

Immigrant women encouraged to “play” with Braintoy’s machine learning platform

Women in Tech program helps newcomers acquire employable skills in city’s growing tech ecosystem

March 8, 2022 - Calgary, AB - Making Changes Association has partnered with Calgary AI company Braintoy to provide immigrant women an opportunity to acquire foundational skills in the growing field of artificial intelligence and machine learning. The Association’s Women in Tech program aims to support immigrant women in finding meaningful employment in a typically male-dominated field.

While women experience unique barriers to enter many emerging technology fields, immigrant women aspiring to enter the tech sector experience their own unique set of barriers as they transition to a new life in Canada.

[Making Changes Association](#) has designed an integrated skills training program that combines employability skills upgrading, technical training in the field of full stack web development, and hands-on work experience to produce employment outcomes for unemployed or underemployed immigrant and aboriginal women in Calgary.

This year, on International Women’s Day, Making Changes Association has partnered with [Braintoy](#), a Calgary Technology company, to host a free half-day Machine Learning 101 Workshop for the participants of its Women in Technology program. During this workshop, women will be invited to use mIOS, Braintoy’s production machine learning platform, and their creativity to transform their ideas to action.

“Think of Braintoy mIOS as data to deployment. But where it shines is that it allows people of all skills - coding or no coding - to be able to take any data and follow a standard mIOps process to build, deploy, and monitor models at scale. It’s the first in the world,” says Amit Varma, Co-CEO of Braintoy.

“Many women who come into our program already have some business experience. Some have experience in the IT field. Our goal is to expose them to cutting-edge technologies so they can acquire new skills and get jobs that employers want. We know there’s a lot of interest in the field of AI and machine learning. This event on March 8th is designed to expose them to what is possible with AI and machine learning,” says Cathy Coutts, Executive Director of Making Changes.

Statistics show that women working in technology make \$30,000/year more than women working in non-technology jobs. However, only 20% of the technology workforce is made up of women and racialized women earn significantly less than non-racialized women and men.

“These women are capable of so much if they are given a chance to learn and practice. That’s what we’ll be doing at the workshop, showing them that anyone can learn machine learning with a good instructor and lots of practice,” says Varma.

Braintoy has taken on interns from the Women in Technology program in the past few years and many have gone on to find full time employment with tech companies.

Calgary is experiencing a severe talent shortage in the technology sector with about 2,000 open jobs waiting to be filled, according to Calgary Economic Development. Coutts says these talented immigrant women can help fill some of those positions.

The program is having success - so far 80% of participants graduate from the program, 65% are employed 180 days after completion and, to date, 75% of all graduates have obtained meaningful employment.

“We’re so grateful to our partner companies, like Braintoy, that offer internships and valuable work experience. Together, we can help guide these women on a path to social and financial success.” says Coutts.

For more information, please visit Making Changes [Women in Technology](#) and [Braintoy](#). Cathy Coutts and Amit Varma are available for media interviews. As well, one of the students in the WIT program, Swapnaja Pitale, is also available to speak to the media.

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