



**GOVERNOR HICKENLOOPER AND SKILLFUL LAUNCH STATEWIDE CAREER COACHING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM TO HELP COLORADO JOB SEEKERS PREPARE FOR DIGITAL ECONOMY**

*Governor's Coaching Corps Brings Together Some Of The State's Most Talented Career Coaches To Elevate Best Practices And New Tools That Will Help Coloradans Navigate Economy Dramatically Transformed By Technology*

**Denver, CO, October 26, 2017** — Gov. John Hickenlooper and Skillful announced today the launch of the Governor's Coaching Corps, a program designed to bring together talented career coaching professionals. The Corps is an innovative investment in frontline career coaching professionals to develop new practices that will help Colorado job seekers navigate the challenges of a labor market being rapidly transformed by technology.

"We're proud of the fact that Colorado has the strongest economy in the country. Still, we have plenty of work to do and that starts with ensuring every Coloradan is prepared to succeed in the new jobs that will drive our future," said Governor John Hickenlooper. "Skillful offers enormous promise when it comes to empowering job seekers, coaches, and employers alike. The Coaching Corps takes this work one step further, ensuring our workforce professionals have the resources and support necessary to support Colorado as a leader in the national digital economy."

The inaugural Coaching Corps brings together more than 25 of Colorado's top career coaches from workforce centers, community colleges, high schools, and nonprofit organizations. Over the course of eight months, these coaches will build a supportive cohort through bimonthly retreats, hone their leadership skills, and develop new practices and tools to serve job seekers. Coaches will be trained to share their knowledge within their own organizations, and all program costs, including travel and lodging, are funded by Skillful, an initiative of the Markle Foundation that launched in Colorado in March 2016.

The Coaching Corps represents the next phase of Skillful's career coach development work within the labor market ecosystem. This is part of a broader effort to scale Skillful with a [significant investment](#) from Microsoft's corporate giving arm [Microsoft Philanthropies](#), which was announced earlier this year.

"One of the most profound takeaways of Skillful's work on the ground in Colorado during the past 18 months is that job seekers really want and need a human touchpoint for helping guide them through the dramatic changes happening in the labor market," said Andi Rugg, Executive Director of Skillful. "The Governor's Coaching Corps is a key element of Skillful. By investing in



Colorado's dedicated career coaches and working with employers to develop data on growth jobs, we can empower career coaches to better guide job seekers and help them find meaningful opportunities in the digital economy."

In addition to in-depth skills development, the Coaching Corps will provide one-on-one leadership coaching, access to a network of peers and industry leaders, and opportunities for coaches to contribute their skills and experience to solve some of the biggest challenges facing Colorado's workforce. As part of the program, coaches will join one of five Action Teams devoted to three core themes:

- **Developing 21st Century Coaching Tools:** Coaches will explore digital solutions that address the growing need to serve job seekers remotely and at scale, while maintaining an all-important human connection.
- **Identifying Jobseeker-Specific Tools & Approaches:** Coaches will develop creative approaches to serve specific segments of the jobseeker population.
- **Cultivating New Partnership Models:** Coaches will pilot new partnership models across workforce segments to provide smoother pathways for job seekers.

"We recognize that career coaches are on the front lines of helping prepare the state's workforce for the digital economy, which is why we are focused on providing them the tools they need and deserve to do their jobs even more efficiently and effectively," said Andi Rugg, executive director of Skillful Colorado. "What we've heard from coaches over the past year-and-a-half is that they want a platform for learning new skills and sharing the ideas and best practices they've cultivated through their own personal experiences. Our goal is to empower them with these opportunities so they can continue to make real differences in people's lives."

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Skillful is an initiative of the Markle Foundation, in partnership with Microsoft, LinkedIn, the state of Colorado, and many others, that brings together key players across the labor market, including employers, state and local government officials, educators and workforce centers, to help workers adapt to the changing workplace. Skillful provides data, tools, and resources that enable businesses to define the exact skills they seek, and turn those insights into a skills-based hiring process that allows workers to demonstrate and articulate the skills that they can bring to an organization. More information about Skillful can be found at [www.skillful.com](http://www.skillful.com).

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