



TECH KIDS UNLIMITED 2020 EVALUATION REPORT



2020 TECH KIDS UNLIMITED PROGRAM EVALUATION

Introduction

Tech Kids Unlimited (TKU) continues its commitment to systematically evaluate all annual programming in conjunction with their developmental psychologist and independent evaluator, Dr. Ariana Riccio. Dr. Riccio has worked with TKU since 2016 to design data collection measures that capture participant growth in areas important for both technology learning as digital citizens and student social and emotional growth. TKU serves a diverse population of students ages 7-21 with various learning needs and differences ranging from Autism Spectrum Disorder, Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, and Nonverbal Learning Disability among others. The organization pays careful attention to program design and student growth, giving TKU a unique opportunity to have a multidimensional impact on students who wish to be engaged with technology throughout their lives.

This evaluation summarizes student outcomes in the areas of technological knowledge and student social gains for both the youth (7-13 years) and teen/young adult (YA) (14-21 years) groups. Data are presented for the entirety of TKU's Summer 2020 Workshop series, held in an online workshop format for the first time in response to the COVID-19 global pandemic. This annual report also includes evaluations of TKU Sunday and Fall After School Programs, the TKU Digital Agency, the Creative Technology Internship and Career Readiness Internship Programs, the 2020 Decode the Vote Hackathon, and the College Access Program. This annual evaluation report concludes with narratives and testimonials from TKU staff members, parents, and students themselves to provide first-hand accounts of TKU's impact on students and the broader TKU community.

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Summer 2020 at Tech Kids Unlimited	3
Evaluation of 2020 Youth Summer Workshops at Tech Kids Unlimited	3
Evaluation of 2020 Teen and Young Adult Summer Workshops	4
Tech Kids Unlimited Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)	4
Sunday Workshops at Tech Kids Unlimited	6
Spring Sunday Youth & Teen 2020 Workshops	6
Fall 2020 Sunday and After School Workshops	7
Evaluation of The TKU Digital Agency	7
2020 Internship Initiatives at Tech Kids Unlimited	14
CTI: Creative Technology Internship	14
CRISP: Career Readiness Internship Summer Program	16
Additional 2020 Programs at Tech Kids Unlimited	18
Decode the Vote Hackathon	18
College Access Program	20
Narratives and Testimonials from Parents	21
Narratives and Feedback from 2020 TKU Staff	22
Narratives from 2020 TKU Student Participants	23
Appendix A	24

SUMMER 2020 AT TECH KIDS UNLIMITED

Evaluation of 2020 Youth Summer Workshops at Tech Kids Unlimited

Tech Kids Unlimited structures summer learning as 5-day instructional workshops focused on a specific technology theme. To meet the needs of TKU students amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, TKU transitioned to fully online workshops this summer. Students could choose from morning or afternoon workshops each week which each ran for 2.5 hour per day. Workshop themes for 2020 participants included Memes and Gifs, Digital Storytelling, Website Production, Animation, Graphic Design, and Podcasting, among other topics. TKU provided eight weeks of programming in Summer 2020.

Data were collected for 39 unique youth and 53 unique teen/young adult participants throughout seven weeks of Tech Kids Unlimited programming. Data were not collected for the first week of programs to allow for observations of the shift to online instruction. **Overall, 127 individual youth seats and 135 teen/YA seats were filled over the 7-week data collection period across all workshops.** Instructors and counselors were asked to rate students in five areas using a 7-point Likert scale in addition to an open-ended questionnaire to comment on student strengths, challenges, successes, and skill improvements. Parents were invited to complete an online survey at the end of the summer about their child's experiences at TKU. Students were also asked to complete an online questionnaire about their experiences at the end of each workshop. An example survey can be found in Appendix A.

Instructor and Counselor Feedback for Youth

According to instructor reports at the end of each week:

- 98% of instructors believed most of their students improved their computer skills
- 95% of instructors believed most of their students improved their social skills
- 88% of instructors believed most of their students learned skills to help them get a job
- 98% of instructors felt they were able to be effective staff members within an online teaching environment

Parent Feedback for Youth

According to the parent report at the end of each session:

- 71% of parents believed their child gained technology skills
- 66% of parents believed their child gained social-emotional skills
- 68% of parents believed their child learned problem solving skills
- 71% of parents believed their child gained confidence in themselves

Youth Questionnaire Results*

According to student's own reports at the end of each session:

- 76% of youth reported they improved their computer skills at TKU
- 52% of youth reported they learned job skills at TKU
- 37% of youth said they made new friends or got closer to old friends at TKU
- 46% of youth reported they got better at working with others after a week at TKU
- 85% of youth reported they would like to return to TKU in the future
- 91% of youth reported that they enjoyed their experience at their TKU online workshop

Evaluation of 2020 Teen and Young Adult Summer Workshops Instructor and Counselor Feedback for Teens

According to instructor reports at the end of each week:

- 100% of instructors believed most of their students improved their computer skills
- 95% of instructors believed most of their students improved their social skills
- 92% of instructors believed most of their students learned skills to help them get a job
- 90% of instructors felt they were able to be effective staff members within an online teaching environment

Parent Feedback for Teens

According to parent report at the end of each session:

- 92% of parents believed their teen gained significant technology skills
- 74% of parents believed their teen gained skills that will help them gain employment in the future
- 76% of parents believed their teen gained significant social-emotional skills
- 84% of parents believed their teen learned problem solving skills
- 84% of parents believed their teen gained confidence in themselves

Teen/Young Adult Questionnaire Results*

According to student's own reports at the end of each session:

- 65% of teens reported they improved their computer skills at TKU
- 55% of teens reported they learned job skills at TKU
- 47% of teens said they made new friends or got closer to old friends at TKU
- 47% of teens reported they got better at working with others after a week at TKU
- 80% of teens reported they would like to return to TKU in the future
- 88% of teens reported that they enjoyed their experience at their TKU online workshop

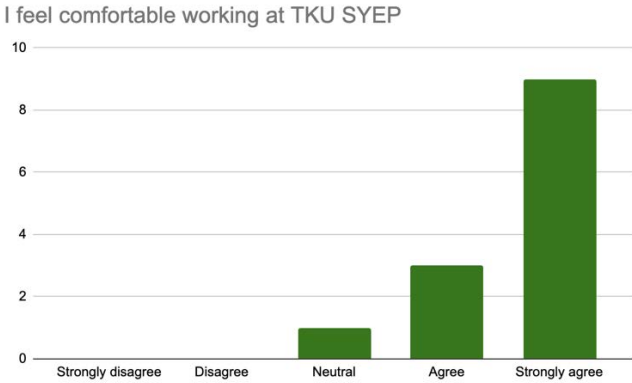
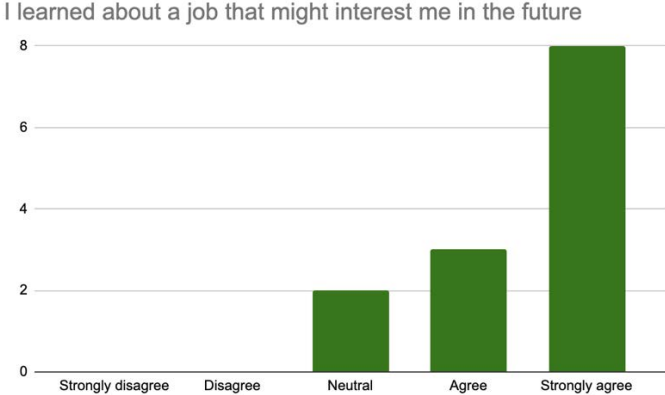
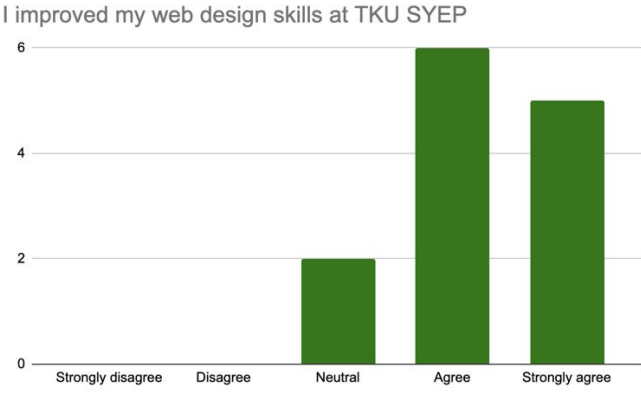
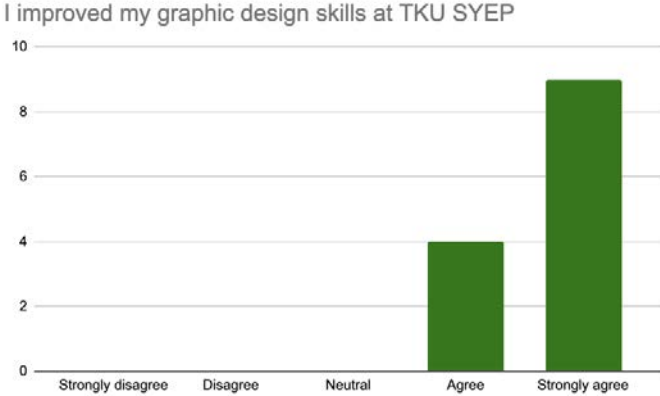
** We are conducting additional research and data analysis to compare student learning outcomes in 2019 (when instruction occurred in-person) to student learning outcomes in 2020 (after a shift to online instruction). Preliminary data indicate that teen participants' technological skill learning did not suffer as a result of online instruction. Youth participants, however, may need additional support in order to successfully transition to online instruction. All age groups experienced a decrease in reported social skill learning and opportunities to make friends. We hope these data will inform our practice as we continue to provide online workshops for 2021.*

Tech Kids Unlimited Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)

As part of an initiative funded by the City Of New York and overseen by ExpandEd, TKU applied and was selected to host a five-week program serving 13 young adults with disabilities for its Summer Bridge Program. ***This program aimed to foster career exploration and build skills in target areas necessary for future employment success.*** Interested young adults ages 14-21 were eligible to apply to the program and participants received a \$1000 stipend for the work they completed over the course of the summer as part of the SYEP program.

This group of SYEP participants met every day for three hours. For four days each week, participants were instructed by a master tech teacher at TKU and focused on topics such as web design, graphic design, game design, and a coding crash course. The final week of the program concluded with participants' completion of their own online portfolios. One day per week was hosted by TKU's founder and Executive Director Beth Rosenberg and focused on work readiness skills such as networking, interview skills, financial literacy, and resume writing.

SYEP students completed an online survey to provide their feedback at the end of their participation in the program. All 13 participants of the SYEP program completed the survey. Students were asked to rate how much they agreed with the survey statements on a five-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Below is a summary of their responses.



SUNDAY WORKSHOPS AT TECH KIDS UNLIMITED

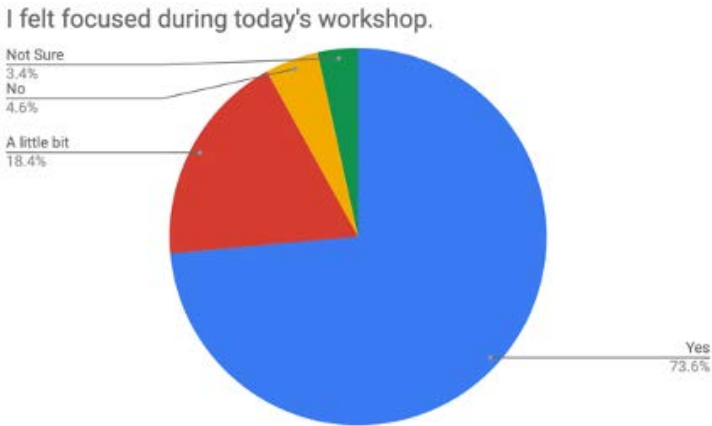
Overview of Sunday Workshops

In addition to Summer Workshops, Tech Kids Unlimited offered 2-hour Sunday workshops throughout the calendar year. Instructors and staff at TKU design programming which can be completed in a 2-hour session or a grouping of two 2-hour sessions to allow for continuous engagement with technology and other software skills for TKU students during the academic year.

Because Sunday programs are held twice monthly and students engage with course material in 2-hour blocks, enrollees have the opportunity to engage in many diverse types of technology programs to explore and refine their technology interests and affinities. Some of the topics of the workshops were focused on memes, pixel art, photo editing, video editing, animation, and music making.

Spring Sunday Youth & Teen 2020 Workshops

TKU Sunday Sessions moved to an online workshop format in March 2020. Both youth and teen/YA participants gave their feedback on program activities using interactive Zoom polls at the end of their workshop. Spring 2020 participants reported the following outcomes:

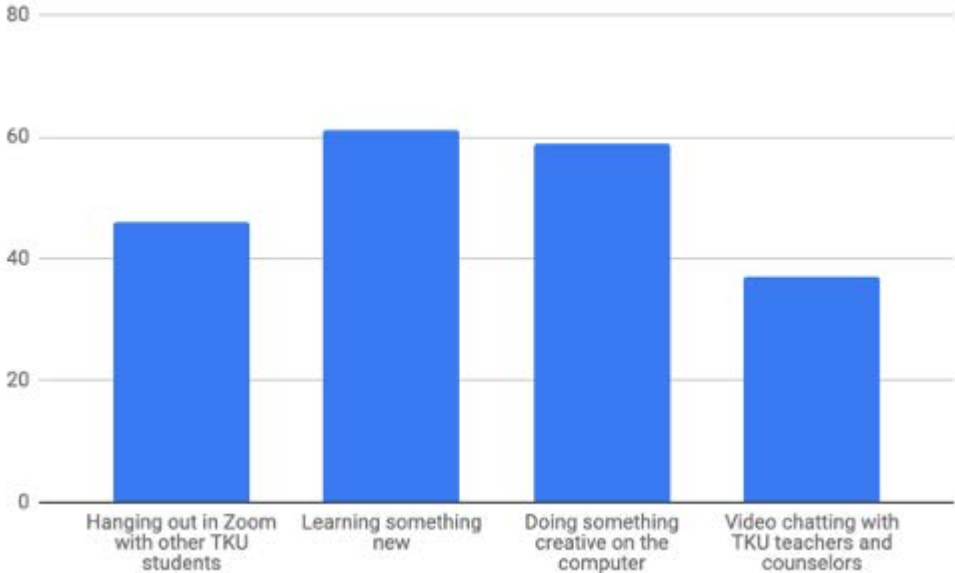


- 74% of students said they felt focused during the Sunday online workshop
- 84% of students reported enjoying the online Sunday workshop
- 86% of students felt counselors and teachers did a good job helping them during the online workshop

When students were asked to select what they enjoyed about the TKU online workshop

- 53% said hanging out in Zoom with other TKU students
- 70% said learning something new
- 68% said doing something creative on the computer
- 43% said video chatting with TKU teachers and counselors

Graph of student responses to the question "What did you enjoy about today's TKU Online Workshop?"



Parents of Spring 2020 online workshop participants shared in the positive feedback presented by their children. All parents were invited to complete an online survey following the completion of the Spring 2020 semester. A total of 27 parents submitted a survey response.

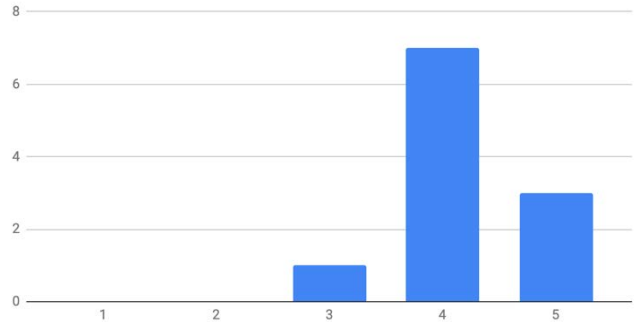
- 74% of parents believed their child gained technology skills after attending Spring 2020 online workshops
- 67% of parents believed their child gained skills to help them get a job in the future
- 52% of parents believed their child gained social-emotional skills
- 67% of parents believed their child learned how to problem solve
- 67% of parents believed their child gained confidence in themselves

Fall 2020 Sunday and After School Workshops

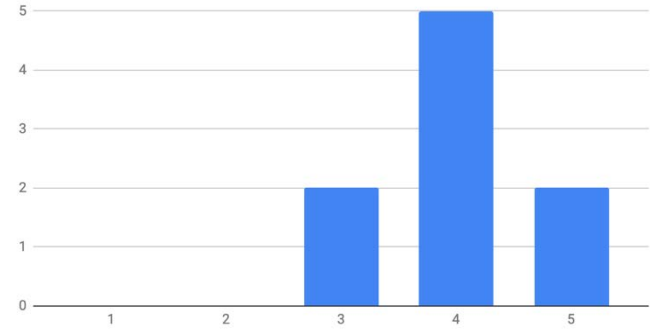
TKU continued to offer online workshops for students this Fall in the form of 1.5-hour Sunday workshops and Wednesday after school workshops, a new addition for 2020. Fall 2020 programs were still ongoing at the time this report was compiled. Students who participated in a Fall workshop in the beginning of the 2020 Fall session were invited to complete an online survey to share their experiences and feedback. Nineteen participants responded to our survey invitation: 11 students attended both Sunday and after school workshops, 7 attended only Sunday workshops, and 1 attended only Wednesday after school workshops. Ten youth and nine teen participants completed the feedback survey.

When asked to rate if they felt their improved their skills in various areas on a scale from 1-5 (strongly disagree to strongly agree), both youth and teens reported an improvement in their computer skills after attending an online workshop this Fall:

Youth responses to: "I improved my computer skills at TKU online workshops in Fall 2020."

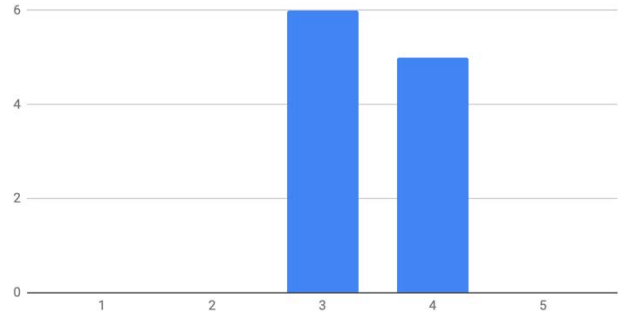


Teen responses to: "I improved my computer skills at TKU online workshops in Fall 2020."

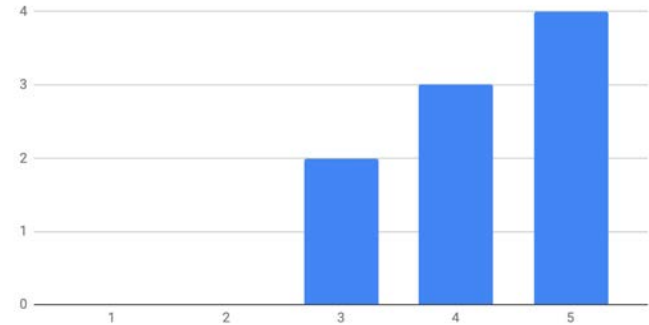


Youth participants reported more neutral feelings when rating whether they got better at working with others during TKU online workshops this Fall. Teen participants agreed that they made improvements in this area overall.

Youth responses to: "I got better at working with other people at TKU online workshops this Fall 2020."

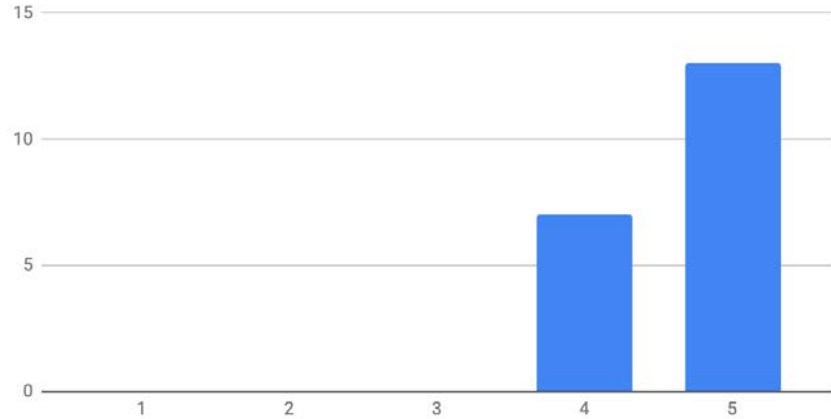


Teen responses to: "I got better at working with other people at TKU online workshops this Fall 2020."



Overall, 100% of students agreed that they were interested in returning to TKU workshops in the future:

Student responses to "I would like to return to Tech Kids Unlimited in the future (either in-person or online)."



EVALUATION OF THE TKU DIGITAL AGENCY

Spring, Summer, & Fall 2020

The TKU Digital Agency (DA) is an after school program for young people who learn differently which mimics a real workplace. Spring 2020 participants met once per week for 15 weeks (January-June), Summer 2020 participants met twice per week for five weeks (July & August) and Fall 2020 participants met once per week for 10 week (October-December). A total of 36 students participated in this program across all three cohorts. ***The focus of this program was on completing projects for real clients and all participants were paid a stipend for their contributions.***

During the Spring 2020 cycle of the TKU Digital Agency from January-June 2020, 13 students focused on two major client projects. The first project was to create posters for EPIC Players, a neuro-inclusive theater company, to promote their upcoming production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Students learned best practices for graphic design and used the software Canva to create their posters. Students also performed an evaluative review of the *Shop the Spectrum* website, an online marketplace where customers can purchase goods and services from businesses that employ people on the spectrum. They checked for incorrect and missing links, identified potential web accessibility improvements, and created social media posts to promote the businesses showcased on the site. Additionally, students used the software Codepen.io to create mockups of how they might redesign the website to improve user experience.

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted this program cycle and the Digital Agency participants rose to the occasion. The Digital Agency's successful adjustment to remote work can be viewed as an achievement of the Spring 2020 cycle, as attendance and participation remained high despite the sudden transition. Like professional employees worldwide, our 13 participants had to adapt to this new environment with new software tools, additional instructions, and additional support from staff. This year, participants used various software tools to complete client projects at the Digital Agency including Canva, Cables.gl, Wordpress, and Codepen.io. Like most modern tech companies and organizations, our participants used Slack for daily communications, Zoom to host virtual meetings, and the Google Suite to collaboratively edit documents and projects.

The TKU Digital Agency continued with online instruction in the Summer of 2020, serving 11 students. Staff noticed an increase in regular attendance across programs while meeting online in the spring, and ***anecdotal evidence suggested that our students valued the continued opportunity to connect with both their peers and their personal interests in technology at TKU.*** The TKU Digital Agency met for 10, 2-hour sessions on Monday and Wednesday evenings in July and August. Summer DA participants focused their efforts on finishing the design and development of a website for the agency itself - a place to showcase their work, introduce the team, and connect with new clients. Students worked diligently in two teams - a web design team and a graphic design team - with rotating student leadership roles throughout the course of the cycle. The web design team created wireframes and style guides based on preferences from the TKU admin team, and constructed the website using Squarespace. Meanwhile, the graphic design team created a logo that is unique to the Digital Agency while being reminiscent of the Tech Kids Unlimited logo. The Summer cycle of the TKU Digital Agency boasted 100% attendance over the 10 total evening sessions, highlighting student commitment to and engagement with the program and project goals. The website, designed by this cohort of participants, can be found here: www.TKUAgency.com

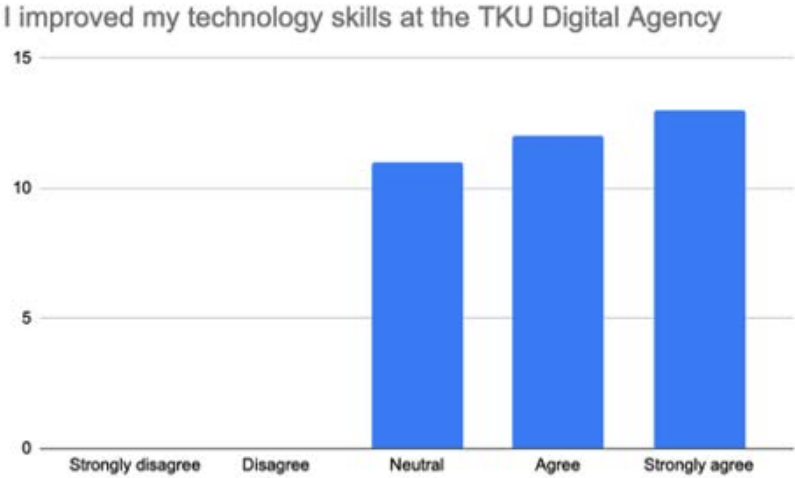
The final installation of the TKU Digital Agency this Fall served a cohort of 12 students while meeting entirely online. Students met for 10 two-hour sessions from October-December. A major project for Fall Digital Agency participants involved editing a promotional video for the not-for-profit NYC Kids Project using a web-based editor called WeVideo.

Master Tech Teacher Lucas White and Jessye Herrell, TKU's Education Manager, took steps to make the Digital Agency an entirely professional experience for participants. Staff addressed participants as 'agency members' instead of students and 'colleagues' instead of 'classmates.' Program staff referred to instructional time as 'professional development' time instead of a 'lesson.' This seems to have left a good impression on participants and they now use that kind of language themselves when asked to describe their experiences. ***Staff noted a large increase in participant growth in areas of leadership, teamwork, and communication skills.***

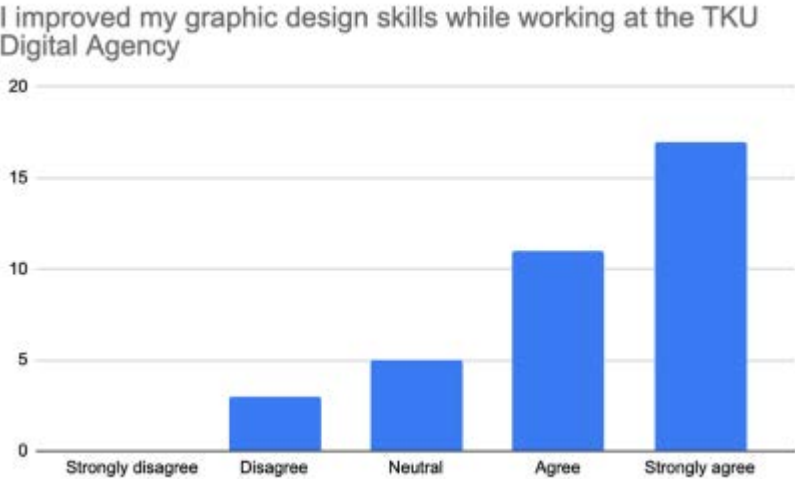
Participant Feedback and Survey Data

Participating adolescents were surveyed at the end of the 15-week Spring (n=12), 5-week Summer (n=11), and 8-week Fall (n=13) programs. The majority of participants reported having an IEP and saw a therapist outside of school (occupational, speech, reading, and/or a social worker).

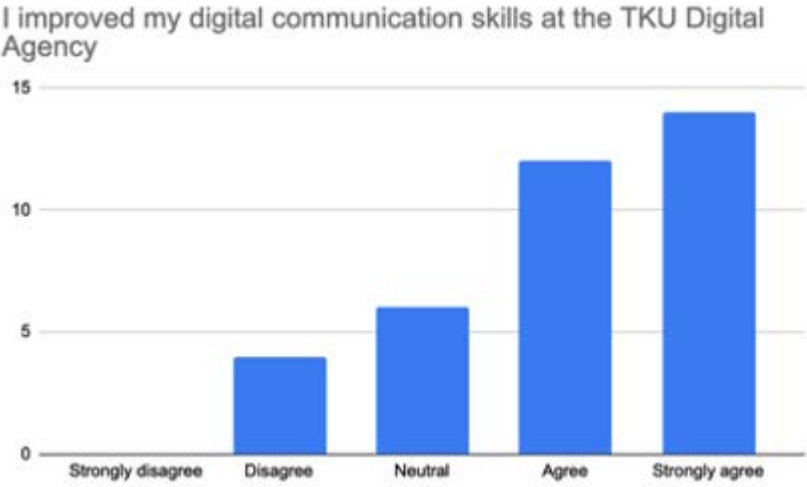
Participants noted that they believed they improved their technology skills while working at the Digital Agency:



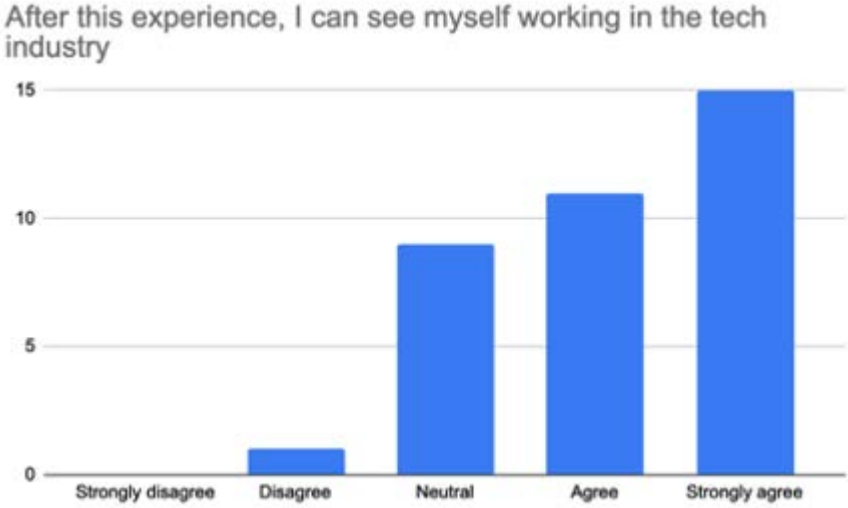
Participants noted that they believed that they improved their graphic design skills while working at the Digital Agency:



Participants noted that they believed that they improved their digital communication skills (i.e. using email, slack, and Zoom) while working at the Digital Agency:



Excitingly, Digital Agency participants also felt they could see themselves working in the tech industry after working at TKU:



Additional data from the Digital Agency participants:

- 76% of participants felt they learned about a job that might interest them in the future through participating in the TKU Digital Agency
- 78% of students felt a sense of accomplishment while participating in the TKU Digital Agency

Quotes about Personal and Professional Growth

Participants had the opportunity to share how they felt about their Digital Agency experience during small focus groups and one-on-one interviews:

- "I like that it helped me to learn new and useful skills and that both the instructors and teachers were very friendly." - J., age 17
- "It gave me an opportunity to do real, professional graphic design and to learn about the field, and it taught me about a lot of useful programs to use." - O., age 14
- "I like how we got the time to learn about various topics regarding the tech industry and brand marketing industry, such as programming, logos, designs, criticism and clientele, freelance, etc. ***I feel that it gives us more opportunities as teenagers to have preparation as an adult when we settle into this part of our lives.***" - T., age 17

When participants were asked what they liked about the program and how it felt to complete projects for real clients, they said:

- "It kinda felt like having a job, doing stuff like this made me feel more capable. These are some of the things I'll be doing when I start to find myself a part-time job." - J., age 18
- ***"I felt that I learned that I could do anything I put my mind to. It felt as though I was my own boss by the end of the day."*** - M., age 22
- "It helped me understand what it is like in the business world, which it did a lot for me in that sense." - T., age 17
- "I felt that I had something to do, I felt productive and it felt professional giving criticism and improvement on my design." - T, age 16
- "I liked going to class and doing work. I had some programs before, but I didn't really know how to use them properly and now I know how to do that. I can make a logo now which I have never done before." - S., age 19
- ***"It gave me an opportunity to do real, professional graphic design and learn about the field,*** and it taught me about a lot of useful programs to use. It was fun. I like getting creative within restraints, so this was perfect. It's a great program with great teachers :)" – O., age 15

2020 INTERNSHIP INITIATIVES AT TECH KIDS UNLIMITED

CTI: Creative Technology Internship

The Creative Technologist Internship (CTI) program, which began in 2017, enrolled a cohort of eight interns to attend weekly work hours for the 2019-2020 academic year. CTI participants are teens/young adults aged 17-21 interested in work or study in creative tech-based fields. This program is designed to act as a bridge between school experiences and workplace environments. Interns learn soft skills while working in a mock office environment, working on social-emotional and transitional life skills. TKU staff and CTI participants are supported by a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and a social work graduate student to assist in learning appropriate workplace behaviors, managing interpersonal relationships, and organizing numerous tasks on schedule. In Spring 2020, all CTI operations were moved online, where interns completed their placements. Many receive high school course credit for attending this one-day a week program.

Interns met as a group for a full day of work every Friday and were engaged in numerous projects. Internship coordinators from various participating high schools communicated program goals to staff and students to ensure that all participants are growing throughout target areas. These goals include improving technical skills, building job skills (including teamwork, time management, and office etiquette), and working on personal goals defined weekly by the student interns.

The 2019-2020 interns were interviewed in June 2020 at the end of their program to assess their learning outcomes. Below are their responses following a focus group with the evaluator:

When asked "What did you learn about yourself as an intern this year?" CTI participants said:

- "I'm able to work independently and accomplish multiple client tasks."
- "I am good at following directions. I work well in a group."
- "I'm a great producer through technology."

When asked "What project did you enjoy the most?" CTI participants said:

- "I enjoyed the Games for Change project as it allowed me to express my creativity and contribute to a good cause."
- "I liked the photoshop projects we did early in the year because it was fun learning how to use it."

When asked "How did this internship prepare you to get a job?" CTI participants said:

- "The internship placed me in a work environment and gave me some independence."
- "This internship prepared me in terms of teaching me how to communicate with my colleagues."
- "They helped me make a resume."
- "Made me feel confident in what I am able to accomplish."

"CTI has been a meaningful experience for me because it gave me the experience of doing actual work for a client. It prepared me for the real world by expanding my skills in technology so that I will be able to get even more jobs in the future." - R., Age 17

"It's more interesting and applicable to real life than my school. The classes teach a variety of useful skills and are very helpful and supportive if you don't understand. They teach us a good work ethic and give us a wide range of skills that will make us more desirable employees." - J., Age 16

CRISP: Career Readiness Internship Summer Program

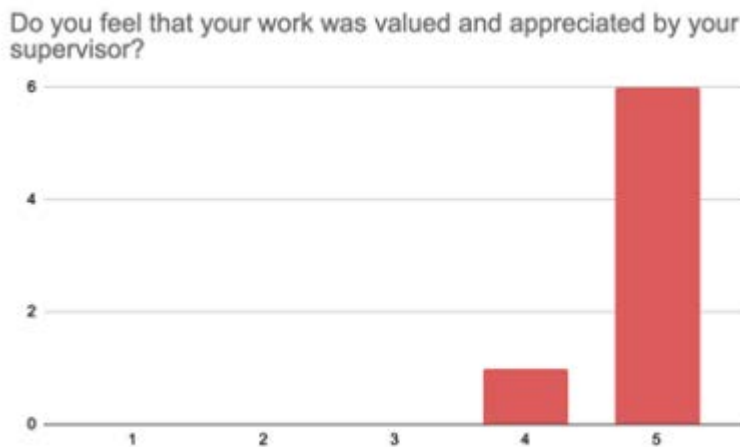
New in Summer 2020

New for Summer 2020, the Career Readiness Internship Program (CRISP) was a fully immersive pilot internship program for advanced TKU students and alumni who are ready and willing to enter the workforce. Seven interns were placed at various internship sites based on their skills and interests. Interns met as a group three days per week with our CRISP coordinator and social worker, Anna Prendella. This program also invited numerous guest speakers and covered topics related to interview skills, resume and cover letter writing, interpersonal skills, professional communication, and time management. With dedicated days in the schedule for group meetings to improve workforce readiness skills, interns had the opportunity to apply these skills at their internship sites in real time. When not meeting as a group, interns worked at their individual work sites and were supervised by professionals in the field. Below are excerpts from interns' own self evaluations and their internship supervisors who oversaw the interns' day-to-day workflow.

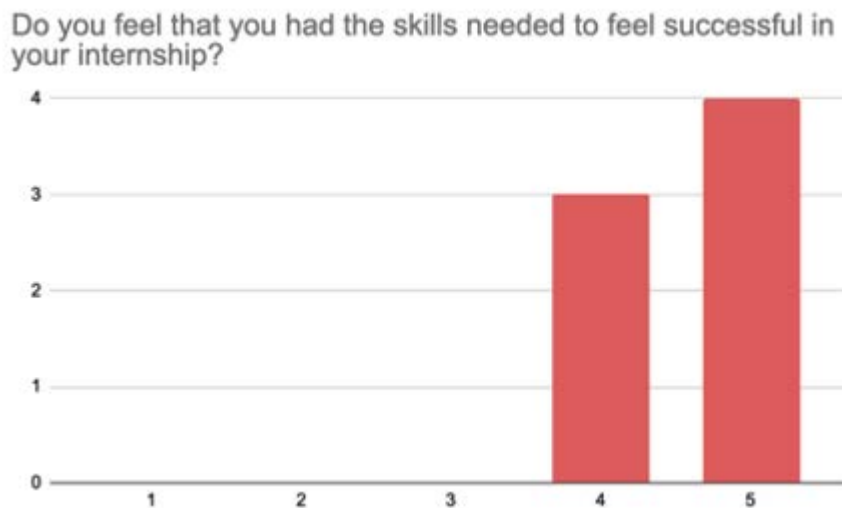
Interns were asked: What were the most important learning experiences for you throughout this internship?

- "I learned about how a job works, and what people do and say in a job environment."
- "Self-advocacy"
- "Time management"

Interns were asked if they felt their work was valued on a scale of 1-5 ranging from "Never" to "Always":



Interns indicated that the career readiness portion of the CRISP program was beneficial to them when responding to the question “Do you feel that you had the skills needed to feel successful in your internship?”



When asked “How do you feel you have grown over the past 5 weeks?” interns expressed very positive feelings about their growth throughout the CRISP program.

- “I learned that I need to be responsible, try my best to accomplish a goal, and do what's appropriate.”
- “I've learned how to be more responsible, how to prepare and how to be engaged in work.”
- **“I feel I have become considerably more socially open to others and to myself over the last 5 weeks. I've become more comfortable contributing to group discussions about important matters ... I also demonstrated my growing flexibility and creativity.”**
- “I think I have grown tremendously.”

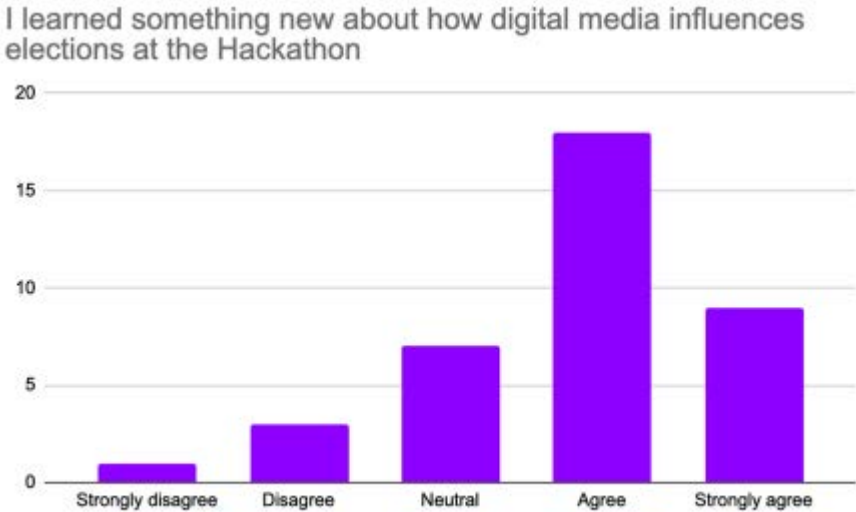
ADDITIONAL 2020 PROGRAMS AT TECH KIDS UNLIMITED

Decode the Vote Hackathon

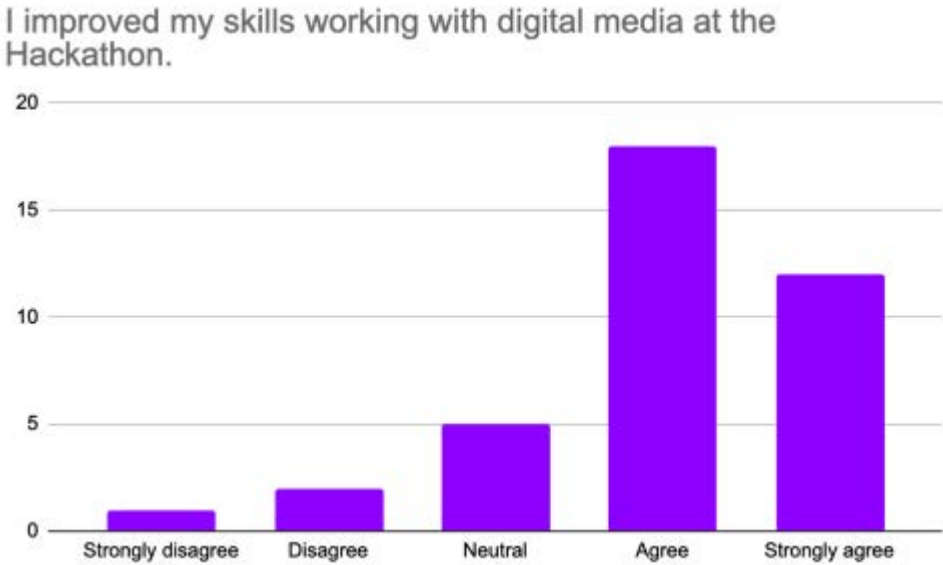
Tech Kids Unlimited continued to provide the community with a day-long hackathon event for youth, tweens, and teen/young adults in 2020. Inspired by the 2020 election, this year's Hackathon theme revolved around the importance of voting. Like the new format for summer online workshops, this Hackathon was held in two online sessions. Morning session participants worked on memes, gifs, and animations while afternoon participants were engaged in audio production and podcasting. Counselors and program staff noted a huge amount of engagement among students in the social justice-oriented themes presented during the workshop. Teens engaged in a group discussion within Zoom chat about issues voters should pay attention to and issues important to them.

A total of 86 students (32 youth, 25 tweens, and 29 teen/young adults) attended the morning and afternoon sessions of the Hackathon this year. To hear student opinions and perspectives on this program, we administered an online survey which was completed by a sample of 38 student participants. Students were asked how much they agreed with the following statements on a five-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

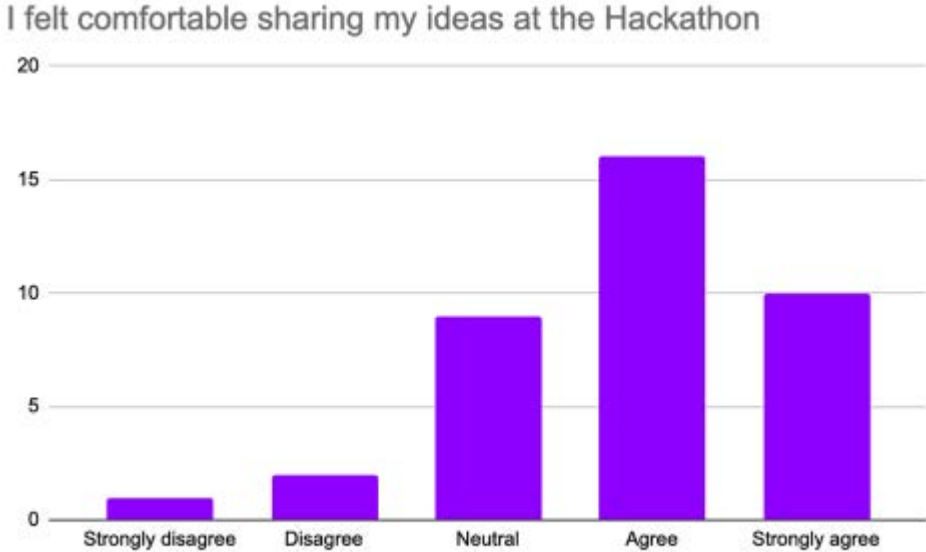
Students agreed that they learned something new about the influence of the media on elections:



Students agreed that they gained technical skills after attending the Hackathon:



Students agreed that they felt comfortable sharing their ideas as a Hackathon participant:

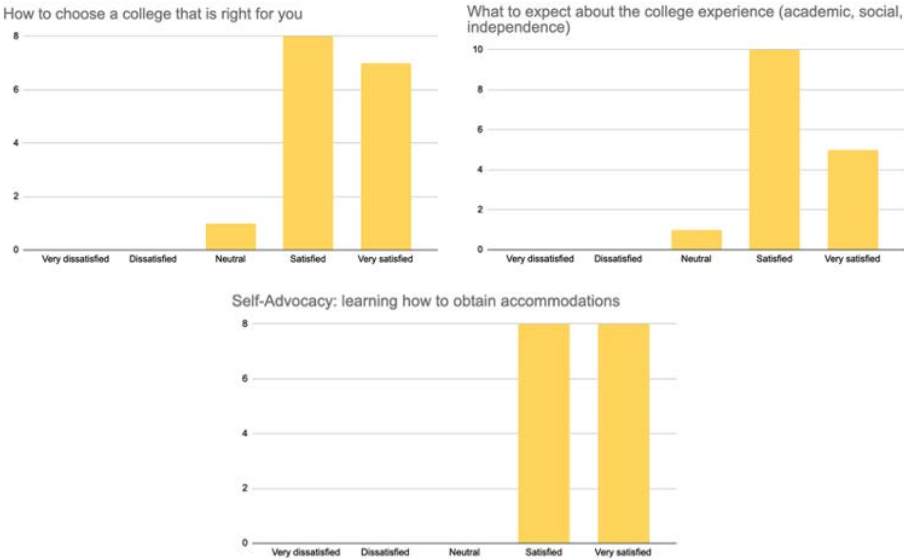


College Access Program

The TKU College Access Program, now entering its third year, provides a supportive environment for students who learn differently to explore college options and build college readiness skills. Program content is influenced by needs, interests, and concerns expressed by students and the program goal is to help the next generation of neurodiverse students aged 14-21 access opportunities to obtain post-secondary education. Participants applied to take part in CAP and were selected based on their age and if they had taken TKU classes currently or in the past. Students completed the CAP program in a Spring and Fall cohort in 2020. Unfortunately, our Spring 2020 CAP program was only able to hold two sessions given complications and closures related to COVID-19. Given this transition, the Fall CAP program met entirely online via Zoom select Friday afternoons for 6 weeks, 1.5 hours per session. TKU served a total of 13 students in this format. With TKU's Education Manager Jessye Herrell at the helm, ***the CAP program focused on topics including managing stress, self-advocacy and receiving academic accommodations, social life at college, choosing a college major, and choosing a college that's right for you.***

At the end of Fall 2020, CAP participants were overwhelmingly positive when rating their satisfaction with various elements of our program. Students were asked to rate how satisfied they were with what they learned about various topics on a scale of one to five ranging from very dissatisfied to very satisfied. Selected results from this survey are presented below.

Rate how satisfied you are with what you learned about each topic:



NARRATIVES AND TESTIMONIALS FROM PARENTS

Parents expressed an overall theme of recognizing the support provided to their children and were appreciative of the quality of TKU's online programs this summer:

"First and foremost, I wanted to THANK YOU and everyone there for the fantastic job you are doing with your summer camps. Last week K. was in the Memes & Gifs camp and he had a great time and said it was really so much fun. I am truly impressed with the quality of instruction and all the extra help available to the kids and also all the support for social interaction which is so crucial for our kids right now. I am so grateful that he has these workshops to look forward to at a time when he's just so isolated and struggling. THANK YOU" - Parent of teen, Age 16

"N. told me that the breakout room worked really well for her. I'm glad that you guys are able to accommodate her." - Parent of teen, Age 15

"Thanks for your wonderful contributions, creativity and following up with E. all week! I appreciate you and your team so much. He loves TKU!" - Parent of teen, Age 14

"C. loves you guys. She has found her tribe. Thank you for everything. There are no words to thank you for all that the TKU workshops have done for C. and our family during this challenging time." Parent of youth, Age 10

"Because of you, W. has had a super fun and productive summer. Tech Kids was a complete lifesaver. We are so grateful. You guys did an outstanding job." - Parent of youth, Age 12

"We are so excited and happy [that C. will be working with the Digital Agency]. You have given this family great joy. Thank you for your continued support with our kids. I'm sure C. will not let you down. Looking forward to his success with TKU by his side."
-- Parent of newly accepted Digital Agency applicant

NARRATIVES AND FEEDBACK FROM 2020 TKU STAFF

"I think the students will remember being able to preserve and socialize with their friends even online. I also think they will take with them being able to utilize all the different types of technology they were taught and being able to do it by themselves at home. I think it really is helping a lot of the students build confidence."

"Students are able to make their own decisions and have the freedom to follow their interests. Students were even allowed to choose a different software if they wanted to. I think, in general, TKU does a really good job of making sure students get to exercise choice. And in turn, as the summer goes on, students are getting more comfortable with knowing what they like and what they want to do!"

"I think the social aspect of sharing work and having everyone discuss each other's work is particularly valuable."

"This week reinforced an idea that TKU has consistently reminded students of, which is that their thoughts and ideas are valuable and should be expressed."

"This was a week where students got to really express their interests and let their personalities shine through their projects. I hope they remember this as a space where they can really be themselves and be appreciated!"

"Students appreciate that a safe space was made for them to share their interests and spend some time communicating with others their age."

"As the summer continues, everyone is getting more comfortable in the virtual environment and I think TKU's structure does a really good job of facilitating this (small class, social worker activity, etc). Because of this, I think that students will remember connecting with their peers, even if online, and how comforting social interaction can be, especially during a time when it is largely lacking."

"So many of the students made such cool projects this week. I tried to keep the lessons flexible, so they could explore their individual interests. Almost all of the students had a passion project that they even worked on outside of the lessons."

NARRATIVES FROM 2020 TKU STUDENT PARTICIPANTS

"Before this week, I was completely new to wireframes and hi-fi/lo-fi. Although these are basics of making an app, I feel like I grasped the concept and I learned how to properly outline/brainstorm an app/service/web app" – Summer teen participant, Age 16

"Well, at first I thought the class was gonna be boring, but it turned out being a really enjoyable experience. I met other kids and they were so helpful, wrote nice comments, and we had a lot of fun together. I couldn't have asked for anything else in terms of teachers. I learned how to create commercials, trailers, gifs, a movie..." – Summer teen participant, Age 14

"I think TKU was an incredible experience. I had lots of fun and lots of creativity in mind. I overcame the obstacle of using my creativity to do my work." – Teen participant, Age 15

"I didn't overcome an obstacle, but I did learn something new. I learned how to use a website I've never used before, and it was fun. I used creativity to make my own comic." – Teen participant, Age 16

"I will remember how I had people guide me when I was stuck and needed answers. They gave me hope and support." – Teen participant, Age 14

"I thought this week was pretty good because it got me to express my creativity and share it to others while also interacting with other people as well." – Teen participant, Age 18

"I really enjoyed this week's edition of TKU. I learned a lot of new things about coding. I had always wanted to learn code, but never had the chance too." – Summer youth participant, Age 13

"I honestly liked TKU, the kids were nice, and I learned new things." – Summer youth participant, Age 12

TKU was an overall enjoyable experience. It got better as we eased into the week and as the routines became clearer, and more well-defined." – Youth participant, Age 13

"TKU..IS...AWESOME..." – Youth participant, Age 10

APPENDIX A

Student Participant Survey Questions (administered online using Google Forms)

Rate how much you agree with the statements below:

- I improved my computer skills this week
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
- I got closer to old friends or met new friends at TKU this week
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
- I learned skills that will help me get a job at TKU this week
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
- I got better at working with other people at TKU this week
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
- I would like to return to Tech Kids Unlimited in the future
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
- I enjoyed this TKU Virtual Summer Workshop
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree

Would you take another virtual TKU workshop in the future?

What did you think of TKU this week? Did you learn something new or overcome an obstacle? Tell me about it!