

After 25 Years, CompassPoint to End Computer Training Program

Given the rapid change in nonprofits' use of technology and our own deepening emphasis on leadership development at all points in the leadership pipeline, CompassPoint will discontinue our computer training program in June 2012. Going forward, CompassPoint's training program will focus primarily on management, leadership, finance, and strategy topics—continuing to provide hundreds of quality offerings each year in San Jose, San Mateo, San Francisco, Oakland, and Concord. Future training in technology will be directly related to our core management topics, e.g. the use of QuickBooks and Excel for budgeting and reporting.

“There are excellent, cost effective options for nonprofit staff when it comes to computer training,” said Nelson Layag, CompassPoint's Training Director. “We're identifying a list of these resources for people who are looking for these trainings; we hope others will send us their recommendations to add to this list.”

The timing of our computer lab closures also coincides with Adobe and TechSoup's new partnership to be launched in spring 2012, which will run a pilot program to bring more training on Adobe software to the nonprofit sector.

An Early Advocate for Technology Investments in Nonprofits

CompassPoint's computer training program had a humble beginning in 1987 teaching software programs like WordPerfect and Lotus 1-2-3 to nonprofit staff. The program also heavily featured training in Apple's Macintosh computers until 1999. In 1995, CompassPoint offered our first Internet trainings (consider: only about 20,000 websites existed then; Facebook today is 15 times larger than the entire Internet was in 1995). From the beginning, CompassPoint held the belief that effective use of technology was as important to nonprofit organizations as any other management discipline and was active in the movement to highlight the importance of technology capacity building within organizations. At its peak, the program annually offered over 300 computer workshops and trained over 3,000 nonprofit staff and volunteers in technology trainings ranging from basic Microsoft Office applications to three-day database management camps to website development and graphic design.

2012 Computer Training Resources for Nonprofits

CompassPoint will continue to offer our current slate of computer trainings through June 2012. For the full list of upcoming trainings visit www.compasspoint.org/workshops. After June 2012, we will reduce our computer training offerings to a select number of technology classes with a focused management orientation, such as Nonprofit Bookkeeping using QuickBooks and Excel. Details of these plans and offerings will be announced in spring 2012. As mentioned, we are building a great list of computer training resources and referrals that we will share with you soon. To add resources to this list, please contact workshops@compasspoint.org. It has been our privilege to provide computer training to the Bay Area nonprofit community for 25 years and we look forward to continuing to serve you with our Management and Leadership workshops.