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Commentary/Op-Ed - April 2020

Amid Crisis, Mayors Can Build a Workforce for the Second Machine Age

The economic fallout of Covid-19 combined with growing automation is poised to transform millions of jobs nationwide. Mayors should start developing plans to create a more adaptable workforce for a rapidly changing economy.

by Jonathan Bowles & Winston C. Fisher

With the nation confronting the economic fallout of Covid-19 combined with a new wave of automation that will reshape millions of jobs, cities should double down on initiatives that align education and training with new economic realities—and start developing automation preparation plans. In this op-ed for *Route Fifty*, CUF Executive Director Jonathan Bowles and Winston C. Fisher, co-chair of the New York City Regional Economic Development Council, call on mayors across the country to take the lead in preparing for the long-term challenges of a more automated economy in the coming years by investing in upskilling their workforces and lifelong learning initiatives, scaling up effective tech-training programs, and implementing mechanisms to help make continuous training more accessible.

You can read the op-ed here.

This op-ed is part of the Center for an Urban Future's Middle Class Jobs Project, and builds on the Center's extensive research on preparing for a more automated economy, including *Work to Do: How Automation Will Transform Jobs in NYC* and the op-ed "NYC, Get Ready for the Robots."

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Center for an Urban Future (CUF) is an independent, nonprofit think tank that generates innovative policies to create jobs,

reduce inequality and help lower income New Yorkers climb into the middle class. For 20 years, CUF has published accessible, data-driven reports on ways to grow and diversify the economy and expand opportunity that are anchored in rigorous research, not preconceived notions about outcome. Our work has been a powerful catalyst for policy change in New York City and serves as an invaluable resource for government officials, community groups, nonprofit practitioners and business leaders as they advocate for and implement policies to address some of New York's biggest challenges and opportunities.



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