ANNUAL REPORT

2022

TECH KIDS UNLIMITED

TECHKIDSUNLIMITED.ORG
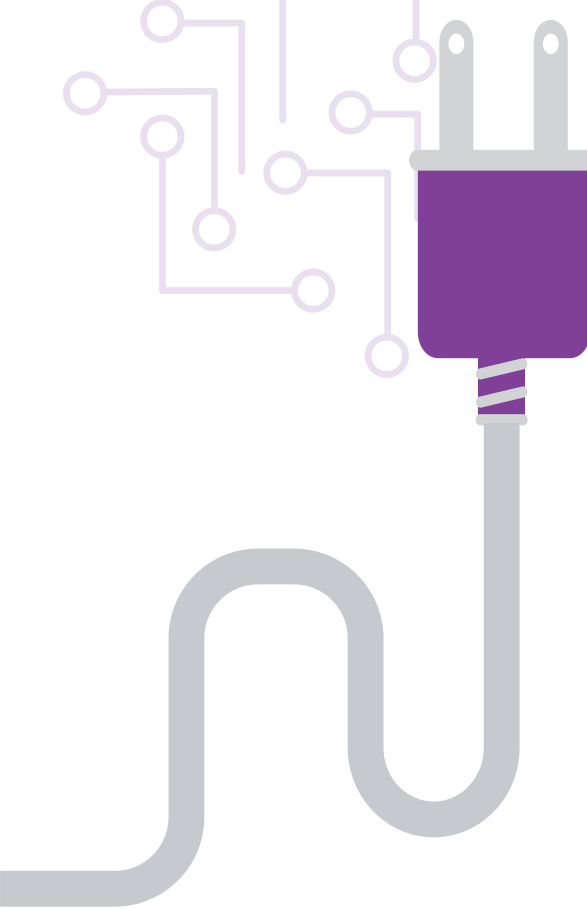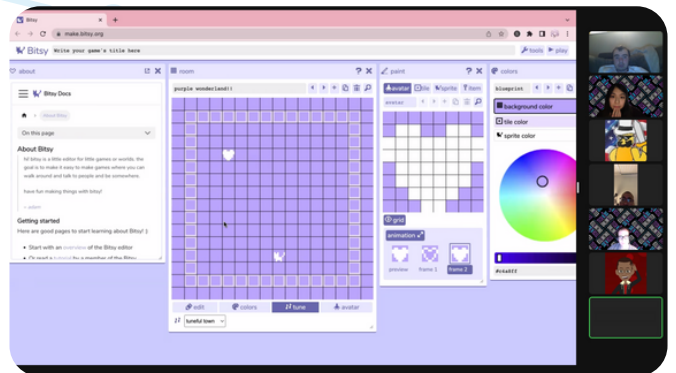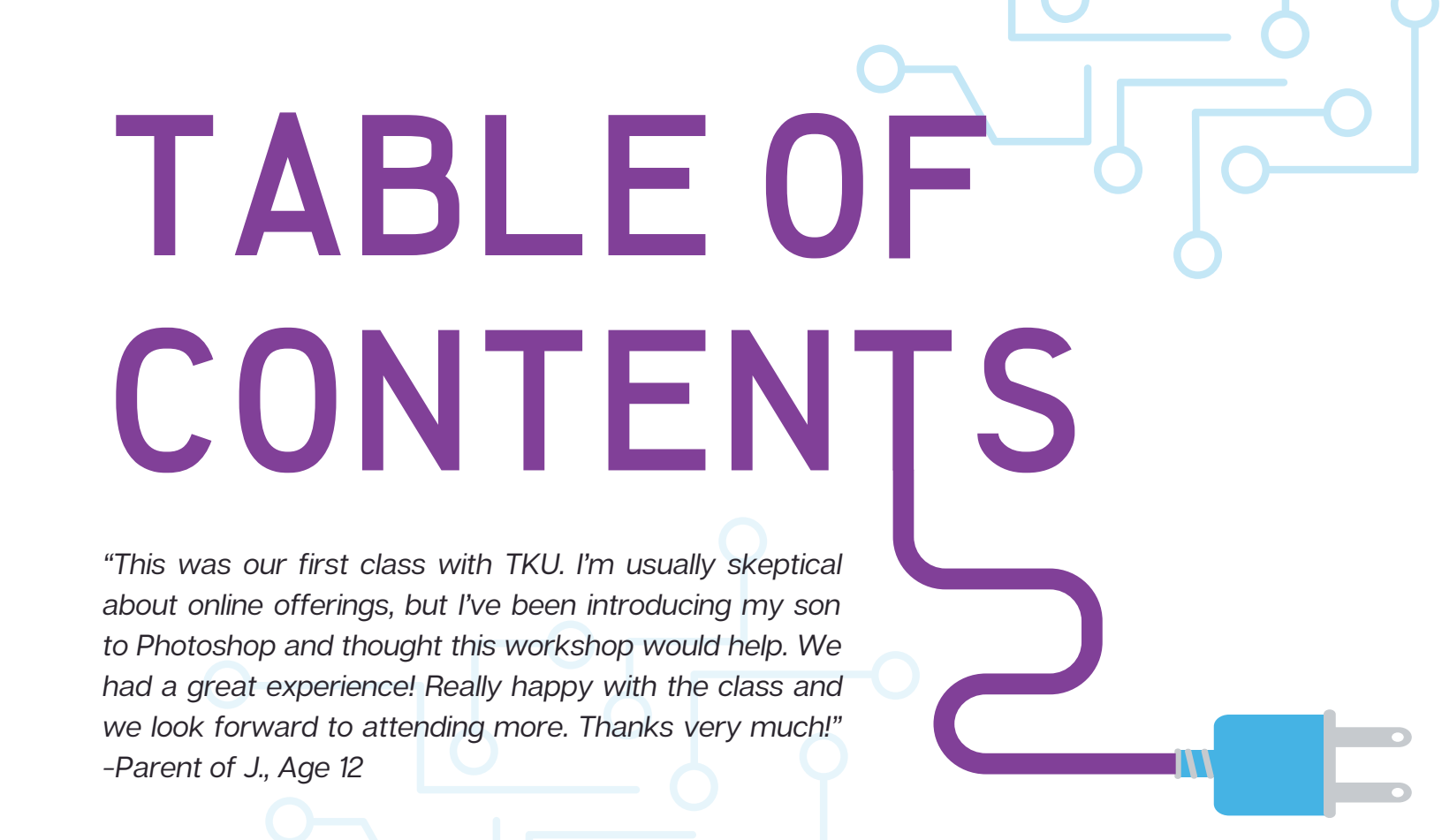
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"This was our first class with TKU. I'm usually skeptical about online offerings, but I've been introducing my son to Photoshop and thought this workshop would help. We had a great experience! Really happy with the class and we look forward to attending more. Thanks very much!"
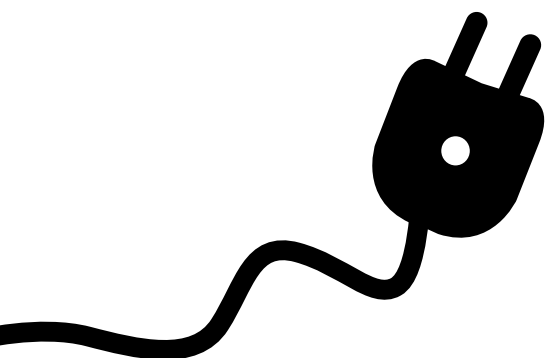*–Parent of J., Age 12*

MISSION

Tech Kids Unlimited is on a mission to empower neurodiverse students' lives through computer science and technology skills. A NYC-based non-profit educational organization, TKU inspires students with disabilities to create, develop, and share the tools of technology in a supportive and nurturing individualized environment. By addressing gaps in access to accessible educational experiences with technology, TKU strives to change the paradigm for education and employment for neurodiverse students.

Isiah, Age 19
The South Bronx

"My son absolutely loves TKU. His artistic development has expanded 10-fold since finding all of you. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for everything all TKU has done for him artistically." -Parent of M., Age 20

OUR REACH

525 Unique students

75% Students received needs-based financial aid

21 Partnerships:
Carnegie Hall x NeOn Arts
Common impact
CUNY College of Staten Island
ExpandEd
Fitch Ratings
Hive NYC Council
Museum Access Consortium
NY Charter School for Autism
NY Stem Education Network
NYU Ability Project
NJ Office for Persons with Disabilities
PASE (Partnership for Afterschool Education)
Person Centered Care Services
SparkYouthNYC
Student Success Network
SYEP
The Summit School
Titus School
Youth Inc.
Brooklyn Autism Center
Winston Prep Transitions

16 Programs:
258 workshops = 1,000+ hours of computer science thinking and technology skills taught.

Students from **18** states

FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

I would like to thank you all for your interest in Tech Kids Unlimited. After an unpredictable and at times tumultuous past few years, we were able to end 2022 with a return to a semblance of normalcy; students were back at **NYU Tandon** for the **annual TKU hackathon.** Not all of the students though. The hackathon was an event available both **in-person** and **virtually**, something we did for the first time this year.

Through continued investment in our virtual curricula and experience, we were able to reach individuals and areas that were only dreamt of not too long ago. This was all made possible by the support and feedback of the TKU community, and the incredible staff under Beth's leadership. TKU is committed to a **hybrid future**, where we can have an impact on more students, in the individualized environments that work best for them.

In 2022, we witnessed this impact first-hand with the growth and success of programs like the **TKU Digital Agency** and **Creative Tech Internship** and **CRISP** (Career Readiness Internship Summer Program). Our flagship work-based learning programs reaffirmed the **positive impact of real workplace experiences and environments**, even when predominately virtual. Empowering the lives of students through opportunities is a mission we remain passionate about, and we are excited for what the future will bring in 2023.

Best,

Alex McKay

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I'm delighted to say that as of October 2022 TKU is now a **fully hybrid program**; this means programs are online AND in-person! We are thrilled to be serving more students than ever before as our community grows to include neurodiverse students nationally. This year **we increased our staff and doubled our programs.** We forged relationships with new funders, community partners and other non-profit organizations working in the neurodiverse youth education space.

Our neurodiverse students are both **creative producers** and **learners**–the life-blood of TKU! As these students grow, we are inspired to give them more opportunities. I am particularly proud of:

- Placing **20** neurodiverse students in **real work environments/organizations** to spend **5 weeks** on a technology project in the 2022 summer internship program;
- Forming a **Neurodiversity Advisory Council** of **10 teens** who meet monthly (and get paid!) to learn about and discuss disability advocacy and policy while learning to be leaders and advising us on the programs they want to see;
- Doing a **hybrid all-day Hackathon** on **#FoodInsecurity** in-person at **NYU Tandon** and online simultaneously; and
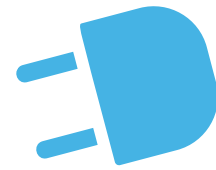- Developing a **3 year strategic plan** that will be unveiled in early 2023.

These are just a few of the many things TKU is doing to make sure neurodiverse students are always part of the equation, always participating in culture and always working toward creating the life they want to have. More great things are to come. Join us!

Sincerely,

Beth Rosenberg

2022 PROGRAM OVERVIEW

SUNDAY TECH WORKSHOPS

Online and in-person workshops which focused on learning new tech skills or building on existing skills. delete —held twice a month.

HANG, PLAY, MAKE

Free workshops held once a month focused on fun projects, socializing, and games.

SUMMER WEEKLONG WORKSHOPS

7 weeks of virtual programs held on topics including Digital Comics & Illustration, Game Design, Video Editing, and Stop Motion Animation.

DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP WORKSHOPS

A series of 3 free workshops covered Copyright, Online Privacy, and Media Literacy.

TEEN TECH SOCIALS

Evening gatherings where students hung out, played games, and shared in a community of techies.

CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

Four intensive programs were held where students learned:
1. Coding focusing on HTML and CSS–the "building blocks" of websites
2. Game Design & Roblox Studio
3. Javascript to make projects in p5.js
4. Python Coding for data visualization

"I learned about how sustainability can change the world for the better if everyone pitches in." -T., Age 17

HACKATHONS

Social justice topics turned into all day events with guest lecturers to use technology for good.

Feeding the Future: Fighting Food Insecurity with Tech **(Winter)**
- Participants made podcasts and video games to bring awareness to food insecurity.

Tech for Good: Small Actions for Big Goals **(Spring)**
- Students created PSA videos and digital posters inspired by the UN 17 Sustainable goals to help spread awareness of how individual actions contribute to broader impact.

CAREER LADDER: WORK-BASED LEARNING PROGRAMS

DIGITAL AGENCY

Teens with advanced technology skills completed projects for actual clients and received stipends. Projects included: redesigning a website, creating a logo, making videos on digital literacy, and more! Go to: www.TKUagency.com

CREATIVE TECH INTERNSHIP

Students ages 17 to 21 met virtually or in-person on Fridays for a full day for the academic year to learn creative software and gained school credit.

CAREER READINESS INTERNSHIP SUMMER PROGRAM

20 college-age students worked on technology projects for 5 weeks in an internship site matched to their skill level and interests. They worked on soft skills (e.g., responding to managers, building relationships with coworkers, arriving to work on time, etc.) led by a social worker who provided essential individualized support.

Projects included:
- Creating social media content and promotional material
- Assisting in video editing and script writing
- Coding web pages using jQuery and other languages
- Redesigning logos
- Updating web page content
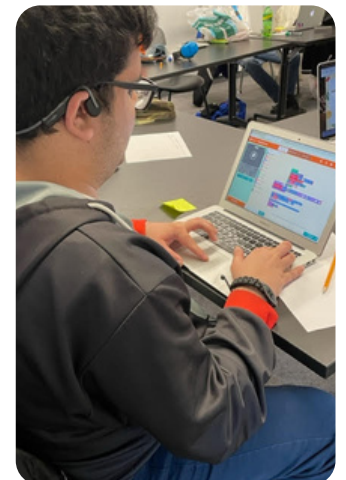- User testing VR scenarios to provide feedback and creating video tutorials

COLLEGE ACCESS PROGRAM

A supportive environment where students ages 16 - 21 gained college readiness skills and explored college options in 7 online sessions.

STUDENT SUCCESSES
- *T. met with the president of Con Edison and explained the work he was doing for the commodity forecasting department.*
- *J. increased HeightSites website social media traffic by over 30%.*
- *L. was told that she would be welcomed to intern/apply to work for Advance Auto Parts in the future.*

PARTNERSHIPS

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Year 2 of a 3-year collaboration with TKU, NYU and CUNY was held online this summer for 4 weeks. 22 national neurodiverse students participated in a game design and employment workshop.

NEON ARTS/CARNEGIE HALL

TKU was awarded two Neon Arts programs from the NYC Department of Probation and Carnegie Hall. Students from the South Bronx and Harlem created podcasts and data visualizations that they presented at Carnegie Hall on 11/18.

BROOKLYN AUTISM CENTER

In a partnership program with Brooklyn Autism Center, five students participated in a website workshop for 8 weeks to learn how to add images, text, and HTML and CSS code to create their own websites.

PERSON CENTERED CARE SERVICES X TKU

In May-June 2022, we partnered with PCCS to create 5 workshops on different topics, such as logo design, video editing, and animation, with imaginary client prompts. The program was taught in an experimental way, with the teacher remote and the students in-person in a classroom.

DIGITAL EMPOWERMENT VIDEOS FOR PATHFINDERS INSTITUTE & INFOSYS FOUNDATION USA

The members of Digital Agency created a series of videos for a course for Pathfinders Institute. This course was designed BY neurodiverse students FOR neurodiverse students by providing them with the information they need to engage in online spaces safely and meaningfully.

2022 HIGHLIGHTS

PACE University
Disability Film Festival

CUNY Neurodiversity
Conference

Lunch with TD Bank

PASE Annual Conference,
Activating the Power of
Afterschool

Marvels of Media Awards

SparkYouth NYC
Benefit

Tech Kids Unlimited is so grateful for our supporters!

FOUNDATIONS & ORGANIZATIONS

The Berk Foundation
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The FAR Fund
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The Schnurmacher Foundation
Society for Science
Spark Youth NYC
The Taft Foundation
Valentine Perry Snyder Fund
Youth Inc

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TD Bank
ConEdison
Infosys Foundation USA
National Grid Foundation
Goldman Sachs Gives

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NYS Council on the Arts
NY Developmental Disabilities
Planning Council
NYC Discretionary Council District 33
NYC Cultural Affairs

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