

Case Study: BlackRock

DEEPENING ITS ATLANTA CONNECTION: BlackRock Engages FinTech Community through FinTech Atlanta & Technology Association of Georgia

BlackRock

BlackRock is the world's largest asset manager and a leading provider of financial technology, helping millions of people build savings by making investing easier and more affordable. Since choosing Atlanta for its newest Innovation Hub in 2018, BlackRock has become a staple in the Atlanta community, where it has 500+ employees.

"When BlackRock chose to expand in Atlanta, we knew embedding ourselves in the local technology ecosystem would be critical, not only to build important relationships and expand our presence, but to collaborate with other thought leaders," said Peter M. Williams, director and head of Community Strategy & Engagement for BlackRock Atlanta. "TAG is an excellent forum for us to deepen our community engagement."

FinTech Atlanta and the Technology Association of Georgia (TAG) provide executives and others from numerous Atlanta-based companies the opportunity to become part of an ecosystem of businesspeople interested in sharing information, networking, growing the next generation of technology and FinTech employees.

Georgia has been the [epicenter for payments and other FinTech innovation since the mid-1980s](#) and handles nearly 75% of U.S. payments transactions.

“As Atlanta’s technology community gets stronger, so will the companies that are engaged in the community,” says Marc Balizer, managing director at BlackRock and a board member of FinTech Atlanta.

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

When you’re the new FinTech kid on the block, as BlackRock was in Atlanta in early 2019, Williams – a TAG board member – said it’s important to seek input from other organizations and employers on how to be successful in the local market, which TAG was able to offer.

TAG and FinTech Atlanta also provided an avenue for BlackRock to educate the community on what the company does and stands for, particularly since it isn’t a direct-to-consumer brand. This was one of the reasons why BlackRock chose to sponsor the 2019 TAG Summit, where it had the opportunity to share the company’s vision with the Atlanta technology community.

DEVELOPING TALENT AND RECRUITING

Through FinTech Atlanta and TAG – the former of which is deeply involved in developing tomorrow’s talent pipeline – BlackRock was introduced to the University System of Georgia and its 26 public institutions educating tomorrow’s top talent.

BlackRock has multiple employees, including Williams and Balizer, who guest lecture at Georgia State University and are also involved with other higher-ed institutions, including University of Georgia, the Georgia Institute of Technology, Emory University, Morehouse College and Spelman College.

The company introduced its own signature program, BlackRock for Universities, which among other things, introduces university students studying finance and/or investments to its enterprise investment management platform, Aladdin, a version purpose-built for universities. In fact, it’s being used for some student-managed investment funds, providing them with the opportunity to invest monies and contribute returns to their schools’ respective endowment portfolios.

The company recently hired its first graduate of BlackRock for Universities.

“Every organization, whether in FinTech Atlanta, TAG or otherwise, should get creative in how they can make a difference at local universities by giving back and developing our employees of tomorrow,” Williams said.

“We’re all interested in continually enriching and growing Atlanta’s FinTech ecosystem and ensuring the talent we have stays in Atlanta.”

**- Marc Balizer
Managing Director at BlackRock**

EXCHANGING IDEAS

When Williams and Balizer gather with other FinTech and tech professionals through FinTech Atlanta and TAG, they benefit from a collaborative exchange of novel ideas. From sharing information on environmental, social and governance (ESG) initiatives to how to attract and retain talent during the Great Resignation, both organizations provide plenty of opportunities for meaningful, topical conversation along with networking.

BlackRock appreciates other benefits of belonging to both organizations, having had success in getting the company name out, developing its talent pipeline and recruiting and also embedding itself in the broader Atlanta FinTech and technology communities.

“We’re all interested in continually enriching and growing Atlanta’s FinTech ecosystem and ensuring the talent we have stays in Atlanta,” Balizer said. “That’s what FinTech Atlanta and TAG are all about.”

About FinTech Atlanta

FinTech Atlanta is a coalition of more than 100 organizations, including Fortune 500 companies, startups, universities, and industry associations, all working to cement Atlanta as the recognized global capital of financial technology. The group strives to fund and energize efforts to recruit, retain and expand businesses and jobs across the FinTech ecosystem in metro Atlanta. To learn how metro Atlanta and Georgia’s FinTech ecosystem is driving more than \$30 billion in annual revenues visit www.fintechatlanta.org.