircle's ability to adapt and accommodate these realities has strengthened the partnership, allowing TransTech to offer its members a more comprehensive support system.

E.C. envisions a future where TransTech can provide its members with even more resources and support. "I want us to reach 1,000 certifications a year. With CareerCircle's support, we can make that a reality," E.C. shares.

With CareerCircle by their side, TransTech is poised to continue making a meaningful impact, one member at a time. "CareerCircle is essential to what we do," E.C. says. "They help us remove barriers and create a clear path to success for our members."

The partnership between TransTech and CareerCircle shows the incredible impact we can achieve together. If you're a nonprofit committed to uplifting underserved communities, we invite you to join us. Let's collaborate to open new doors for your members, providing the skills and opportunities they need to thrive. Visit CareerCircle's website to learn how we can tailor our programs to support your mission and create real change.

