PUBLIC INTEREST TECHNOLOGY

The future of work(ers) rights!

This transcript is from a video featuring Sarita Gupta, co-director of Jobs With Justice. It's part of the *Public Interest Technology* series, celebrating Ford-supported visionaries working at the intersection of art, design, and technology to help shape a future that serves justice and the public interest.

Transcript begins.

SARITA GUPTA: There's so much talk about the future of work right now. It's sort of a dystopia that gets painted, all about robots taking over and jobs being lost. But there's so much more to the story. What excites me is the opportunity to reimagine a new generation of worker power and worker organizations. I'm a workers' rights leader, and I believe that public interest technology can fuel our thinking and help us come up with the kinds of solutions we need to make real, lasting change.

> [Sarita Gupta, Co-director, Jobs With Justice. A South Asian woman, wearing a mustard-yellow top and black pants.]

Public interest technology, from the realm of workers' rights, it's about being able to utilize technology in ways that truly improve jobs. For example, imagine for a moment, if you can't predict your schedule at work, how do you budget appropriately or how do you plan for childcare or eldercare or let alone make appointments to see your own doctor should you need it? For too many working people in this country, the issue of scheduling is really challenging. We have an opportunity right now to engage with scheduling software companies to help us think about ways in which they can help distribute more equitable hours of work to more working people. What's been interesting is the reaction of companies that actually do the scheduling technology. Companies like Paychex, who have said to us, "We can actually address this, and we can make this possible, but we never knew this was such an issue and such a need."

I think technologists and working people, or organizations representing working people, need to be in the room together to really understand what problems we're solving for and to collaborate and design systems and tools that will really benefit everybody. Another really great example—Clear My Records Project. Around the country, many groups have been winning Ban the Box campaigns to ensure that returning citizens are not discriminated against when seeking jobs. Through a partnership with technologists, they were able to create an app where returning citizens can actually delete the records themselves to ensure that their files are free of their criminal records and they're able to seek a job and not face any kind of discrimination. So those are some of the kinds of examples of ways in which working people can harness technology in a way to either improve jobs or improve access to jobs. Public interest technology can fuel the

imaginations and the creativity of social change leaders to think more boldly and expansively around the types of solutions that we need to meet the social needs of our time.

[This is tech at work for the public! Hashtag Public Interest Tech. Ford Foundation dot org forward slash tech. Ford Foundation logo: a globe made up of a series of small, varied circles.]

CREDITS

Executive Producer and Series Creator
Jessica Reynolds

Director and Producer
Jessica Reynolds

Field Producer
Claire Kinnen

Editor
Greg Acampora

Design and Illustration
Conrad Kochek

Animation
Paul DiPierro

Director of Photography
Stacey Mize

Assistant Camera
Riede Dervay

Grip / Sound
Alberto Sala

Sound Design and Re-recording Mixer
Nicholas Montgomery

Color Correction
Henninger Media Services

Copy Editor
Naomi Wax

Music
deWolfe

End of transcript.