

We Connect the Dots Partners with Marcum's Raffa Social Capital Advisors to Provide More Underserved Students Access to Tech Jobs.

Syosset, New York, September 26, 2019: [We Connect the Dots \(WCTD\)](#) is a leading program that successfully offers at-risk youth the opportunity to engage in technological education in preparation for America's evolving workplace. Last week, this program joined forces with **Raffa Social Capital Advisors**, a unit of Marcum LLP's Nonprofit & Social Sector Group, to help scale the organization's successful technology training model across the United States.

The nonprofit was founded in 2013 by entrepreneur and Microsoft veteran, *Laurie Carey*. Ms. Carey remarked, "Our model works. Our kids need it. Now is the time for us to take what we do well and offer tech education to more at risk kids, both in the Long Island area and across the nation. This past year, three states have asked us to pilot our model outside of New York. We are putting together our plan and funding to be more available to more students here and in these additional locations."

Raffa-Marcum's Nonprofit & Social Sector Group was founded independently as Raffa in 1984 and merged with Marcum in 2018. Raffa continues to be women-led, mission driven, and committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Ms. Carey and her WCTD team envisioned Marcum and its Raffa group – based on Raffa's specific expertise and as the relationship between the organizations began to form – as ideal collaborators with which to achieve WCTD's meaningful work. Raffa seeks to help to refine WCTD's overall growth models, support its next-stage business plan development, and better focus and scale near-term and long-term fundraising and strategic partnership goals.

Currently, WCTD works with over 1,000 students, primarily in Long Island and in the Greater New York Metro area. Program graduates are prepared for post-secondary majors or minors, or for professional, non-college education (e.g. network engineering, business computing), in STEAM that would be out of their reach without the program.

In 2015, Ms. Carey also formed Laurie Carey Consulting, LLC, newly-branded as **Nebula Academy** in 2019—a for-profit partner to WCTD. Nebula Academy provides coaching, professional development, team-building and collaboration, both in person and online, to adult and non-traditional learners and educators. It also offers consultation to businesses in need of technology support. Nebula Academy shares facilities with WCTD's programs in Syosset, New York.

Carey noted, "With Marcum's Raffa group, WCTD hopes to develop additional fiscal and other resources to attract even more local students to participate in the current workforce. We already have important relationships with Microsoft, Amazon, Harvard University and other global leaders, but it is time for us to take this to a much higher level of partnership. We need to bolster existing grants to support the extension of WCTD's Syosset-based learning facility to encompass more physical area, more desks and more computing and other equipment. This facility will also be available for some of our teaching and learning programs within our for-profit, Nebula Academy."

Rich Tafel, director of Raffa Social Capital, remarked, "With our ever-changing economy, it is crucial for more at-risk students to gain awareness of jobs in the tech sector and gain access to training that prepares them. We're excited to help support WCTD's goal of pioneering this growing sector of tech-credentialed careers."

ABOUT WE CONNECT THE DOTS (WCTD)

[We Connect the Dots \(WCTD\)](#), a non-profit educational organization founded by Laurie Carey in 2013, seeks to use learning and coaching models to create positive outcomes across education and professional development

communities and provide engaging learning experiences. WCTD's unique, project-based, experiential learning programs for Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM) help students to realize that these disciplines are essential to their future and give them hands-on skills to compete in the 21st Century workforce.

WCTD exists in-concert with Ms. Carey's for-profit entity, **Nebula Academy** (a DBA of Laurie Carey Consulting). Nebula Academy's mission is to use cognitive learning and coaching models to create positive outcomes across education and professional development communities, where technology is used as a tool for supporting productive and engaging learning experiences.

Media Contact

Anam Javaid

631-468-7475

ajavid@we-connect-the-dots.org

ABOUT MARCUM LLP AND RAFFA-MARCUM'S NONPROFIT & SOCIAL SECTOR GROUP

Marcum LLP is one of the largest independent public accounting and advisory services firms in the nation, with offices in major business markets throughout the U.S., as well as Grand Cayman, China, and Ireland. Headquartered in New York City, Marcum provides a full spectrum of traditional tax, accounting, and assurance services; advisory, valuation, and litigation support; managed accounting services; and an extensive portfolio of specialty and niche industry practices.

[Raffa Social Capital Advisors](#), a unit of Raffa-Marcum's Non-Profit and Social Sector Group, was founded in 1984, well before the term "conscious capitalism" was coined. Raffa is a diverse team of mission-driven professionals committed to "Doing More." The group's clients are primarily non-profits (over 1,000 of them) and socially conscious for-profits that tend to employ intellectually bright, ambitious and altruistic employees. Beyond Raffa's audit and tax practices, the group offers specialized managed services (accounting, HR and IT); project consulting and staffing solutions; leadership and strategy; executive search, transition, and planning; operational improvement; and mergers and acquisitions.