



# ANNUAL REPORT

2023 INSIGHTS • 2024 PATH FOWARD



# CULTIVATING FOR AN EVER-CHANGING NEED

*TechBuffalo stays focused on goals, nimble in approach*

Forging connections, inspiring action and breaking down barriers. **This is generational work.** We know the seeds we plant today might not bear fruit for years — but that with patience and lasting support, they will one day flourish. Our community will see inclusive and equitable economic growth fueled by the power of tech and talent.

A whirlwind 2023 for TechBuffalo validated that we are on the right path. That our intentional steps taken, from new events and programs to partnerships, brought unprecedented alignment toward collective progress. Our community ties were deepened, and we embraced invaluable lessons that honed our approach.

It also reinforced the need to broaden mindsets. It is time to broaden the conversation from one that is almost exclusively focused on tech roles to the role of tech in every career. We have the opportunity to shift the focus beyond traditional molds and champion the all-encompassing impact of tech, including its support of advanced manufacturing and entrepreneurship.

As we look forward to the path ahead, it's with excitement and steadfast commitment. On the cusp of continued change, driven by AI and other advancements, it's time to lean harder into the momentum we all worked so hard to spark.

We will continue bringing life to what a career in tech and entrepreneurship means. We will maintain laser focus on building, nurturing and retaining our tech pipeline. And, above all, we will ensure that in this moment of transformation, opportunities are more inclusive and accessible than ever before.



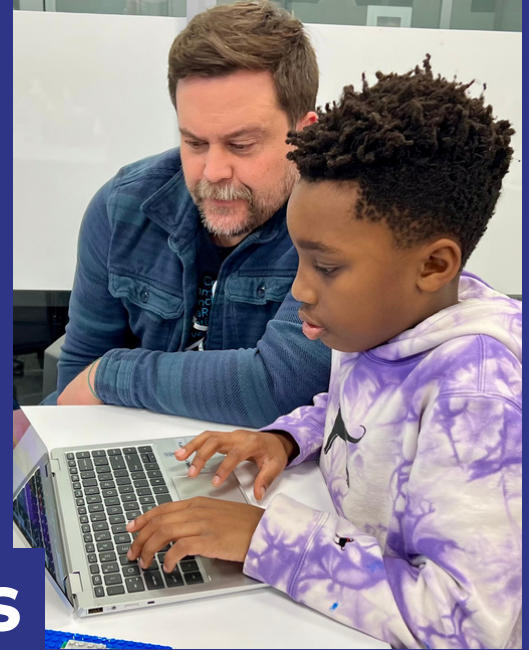
**SARAH TANBAKUCHI-RIPA**  
PRESIDENT & CEO



## OUR MISSION

**TO BUILD AN INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE TECH COMMUNITY IN WNY BY IMPROVING THE REGION'S ABILITY TO ATTRACT, RETAIN, AND GROW TECH TALENT**





## 2023 PROGRESS

### NATIONAL NETWORK

TechBuffalo was selected as one of 40 organizations nationwide to be a part of Microsoft's TechSpark program, focused on equitable access to tech skills.

### CONVENING & EMPOWERING

TechBuffalo brought the community together with a thoughtful lineup of 25+ events and programs, from our Community Conversations series to the Pathways to Tech conference.

### COLLEGE RETENTION

TechBuffalo engaged 12 employers and over 175 interns in its inaugural PowerUpTech program, with custom events on professional development, networking and why it's worth staying in Buffalo.

### REFRAMING OPPORTUNITY

On the cusp of another workforce evolution with AI, TechBuffalo is focusing on the essential role tech plays in every industry and ensuring that raising the tech/AI IQ across communities remains top of mind.





# ENGAGEMENT THAT BROUGHT OUR MISSION TO LIFE

## Talent

We activate excitement about a career in tech through intentional outreach and engagement, building community and creating connections.

## Companies

We seek to solve tech talent pain points by making the connections and developing programs that create inclusive, top-tier talent pipelines that meet company demand.

## Ecosystem

We convene, connect, and foster coordination, collaboration, and partnership to optimize outcomes that support a thriving WNY tech ecosystem.

## Women in Tech WNY

A half-day “See Yourself in Tech” event in March centered on diverse career paths and non-traditional roles that exist within the tech industry, featuring a keynote from Kendra Brim of Tesla.

Morning Meetups every other month focused on fostering meaningful discussion and connections.

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**500+ REGISTRANTS • 5 MEETUPS**

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## Pathways to Tech

A resource expo designed to provide unmatched industry access and support for community members looking to learn about local tech opportunities, college students preparing to enter the workforce, and professionals making a career pivot.

In partnership with Invest Buffalo Niagara on Sept. 27 at Northland Workforce Training Center. Sponsors: National Grid, BMW & Frey Electric.

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**200+ ATTENDEES • 30+ ORGS**

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# ENGAGEMENT THAT BROUGHT OUR MISSION TO LIFE

*“We really appreciate the opportunity to partner with you and TechBuffalo. I really enjoyed the event and look forward to future collaborations!”*

*Thank you for the invitation and for facilitating a wonderful evening and conversation!”*

– Community Conversations panelist  
Kevin Wiese, CIO, BestSelf

## TechConnect

A half-day forum dedicated to helping WNY nonprofits harness the power of free Microsoft tech resources, enhancing operational capabilities, and enabling organizations to better support tech talent in our community.

In collaboration with Majority Leader Crystal D. Peoples-Stokes’ Office and Microsoft TechSpark.

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90+ ATTENDEES • 2 SESSIONS

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## Future Innovators & Tech Trailblazers

An event series created for college students to foster local tech career pathways, featuring workshops like Mastering 2023 with the new 43 North cohort and networking opportunities.

In partnership with Forge Buffalo.

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300+ STUDENTS • 20+ EMPLOYERS

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*“The PowerUp Tech program provided incredible networking opportunities and this is ultimately what led to me learning about the company I work at now.”*

– PowerUp Tech 2023 participant  
Brooke Skovira



# POWERED BY CONTINUAL COLLABORATION

**Together, we can  
make a lasting impact.**

Our growing tech ecosystem means greater possibility for local talent, employers and the overall community.

Making the most of this unprecedented opportunity is an all-hands-on-deck undertaking — one we're proud to further daily through close collaboration and driving connections.

From conversations sharing best practices to attending events that further our collective growth. From purposeful one-on-one introductions to major program partnerships. **It all matters.**

From all of us at  
TechBuffalo,

**THANK YOU.**

716 Ministries  
43North  
Acara  
AI Buffalo Meetup  
Aleron  
Arts Services Inc. of Western New York  
AMPA Works  
AT&T  
Avarint  
B-sides Buffalo  
Be in Buffalo / Invest Buffalo Niagara  
Bernardi Immigration Law  
BestSelf Behavioral Health  
Buffalo Niagara Human Resources Association  
Bryant and Stratton  
Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus / Innovation Center  
BootSector  
Buffalo Center for Arts & Technology  
Buffalo Data Science Community (BDSC)  
Buffalo Dev Ops Meetup Group  
Buffalo Employment & Training Center (BETC)  
Buffalo Fashion Runway  
Buffalo Film Commission  
Buffalo Film Works  
Buffalo Futures  
Buffalo Manufacturing Works  
Buffalo Museum of Science  
Buffalo Newcomer Meetup  
Buffalo Niagara Partnership  
Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus  
Buffalo Prenatal / Perinatal Network / Fatherhood Initiative  
Buffalo Prep  
Buffalo Startup Coffee  
Buffalo State Creativity & Change Leadership Dept.  
Buffalo State Data Science  
Buffalo State Innovation, Creativity & Entrepreneurial Council  
Buffalo State SCION committee  
Canisius University Computer Science Club  
Canisius University Women Business Center  
City of Buffalo  
CrystalCSTEP  
CUBRC  
DPost  
Douglas Development

*“Buffalo continues to build a technology ecosystem that is committed to growing and developing incredible tech talent. A major contributor to the ecosystem is TechBuffalo.”*

– Sallie Reid, Chief People Officer at ACV & new TechBuffalo board member

E-Sports 716  
Evergreen Health  
Educate Maine  
Feedmore WNY  
Frank E. Merriweather Jr. Library  
Forge Buffalo  
Girls Coding Project  
Good Neighbor Fund  
Goodwill of WNY  
HANSA  
Harter Seacrest & Emery  
Harris Beach  
Hispanic Heritage Council  
Hodgson Russ  
Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME)  
Hubspot Users Group (HUG)  
InfoSec 716  
InfoTech WNY  
Ingram Micro  
Korp Foundation  
Literacy Buffalo  
Lighthouse Technology Services  
Jacobs Institute  
Malik & Popeil  
Microsoft  
Mission Ignite  
Mod Tech Labs  
Moog  
M&T  
M&T Tech Academy  
National Grid  
National Fuel  
Niagara University  
Northland Workforce Training Center  
NYS Department of Labor  
NYS Department of Social Services  
Odo  
Office of NYS Assembly Majority Leader Crystal Peoples-Stokes  
PathStone Corp.  
Per Scholas  
Phillips Lytle  
RPRT  
RUST Coding Meetup  
Rustbelt Robotics  
SAY Yes Buffalo  
Seneca One  
Serendipity Labs  
Sparq  
Sprint Marketer  
SUNY Buffalo State  
SUNY Erie  
Tesla  
The Exchange at Beverly Gray  
The Foundry  
The Gist  
Trocaire College  
UB BOLD  
UB/Canisius Prosperity Fellows  
UB Career Design Center Snack n’ Chat  
UB Entrepreneurship Class Workshop  
UB ISS International Student Services  
UB Marketing Association  
UB MISA Club  
UB Panasci Competition  
UB Regional Institute  
UB School of Management  
UB Startup and Innovation Collaboratory (CoLab)  
UB STEM for Everyone  
UB Theta Tau Engineering Fraternity  
UB WISE Women in Science and Engineering  
United Way  
Univera Healthcare  
Viaduct  
Villa Maria College  
Westminster Economic Development Initiative  
Wellconnected  
Willie Hutch Jones: STEAM Fair  
WIT Network  
WNY STEM  
YES Workforce



# OUTLOOK FOR 2024: ACCELERATING THE MOMENTUM

*"TechBuffalo was born out of an **unequivocal belief in the potential of our tech ecosystem**. But we knew it needed thoughtful nurturing to properly thrive. That foresight, coupled with the hard work of TechBuffalo and countless other organizations, now **ideally positions us to fully seize on the region's transformational momentum**." – Chair of the Board Michael Moskal*

## Workforce Coalition

A first-of-its-kind collaborative effort to create a demand-driven training strategy that benefits all. By closely connecting employer skill needs to available career pathway support, the WNY Manufacturing and Tech Workforce Coalition will facilitate a more meaningfully aligned approach.

1

## Family Code Night

A family-based approach to workforce development, in partnership with Microsoft TechSpark, that fosters cross-generational STEM engagement with Minecraft Education. This shared guardian-and-child experience offers a fun introduction to programming concepts while removing the common barrier of childcare.

2

## PowerUpTech

Expanding the impact of this tech talent and retention program, designed for college students, that builds on the momentum of its first year successes and insights gained for a collaborative retrospective. This is a concerted effort to reduce the region's 70% loss of tech grads.

3

## Power of Storytelling

A new integrated marketing strategy that leverages first-hand experiences to build meaningful audience connections. Our most powerful tool for transforming preconceived notions and reshaping the narrative around the varied possibilities that a career in tech opens across every industry.

4





# POWERED BY GREAT PEOPLE

## THE TEAM



**Sarah Tanbakuchi**  
President & CEO



**Cydney Johnson**  
Marketing & Outreach



**Cameron Smith**  
Finance & Operations Director



**DaMante' Curry**  
Special Projects Coordinator



**Rachel Eastlack**  
Community Impact Program Lead



**Mary Ruelle**  
Higher Education Program Lead

**2,000+**

COMMUNITY MEMBERS AT



**25+**

EVENTS & PROGRAMS WITH



**25+**

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

## THE BOARD

### CHAIR

**Michael Moskal**  
CIO, CUBRC, Inc.

### VICE-CHAIR

**Christina Orsi**  
President, The John R. Oishei Foundation

### TREASURER

**Thomas P. Quinn**  
CEO, WNY Impact Investment Fund

### SECRETARY

**Scott Stencik**  
President & CEO, Aleron Group



**Jenna Kavanaugh**  
Lead Representative, National Grid

**Ekua Mends-Aidoo**  
President & Principal Consultant, Clementine Gold Group

**Eric Reich**  
Co-Founder of Campus Labs, 43N Board Member

**Michael Wisler**  
CIO, M&T Bank

**Randy Harris**  
CEO, Lighthouse Technology Services

**Renita DiStefano**  
President & CEO, Second Derivative, LLC

**Sallie Reid**  
Chief People Officer, ACV Auctions

**Stephanie Peete**  
Director of Workforce Development, Say Yes Buffalo

**Kemper Lewis**  
Dean of Engineering, University at Buffalo



Building Community.  
Creating *Connections.*

