

# developed

## *The App Economy Tour*

1401 K Street NW Suite 501  
Washington, DC 20005  
202-331-2130  
[www.actonline.org](http://www.actonline.org)

Developed | The App Economy Tour is a series of events that brings entrepreneurs, business leaders, industry experts, and local, state, and federal officials together for an eye-opening discussion on next-generation apps, game-changing mobile solutions, and innovations driving the app ecosystem. These events are an opportunity for developers and entrepreneurs, at any stage of the development or business cycle, to get more insight into how to build a brand, what rules and regulations they must be mindful of, how to get into app stores quickly and efficiently, and how to figure out what comes next in terms of funding streams and business opportunities.



## Minneapolis, Minnesota

### Monday, November 25, 2019

The app economy is a \$1.7 trillion ecosystem led by U.S. companies. The app marketplace is growing in areas outside of traditional tech hubs. In the United States, more than 83 percent of app companies are located outside of Silicon Valley, and 13 percent operate in rural or suburban areas.

Our sixth stop on Developed | The App Economy Tour took us to Minneapolis, Minnesota. Minneapolis is typically associated with big name brands like Target and 3M, but over the last 10 years, the city has become a hub for small businesses with a vibrant community that is already making astonishing contributions that span industries. The event on November 25th focused on companies that chose Minneapolis as their place to grow and included a discussion featuring panelists representing the various components of the app ecosystem.



## Developed | Speakers

To kickoff the event, Congressman Dean Phillips gave opening remarks. Representative Phillips has a long history in entrepreneurship. He attended Brown University before returning to Minnesota to earn his MBA from the University of Minnesota's Carlson School of Business. After working at a variety of startup businesses, he joined the family business, Phillips Distilling, which he eventually led. He later went on to help build Talenti Gelato into one of the top-selling ice cream brands in the country. He is now co-owner of Penny's Coffee, a small business with three locations. In Congress, Representative Phillips is focused on campaign finance, electoral, and ethics reforms, and addressing healthcare costs, global climate change, and gun violence. He is a member of the House Ethics, Financial Services and Foreign Affairs Committees, as well as the Democracy Reform Task Force and the Gun Violence Prevention Task Force. During his remarks, Representative Phillips shared his thoughts on the role Minnesota can play in bridging the tech talent gap and shared insight into how Congress is thinking and will continue to think about tech.

Following the Congressman, Jacquie Berglund, CEO and founder of FINNEGANS Brew Co., the first beer company in the world to donate 100% of profits to fund fresh produce for those in need, gave welcoming remarks. Through the creation of both FINNEGANS and its nonprofit counterpart, FINNEGANS Community Fund, Berglund has championed an innovative, market-based approach to addressing and raising awareness about food security in communities across the Midwest. During her remarks, Berglund shared the history of the FINNOVATION Lab, the community, and Minneapolis resources she leaned on while building her businesses. She also gave insight into how she made it all work and why she chose to turn her company's profits into support for the community and small businesses.

## Developed | Panelists



Parag Shah is the co-founder of Vemos. He has been developing technology companies for more than 10 years and has co-founded companies such as Lunchbox, Foodsby, and Vemos. During the panel, Parag shared his thoughts on how technology can bring people closer together, create better experiences, and make industries more efficient. Parag also explained the benefits of thoughtful privacy, security, and data stewardship practices for small businesses, and ways that Minnesota could better support the changing workforce.



Michelle Tran Maryns is an inaugural FINNOVATION fellow and the founder, CEO, and sparkler-in-chief of We Sparkle, a software-as-a-service (SaaS) social enterprise dedicated to helping small businesses care for their customers and communities. During the panel, Michelle shared her experiences as a FINNOVATION fellow and provided insight into how she taps into the community to expand and create new business opportunities for her company.



Casey Shultz was one of the original employees of CouchSurfing International where she helped the company raise its \$7.9M A-round. Casey came to Minnesota via the Twin Cities Startup Week Fly-in Program as the director of program management at BETA where she oversees the logistics and strategic partnerships for Startup Week. During the panel, Casey pointed to some resources in Minneapolis and how attendees can get involved in startup programs created to support small business and innovation across the city and the state.





Landon Zinda currently serves as legislative director to Representative Tom Emmer. During the panel, Landon talked about the Congressman's approach to technology issues, including Congressman Emmer's FinTech work on the House Financial Services Committee and the Congressional Blockchain Caucus. Landon also highlighted the role that small businesses can and should play in helping to shape the technology conversation in DC and implored attendees to follow up with him and other offices to talk about issues impacting their companies and how Congress could help.

## Developed | Panel

The panelists shared their experiences as developers or working with developers and answered questions on how increasing attention from policymakers may shape the next 10 years of the app revolution. The discussion covered a wide range of topics including privacy, big data, and workforce development. The panelists also discussed their experiences with funding, highlighted the resources available to developers and small businesses in Minneapolis, shared advice on how to tap into those resources, and ways small businesses can and do benefit from their relationship with platforms.



When discussing platforms, Casey highlighted the change platforms brought to the launch cycle for small companies. "Platforms have really helped the bottom line when it comes to going to market. Anyone can make an app or a website, and the cost is next to nothing. As technology continues to develop, it will only get better."



As the conversation shifted to privacy, Parag suggested companies make their privacy practices simple and relevant to consumers. "How do we make sure consumers opt into things they can really understand? We need to have privacy policies that don't take an entire weekend to read."



"There is an education issue in Congress. It's why I'm here, and why I want to hear from all of you on what you're doing and why, and the kinds of issues you're running into. Call me. Email me. It helps me to hear from you on tech issues."  
Landon Zinda

**"Take advantage of all the resources available in Minneapolis. But as you're taking advantage of those resources, try also to get involved and support future generations in the community." Michelle Maryns**

## Developed | Your Backyard

When considering difficult policy issues, the first question you likely ask is, “how will this affect my constituents?” At Developed | Minneapolis, we asked those questions directly to your constituents. During Developed events, Members and their staffs have the opportunity to speak directly with small business constituents about the app ecosystem, their relationships with software platforms, and how regulations affect their ability to grow and create jobs. We are happy to facilitate ongoing dialogue between your office and any of our panelists. Let us know if you would like more information on Developed | The App Economy Tour, the panelists from our Minneapolis event, or how you can get more information on policy issues critical to small businesses in Minneapolis.

“How do we make Minneapolis more of a tech center? I think it starts with the University of Minnesota. We have a lot of things working for us, but the first step is supporting programs and the students coming out of those programs.”  
Congressman Dean Phillips



**If you have any questions or would like more information, please reach out to the App Association's senior director for public policy, Graham Dufault.**

**Email: [gdufault@actonline.org](mailto:gdufault@actonline.org)  
Phone: 503-781-9037 (m)**