

# Miami-Dade College Partners With Correlation One and SoftBank to Meet Data Science Industry Needs

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In an effort to address skills and opportunity gaps within the workforce, technology company Correlation One has established Data Science For All/Empowerment (DS4A)—a program that offers free data analytics training, networking and career coaching to individuals from underrepresented backgrounds.

The first cohort consisting of 500 people was launched last year. Now however, to meet their goal of training at least 10,000 people over the next three years, Correlation One collaborated with SoftBank and Miami-Dade College (MDC).

“Data literacy is a new and emerging literacy that we believe is incredibly important for the jobs of the future...,” said Rasheed Sabar, co-founder and co-CEO of Correlation One. “We basically started [DS4A/Empowerment] to say, ‘look, let’s proactively and surgically remove the barriers that keep underrepresented minorities outside of the jobs of tomorrow.’”

As part of the partnership with MDC—a Hispanic-serving institution—current students and Miami residents are able to earn course credit for the program. To improve their own course curriculum, several MDC faculty members also plan to enroll.

“Our goal is to learn how these case studies are implemented to hopefully start bringing more case studies to our program,” said Antonio Delgado, dean of engineering, technology and design at MDC. “It is not just theory and hands-on learning, but also these up-to-date case studies that can be incorporated into our school programs for the students to really get more idea of how data analysis is implemented nowadays.”



Beginning April 17, a cohort of 1,000 people will engage in virtual lectures, interact with industry professionals through mentorship and work to solve “real-world challenges” in group projects. For 13 weeks, the day-long Saturday courses are led by faculty members from institutions such as Harvard University, Columbia University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology.



The cost of the program is subsidized by industry partners and donors.

Though previous data science experience is not required, fellows have the option to take a pre-course bootcamp to become more familiar with Python programming.

As part of the job preparation aspect of DS4A/Empowerment, local Miami employers such as Softbank and other companies around the country are invited to attend a career fair to hire graduates of the program.

“Ultimately our goal is not to train individuals, it is to get underrepresented individuals jobs in the data economy,” said Sabar.

To be eligible, applicants must be a college student, working professional or high school/GED underrepresented minority student. As part of the application process, candidates provide their professional history and take a technical skills assessment. This year, Correlation One received over 30,000 applications.

Upon completion of the program, participants will receive a signed DS4A certificate.

“My bigger vision is that we are going to bring more talent into the local technical ecosystem by having these types of partnerships,” said Delgado. “Private and public institutions working together to help local minorities get opportunities in those jobs that already exist and jobs that are going to continue growing and expanding because of the need of data analysis.”

Going forward, cohorts will run twice a year and will continue to double in size each session.

Outside of DS4A/Empowerment, Correlation One created another initiative to diversify the data science workforce.

For example, the DS4A: Women’s Summit aims to bridge the gap between academia and industry through mentorship, training and building network connections with employers. This year, the program will be designed for non-technical and technical females to collaborate.

“It is going to be a great way to train both the aspiring technical professionals and bring more technical women into these data-oriented jobs,” said Sabar. “But also empower the existing senior women who don’t have that data literacy and business level understanding of what AI is and how to lead digital transformation.”

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