

Diversity in tech: 10 data points you should know

By Lyndsey Gilpin February 4, 2015, 4:00 AM PST // lyndseygilpin

There is a glaring diversity problem in the tech industry. Here are 10 facts that can help put the issue in perspective.



CODE2040 is a nonprofit that works to close the achievement and wealth gap in tech by mentoring and training blacks and Hispanics for careers in tech.

Image: CODE2040

Blacks and Hispanics are the fastest-growing populations in the country. In 2013, 13.2% of the total US population was black and 17% were Hispanic, according to Census Bureau data (<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/00000.html>), and it predicts non-Hispanic whites will cease being the majority in 2044.

Despite this growth, minorities are consistently underrepresented and underserved in many ways. The race disparity is especially glaring within the tech industry, whether you're looking at software engineers, founders, venture capitalists, or other leadership roles.

There are great initiatives trying to tackle this problem, and they are gaining great momentum. AllStarCode (<http://www.allstarcode.org/>) is a nonprofit that prepares young men of color for careers in the tech industry; YesWeCode (<http://www.yeswecode.org/>) helps low-opportunity youth become programmers. Intel recently allocated \$300 million (<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/07/technology/intel-budgets-300-million-for-diversity.html>) to increase workplace diversity by 2020.

To put the problem in perspective, I gathered some of the most relevant data about diversity in the tech industry and compiled it into this list.

1. By 2040, blacks and Hispanics will make up nearly half of the US population

According to CODE2040, (<http://www.code2040.org/background/>) blacks and Hispanics will make up 42% of the US population by 2040 – hence the organization's name. Their household median salaries, however, are quite low: \$32,068 for blacks and \$37,759 for Hispanics. Added together, those salaries don't even equal the median salary for a computer and information professional.

CODE2040 is a nonprofit organization founded by Laura Weidman-Powers (<http://www.techrepublic.com/article/laura-weidman-powers-code2040-founder-minority-advocate-discomforter/>) that helps create pathways to success in technology and aims to close the wealth and achievement gaps. The organization has a Fellows Program that mentors and helps minorities find jobs at tech companies that want to increase their diversity. It also just announced (<http://www.code2040.org/news/2015/2/2/code2040-expands-its-reach-with-two-new-initiatives>) new initiatives in collaboration with Google.

2. Blacks and Hispanics are not represented well in the tech industry

Blacks and Hispanics only represent 9.2% of the tech industry. In 2014, many of the major tech companies released their diversity data (<http://www.techrepublic.com/article/diversity-stats-10-tech-companies-that-have-come-clean/>) after much pressure, and the results weren't pretty.

- Google employees were 2% black and 3% Hispanic.
- Apple employees were 11% Hispanic and 7% black.
- Facebook employees were 1% black and 3% Hispanic.
- Twitter employees were 2% black and 3% Hispanic.
- Yahoo employees were 4% Hispanic and 2% black.

3. Minorities are working the low-paying jobs in Silicon Valley

A nonprofit that works on behalf of temporary employees called Working Partnerships USA released a report (http://wpusa.org/WPUSA_TechsDiversityProblem.pdf) in 2014 that took a closer look at what types of jobs minorities are actually filling in the tech industry. According to the research, Hispanic workers make up 69% of janitors, and 74% of grounds maintenance workers. Blacks and Hispanics together make up 41% of private security guards for tech companies.

4. There is a lack of diversity in high school students taking AP Computer Science

According to the College Board, (http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/curriculum/2014/01/girls_african_americans_and_hi.html) which oversees the Advanced Placement test, about 30,000 students took the AP exam for computer science in 2013. About 3% of students who took the test were black and 8% were Hispanic. In 11 states, no black students took the exam, and no Hispanics took it in eight states. In 2014, however, more students took the computer science exam in general – the total amount increased by 26% – but the percentage of minorities didn't improve. In fact, in 12 states, no black students took the test.

5. Blacks are much more likely to be unemployed

The Center for Economic and Policy Research found that (<http://www.nationaljournal.com/next-america/education/african-americans-with-college-degrees-are-twice-as-likely-to-be-unemployed-as-other-graduates-20140527>) 12.4% of black graduates age 22 to 27 were unemployed – compared to 5.6% of all college graduates in the same age range. Between 2010 and 2012, 10% of black college graduates with engineering degrees and 11% with math and computer-related degrees were unemployed. Compare that with the 6% employment rate of all engineering graduates and 7% of math and computer studies graduates.

6. There is little diversity in computer science education

According to research by the National Science Foundation (<http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/seind12/c2/c2s2.htm>) in 2012, nationally, blacks make up 10% of computer science degrees. The report also showed that Hispanics make up 8% of computer science degrees.

In 2010, minority women earned about 10% of bachelor's degrees in science and engineering, 7.9% of master's degrees in science and engineering, and 3.9% of doctorate degrees in science and engineering. This is according (<http://www.ngcproject.org/statistics>) to the National Girls Collaborative Project, which brings together organizations to encourage girls to get involved in STEM.

7. Companies with black founders don't get venture capital money

CB Insights released a study in 2010 (<https://www.cbinsights.com/blog/venture-capital-demographics-87-percent-vc-backed-founders-white-asian-teams-raise-largest-funding/>) that showed less than 1% of venture capital-backed company founders were black; 12% were Asian, and about 83% of founders were white. In 2013, internet-specific companies raised \$7.1 billion, which was the highest level of investment in the internet since 2001 – yet very few black founders get investments.

One report (<http://paulcollege.unh.edu/sites/paulcollege.unh.edu/files/Q1Q2%202013%20Analysis%20Report.pdf>) by the University of New Hampshire's Center for Venture Research showed that in the first half of 2013, minority entrepreneurs made up only 8.5% of those pitching. The yield rate for them was only 14.7%.

8. Blacks are some of the biggest consumers of social media

According to Pew Research (<http://www.pewinternet.org/2014/01/06/detailed-demographic-tables/>) released last year, 92% of blacks own cell phones and 56% own smartphones. About 10% of blacks said they did not have an internet connection at home but had a smartphone that they used to access the internet; and 46% have both.

About 73% of blacks that use the internet use social media – and 96% of black internet users are age 18 to 29. Blacks use Twitter more than whites – especially young blacks. 40% of black internet users age 18 to 29 said that they use Twitter, compared to 28% of whites.

9. Minority women are hardly represented at any stage in the tech world

Of the 26% total women that made up the computer workforce in 2013, black women only made up 3%, according to the National Center for Women and Information Technology (http://www.ncwit.org/sites/default/files/resources/btn_02282014web.pdf). Only 5% were Asian women, and 2% were Hispanic.

Less than one in 10 employed scientists and engineers are minority women, according to research by the National Girls

[Collaborative Project \(http://www.ngcproject.org/statistics\)](http://www.ngcproject.org/statistics). The organization's research also showed that in every science and engineering occupation, more than half of all workers were white.

10. There will soon be less than 1% black CEOs of Fortune 500 companies

In March 2015, when the McDonald's CEO steps down, there will only be four black CEOs of Fortune 500 companies. In February 2014, [Fortune reported \(http://fortune.com/2014/02/04/microsofts-new-ceo-one-minority-exec-in-a-sea-of-white/\)](http://fortune.com/2014/02/04/microsofts-new-ceo-one-minority-exec-in-a-sea-of-white/) that minorities, including Hispanics and Asian Americans, only made up about 4% of Fortune 500 CEOs.

One in 14 tech workers are Hispanic or black, but only one in 18 are in leadership positions, [according to a report \(http://www.gsb.stanford.edu/insights/laura-weidman-powers-opening-doors-minorities-technology\)](http://www.gsb.stanford.edu/insights/laura-weidman-powers-opening-doors-minorities-technology) by the Anita Borg Institute.

Also see:

- [Diversity stats: 10 tech companies that have come clean \(http://www.techrepublic.com/article/diversity-stats-10-tech-companies-that-have-come-clean/\)](http://www.techrepublic.com/article/diversity-stats-10-tech-companies-that-have-come-clean/)
- [PowerToFly connects women around the world to tech companies that need talent \(http://www.techrepublic.com/article/powertofly-connects-women-around-the-world-to-tech-companies-that-need-talent/\)](http://www.techrepublic.com/article/powertofly-connects-women-around-the-world-to-tech-companies-that-need-talent/)
- [How 'Hour of Code' sparked a movement that could teach 100 million people to code \(http://www.techrepublic.com/article/how-hour-of-code-sparked-a-movement-that-could-teach-100-million-people-to-code/\)](http://www.techrepublic.com/article/how-hour-of-code-sparked-a-movement-that-could-teach-100-million-people-to-code/)



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