



# Entry-Level IT Support Learning Program

WASHINGTON, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA LEARNING PROGRAM CONTRACT

## Learn New Tech Skills and Advance Your Career

Do you want a better career, but worry you're not qualified? Do you think about going back to school, but worry about the cost, or whether you'll learn anything that actually helps your career? Do you have trouble getting employers to take you seriously because you don't have a Bachelor's degree?

Merit America will help you learn in-demand tech skills and connect you with employers with great jobs, while providing compensation throughout the program. We are currently recruiting talented individuals without Bachelor's degrees to participate in our fourth cohort in the D.C. metro area.

As a Learning Associate you will:

- 1) learn new skills for in-demand technology careers,
- 2) get help finding a new job in IT, and
- 3) shape our innovative learning program.

You are expected to commit to learning 20-25 hours per week for 10-20 weeks. This includes 15-20 hours per week of online learning (on your own schedule), and 3-5 hours per week of in-person meet-ups with your coach and a small group of peers (at times and locations that work for you). The majority of our participants work full-time or part-time while participating in Merit America, and our program is designed to be flexible for working adults.

Merit America provides a unique opportunity to advance your career without quitting your day job.

We encourage you to read this posting in its entirety and to learn more at [meritamerica.org](https://meritamerica.org) before applying. Commit to learning, and Merit America will help you get ahead.

## Skills and Abilities

- **Exceptional workplace skills:** You easily work with all types of people and you're the person teammates call on to help fix problems; you love a good challenge and communicate clearly.
- **Excellent time management skills:** You are great at balancing and meeting your personal and professional commitments, even when it seems like there's not enough time in the day to get everything done.
- **Passion for learning:** You are excited about the opportunity to learn new things and often find yourself learning in new ways, whether by staying up late watching videos online or getting help from friends who know things you don't.
- **Interest in technology careers:** You have an interest in technology and/or technology-related skills, and are excited about preparing for an IT-related career.
- **Strong self-motivation and "grit":** You are ready to commit to building a better future for yourself and your loved ones and you rarely give up when faced with challenges.

## Education and Work Experience

- **You have some professional work experience,** with colleagues and/or managers who would strongly recommend working with you.
- **You have a high school diploma or GED, but no Bachelor's degree.** While those with Associate's degrees are welcome to apply, those with a Bachelor's degree or who are currently enrolled in a Bachelor's degree program are not eligible.

- **You are able to pass a basic academic assessment test**, which includes logical reasoning, numerical reasoning, and reading comprehension.
- **You are a fluent English speaker and writer.**
- **You are authorized to work in the U.S.** and able to pass a background and reference check.
- **You live within 25 miles of Washington D.C.**, with access to public transportation and/or a car for any meet-ups in the greater Washington D.C. region.
- **You are comfortable using the internet through a smartphone or a computer**, with consistent internet access through your personal devices or nearby public spaces (e.g., public libraries, coffee shops).

## What You'll Spend Your Time Doing

- As a Merit America Learning Associate, you will spend your time in a learning program that combines online learning with in-person meet-ups for 10-20 weeks for approximately 20-25 hours/week. The program is designed to get you ready for an entry-level IT role, with opportunities for ongoing career advancement. The key components of the program include:
  - **Online Learning**, including the *Google IT Support Professional Certificate* and other IT-related coursework
  - **In-person Coaching**, including help writing a professional resume and cover letter, and opportunities to practice your interview skills and other key professional skills
  - **In-person "Squad" Meetings** with your peers, at times and locations that work with your schedule
  - **Virtual Support** through our online platform and volunteer mentors
  - **Community Events**, including program kick-off, networking events, and graduation
  - **Job Search Support**, including access to our network of employer partners

- You can learn more about the different components of the program at <https://www.meritamerica.org/career-seekers/>.

## What The Interview Process Will Look Like

- **Phase 1: Online Assessment** - a <1 hour online assessment of logical reasoning, numerical reasoning, reading comprehension and behavior - must be completed within 3 days of invitation.
- **Phase 2: Video Interview** - an 8-question recorded video interview - must be completed within 3 days of invitation.
- **Phase 3: In-person Group Interview** - a 1 hour in-person group interview with your potential future program peers; will be scheduled within 1-2 weeks of completing the video interview.
- **Phase 4: Online Course** - a short online course to prepare for the Merit America learning experience; must be completed within 5 days of invitation.
- **Phase 5: Background & Reference Check** - a standard background and reference check completed prior to acceptance as a Learning Associate.
- **Total Application Timeline:** 1-3 weeks, depending on how quickly you complete each requirement! Note that our next cohort is scheduled to launch in **early February 2019**, but we recommend applying as soon as possible.

## The Merit America Success Sharing Program

- The **Merit America Success Sharing Program** enables working adults to get the skills employers want with a flexible education program, which is financed by a combination of 1) philanthropy, 2) employers, and 3) former learners who have successfully made career transitions following our program.
- This combination of funding sources allows us to build an accessible pathway from low-wage work to upwardly-mobile careers for the millions of Americans without Bachelor's

degrees. By closely tying employers' needs and learners' success to our long-term financial success, we will be able to reach tens of thousands of individuals across America in the near future.

- **We ask learners who land a new job related to their Learning Track following our program - and who make above a salary threshold - to give a small portion of their future earnings to ensure that others can also benefit from the Merit America opportunity.**
- We fundamentally believe that people with the potential to succeed should not have to face decades of debt misaligned with their career outcomes. We are so committed to our learners' career outcomes that we will bear the complete financial risk of educating learners with the skills we know that employers need. Simply put, if you do not get a job above a salary threshold as a result of our program, you will not owe anything for your professional and technical training.

## **How Does the Success Sharing Program Work?**

- Merit America partners with employers to gain priority hiring commitments for our learners and understand the specific skills necessary for our graduates to get and succeed in employers' jobs.
- Merit America equips learners with the in-demand digital and professional skills that employers need through a "blended" learning program, which combines best-in-class online technical training and weekly in-person support (including 1:1s and small group meetings with a dedicated career coach).
- Learners participate in the Merit America program with absolutely no upfront costs and loans, and even receive weekly stipends to help cover any possible associated costs for their participation (e.g., transportation, childcare, foregone work hours, etc.).
- Learners who successfully complete the Merit America program and demonstrate exceptional job-readiness are matched with our employer partners for interviews.
- If a learner does not get a new job that pays above the salary threshold, they will not owe a dime.

- Learners in the entry-level IT Support Track who secure new jobs after the program with annual incomes of \$40,000 (\$3,333 a month) or more will make a fixed monthly payment over the course of three to five years, with a maximum total contribution of \$3,900.
- All payments from learners go to ensuring that future learners are able to participate in the Merit America program.
- If you have any questions about the Success Sharing Program, there will be numerous opportunities to discuss the program details throughout the admissions process.

One last thing: Diversity is integral to our success and we are proud to be an equal opportunity employer. We believe that all workplaces should be truly inclusive of underrepresented individuals in terms of race, gender and/or socio-economic status, and any other characteristics protected by applicable law. We strongly encourage individuals from underrepresented groups to apply.

[Merit America Home Page](#)

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