

Driving Communities Forward

Insights from San Francisco cross-sector leaders focused on economic mobility and workforce development in the COVID-19 crisis.

The Issue

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the deep inequities in our society, and has disproportionately impacted the students and job seekers in our most vulnerable populations. Economists and experts predict a “K-shaped recovery” where some individuals and industries swiftly move out of crisis, while there will be cascading struggles for many small businesses and workers for years to come, especially those from traditionally underserved communities.

The Discussion

Cruise, a self-driving car company based in San Francisco, convened leaders from across sectors for a conversation to share new data, research and stories that illuminate how deeply COVID-19 has impacted Bay Area residents. The series of panel discussions capped off Cruise’s FutureWorks Week, a social impact program designed to support students and job seekers in the economy of the future. By exchanging ideas and identifying tangible solutions, Cruise’s hope is to recognize how our collective economic recovery and long-term success require collaboration and prioritizing the economic mobility of those most vulnerable in our community.

- **Unemployment rate in San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont August 2020: 9%**¹
- **Unemployment rate jumped from 3% to 16% at the onset of the 2020 Pandemic**²

“This is not a moment that we’re in.
It’s a movement for change.”

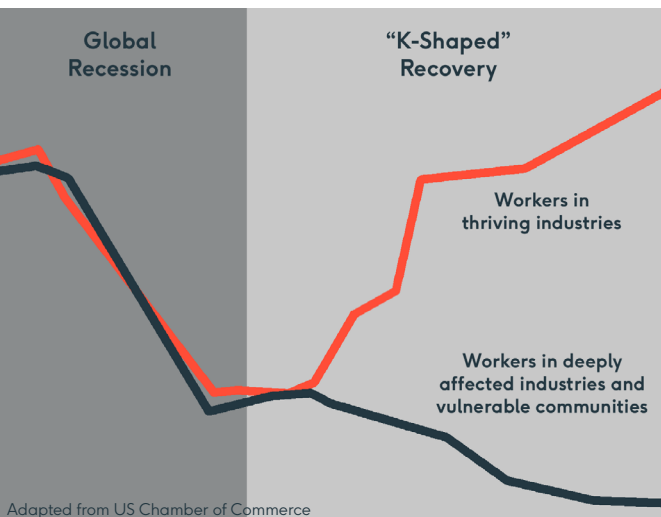
- Joaquín Torres

Director of the San Francisco Office of
Economic and Workforce Development



Panelists:

- Jeff Bleich - Chief Legal Officer, Cruise
- DJ Brookter - Executive Director, YCD
- Efreem Bycer - Manager, Economic Graph, LinkedIn
- Lisa Countryman-Quiroz - CEO, JVS
- Amanda Lenaghan - Head of Social Impact, Cruise
- Sarayah Moore - Co-Founder, Humanmade
- Talia Nagar - Senior Program Officer, Employment, Tipping Point
- Joaquín Torres - Director, San Francisco Office of Economic & Workforce Development



1. Bureau of Labor Statistics
2. JVS Client Survey 3.0 Final Results

Tangible Solutions

If left unchecked, the recovery from COVID-19 could deeply undermine the ability of Bay Area residents to thrive. Employers, nonprofits and the public sector are finding ways to drive solutions that work—for individuals, their families and our economy. Our panel showcased micro-solutions that are creating meaningful change in individuals' lives.

“The mantra of this period has been ‘we’re all in this together’ and I think we all need to live up to that right now.”

- Lisa Countryman-Quiroz
CEO, JVS



Pathways to Employment

Skill building is critical to help job seekers secure family-sustaining employment, but skills training must be provided in conjunction with work experience, network building and social capital development.

- JVS has been working in close partnership with employers for years to design and deliver career pathway training in high growth jobs. [Learn more.](#)



Career Building

Coaching, further training, and mentoring for employees to ensure they're building their careers and getting the highest value, highest paying job possible.

- For 15 years, Tipping Point has been a non-profit support system for the organizations that serve as our community's safety net. [Learn more.](#)



Community as Expert

Companies are leaning into the community expertise on these long term equity challenges, and not forcing organizations to create new solutions.

- YCD believes that every individual should have the right to sustainable and generational economic mobility. YCD positively impacts lives & empowers people to break cycles of poverty. [Learn more.](#)



Reskilling the Future of Workforce

Mock interviews to support job seekers in the new world of digital recruiting.

- Providing dynamic on the job style training to underserved Bay Area residents that want a thriving career in advanced manufacturing, ensuring a more diverse and equitable sector. [Learn more.](#)



Skill Building

Free LinkedIn Learning sessions for jobs that don't require a college degree but do require digital skills.

- The mission of LinkedIn is simple: connect the world's professionals to make them more productive and successful. [Learn more.](#)

Industry Resource: [Apprenticeships in the Tech Sector from Bay Area Council Economic Institute](#)

What can you do?

For companies

[TechSF](#) provides opportunities for residents interested in a career in technology. Sign up today, or seek out a **training and tech apprenticeship program** in your city, and play a role in building opportunity for your future workforce.

For individuals

Open up your networks to support job seekers, share digital skills, conduct mock interviews, advocate for equitable practices at your employer, and donate to the Give2SF COVID-19 response and Recovery Fund.

For everyone

Follow the organizations and experts who have the research, data, and programs that can inform and inspire you to act. Support your community organizations with your time or financial support to extend their programs to those most in need.

About Cruise FutureWorks Week

Driving Communities Forward was hosted in conjunction with Cruise's inaugural FutureWorks Week, which brought together over 200 community members and employees through a series of virtual volunteer and educational events to support local job seekers. As part of an emerging industry, Cruise recognizes the unique opportunity it has to empower local students and workers as they pursue the careers of tomorrow, including those in emerging technology and transportation. The program focused on connecting motivated individuals from historically underrepresented populations in tech and underserved communities with opportunity, through mock interviews, LinkedIn review exercises, group networking, and more.

Participant Outcomes

- 76% feel more equipped to secure a thriving wage job
- 87% feel more confident in telling their career story
- 100% of mock interview participants built their confidence interviewing

"The opportunity to participate in Cruise's mock interview session was pivotal in my career path. I can't express the confidence this experience gave me. I was recently hired for a position that I love and am grateful to have landed this dream job."

- Fontaine Hernandez
Humanmade participant



About Cruise

Cruise is building the world's most advanced self-driving vehicles to safely connect people with the places, things, and experiences they care about. [Learn more.](#)



About Common Impact

Common Impact is a nationally-recognized nonprofit that designs and scales people-powered social impact and skilled volunteer programs to fuel organizations fighting inequality. [Learn more.](#)