



TECH KIDS
UNLIMITED
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2024

EVALUATION REPORT





2024 Program Evaluation

In 2024, TKU worked with **Dr. Michelle Ballan, Ph.D., MSW, Professor & Associate Dean for Research, School of Social Welfare at Stony Brook University**, a social worker and independent evaluator with expertise in neurodevelopmental disabilities and research, to evaluate programs.

TKU is a non-profit organization that uses technology tools, computer science thinking, and social-emotional learning to ignite unlimited futures for neurodiverse students in need. Students who learn and think differently explore the creative power of tech, practice work readiness skills, and build confidence through virtual and in-person programs in a fun and supportive community.

TKU offers a variety of in-person and virtual programs. These programs spanned Sunday workshops, school break programs, summer sessions, and career ladder initiatives, providing unique opportunities for skill development and community building.

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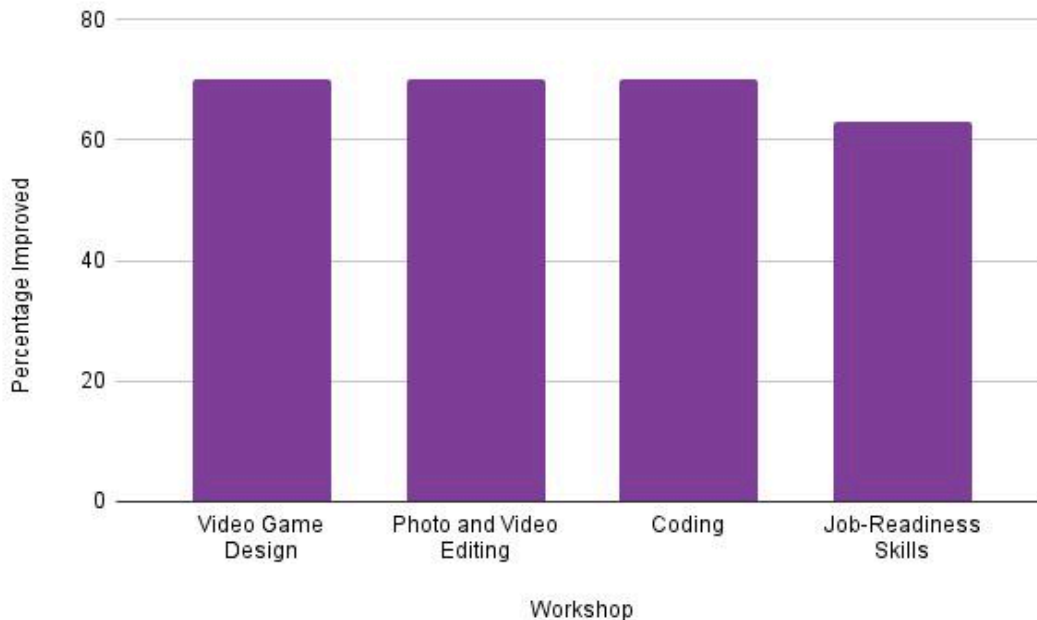
TECH KNOWLEDGE PROGRAMS

Sunday Workshops

TKU offered Sunday workshops, including Virtual, In-Person and Family Sundays. These workshops were designed to engage participants with hands-on technology experiences, fostering creativity, skill development, and collaboration. Survey data was collected from over 60 participants.

“Learning more about coding patterns to make game-based content in the future [was fun.]”

Skill Development



Support & Engagement:

- Over **70%** of participants felt supported by teachers and counselors, who helped them to problem solve during the workshops.
- **Participants expressed excitement about future workshops, with 73% agreeing or strongly agreeing they would like to return.**

“I think it was really fun and interesting. I got to meet a bunch of new faces that I'll definitely be remembering for a while.”

Summer Workshops

TKU offered five weeks of in-person workshops. Students chose between full-day and half-day options, engaging in hands-on technology education from Monday through Friday. Workshops covered diverse topics including animation, digital art, coding, and game design, providing students with opportunities to explore creativity, build friendships, and develop new skills.

"I made some amazing things, met a new friend, and experienced new things I haven't done at all!"

Skill Development

- Almost **60%** of students reported improved computer skills during the workshops
- **Over 85%** felt they used computers creatively
- **67%** saw improvements in digital art and animation
- **63%** explored unfamiliar computer programs
- **51%** gained confidence in their ability to learn new skills and discover new ways to use their computers and mobile devices.

Support & Engagement:

- **More than 83%** of students felt supported by TKU staff during the workshops.
- Almost **70%** expressed excitement about sharing their projects at the Friday presentations.



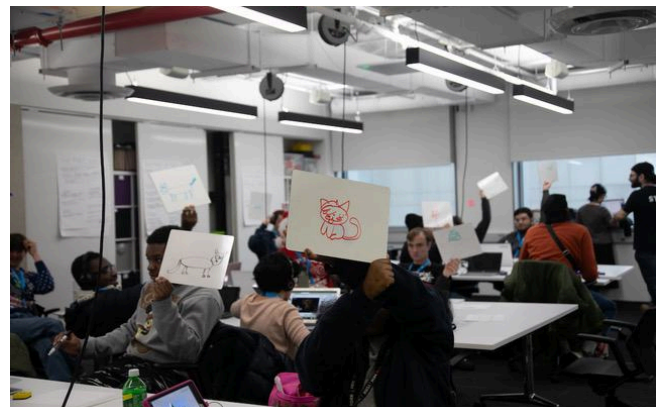
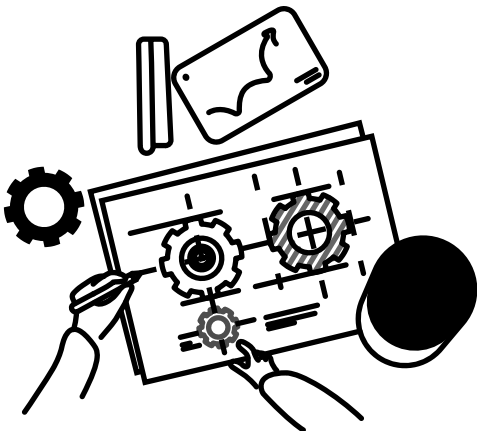
"I thought my experience at TKU this week was great! I learned about stuff like stop-motion animation, digital art and so much more! My experience last week was great too! I want to come back next week!"

School Break Program

TKU offered a one-day school break program designed to help participants learn technology skills while connecting with peers. **Movie Magic Workshop** focused on developing technical skills and exploring collaboration tools used in video editing.

Key Findings:

- **75%** of participants gained video editing skills, and confidence in their ability to express thoughts, ideas, and opinions.
- **All participants** noted enjoying the workshop, with **75%** reporting a desire to return to TKU in the future.
- Participants' favorite aspects included *“Expressing myself in a video,” “Making the short video,” “Creating the short cartoon,”* and *“Showing my video to everybody.”*



CAREER LADDER PROGRAMS

Level Up Tech (LUT)

TKU conducted two Level Up Tech (LUT) programs, LUT: Drones, and LUT: Digital Marketing & E-Commerce. These career-ready workshops provided participants with hands-on experiences, fostering technical skill development and career exploration in a particular aspect of a tech field.

Drones

Skill Development:

- **100% of participants felt confident to some extent or very confident in their understanding of the material covered.**

Program Feedback:

- **75%** of participants found the program's pacing to be "just right."
- Participants identified their favorite aspects as: *"The kahoots [game software] and activities,"* the *"Encouraging and supportive learning environment"* and *"Learning about the various drone terminology."*

Digital Marketing & E-Commerce

Program Feedback:

- **All** participants noted feeling **excited** or **inspired** by the program.
- Participants highlighted interactive elements like the Logo Game and Kahoot as their favorite parts.
- **Over 87% of participants rated the program's pacing as "just right."**
- Participants reported the following as the most interesting things learned: *"Knowing Digital Marketing is more than thought," "Learning about the SEO program," "awareness and the pyramid of marketing tactics."*

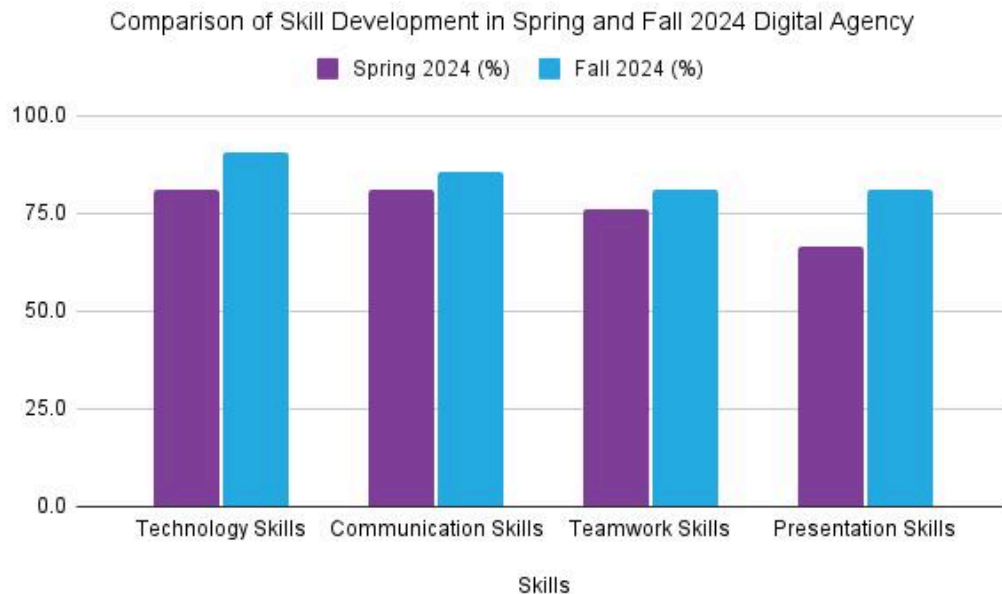
Digital Agency (DA)

In 2024, TKU ran three Digital Agency (DA) program cycles—Winter, Spring and Fall. These 12-session virtual programs, conducted for two hours each session, provided participants with a unique opportunity to work on real client projects, hone their technical and creative skills, and gain valuable career experience while receiving stipends for their efforts. The program garnered overwhelmingly positive feedback from its participants, who completed detailed post-program surveys to share their experiences.

“I’m not treated just as a student while learning and I feel like an employee.”

Skill Development

Unique skill related questions were asked in the Fall 2024 survey with DA participants reporting significant growth in their technical, communication, and teamwork skills.



- 95.3% of participants indicated they improved their ability to give others feedback, **85.8% improved their ability to listen to others’ feedback and apply it to their work**, 81% improved their graphic design skills and 61.9% improved their ability to set goals and manage their time to meet deadlines.
- **100%** of participants felt accomplished after spending time in DA, 85.7% felt engaged while working on projects, and 71.5% of participants indicated that they can see themselves working in the design industry in the future.

Creative Tech Internship (CTI)

The Creative Tech Internship (CTI) held in Fall 2023-2024 focused on providing participants with hands-on experiences in technology, creativity, and career readiness. This program offered participants valuable skills to prepare for future job opportunities.

Skill Development:

CTI participants reported substantial improvements across Technology, Communication, Teamwork, Leadership, Advocacy and Job-Readiness Skills.

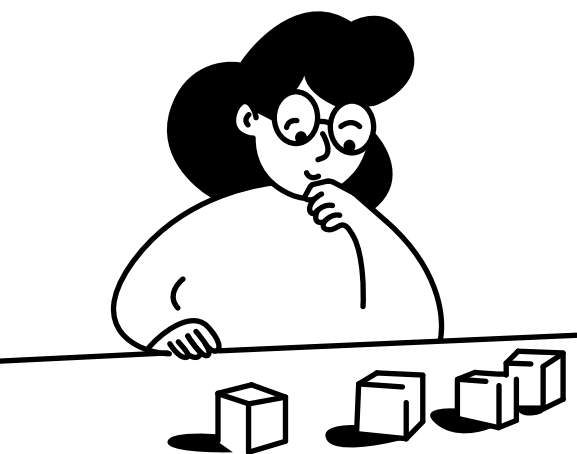
Participants noted several job skills **they learned** at the internship including **collaboration, organization, time management, resume-building and self-advocacy.**

“I’m better at working with a team than I thought. I need to put more effort into my work.”

“[I learned about]..The value of being prepared for work, and I learned how I work best.”

“[I learned...] More about my awareness of time management, and arriving on time, and also about managing my energy.”

“I am a hard worker and a very cooperative person.”



Testimonials

Participants expressed **pride in their achievements**, including designing video games, graphic design projects, video and voiceover, and contributing to group initiatives.

“I ...[improved] my listening skills and my editing skills.”

“I learned the importance of a resume, a cover letter, and an elevator pitch.”

“Getting my game in a museum and speaking on a panel..[was amazing].”

“I was able to get some of my work publicly displayed, and that was an important first step into a creative field.”

“I learned how to code basic games, and I learned how to create an efficient resume.”

Career Readiness Internship Summer Program (CRISP)

In 2024, TKU conducted the Career Readiness Internship Summer Program (CRISP), providing neurodiverse participants with hands-on work experience, career skill-building, and professional growth opportunities.

Skill Development

CRISP participants reported significant improvements in essential career skills after completing CRISP:

- **Resume Writing:** 91% rated their resume-writing ability as "Satisfactory" or better.
- **Time Management:** 73% rated their skills as "Above Average" or "Outstanding."
- **Collaboration Skills:** 82% rated their skills as "Above Average" or "Outstanding."

Participants also emphasized the value of workplace etiquette, professionalism, and stress management strategies. In fact, **almost two thirds** of participants agreed or strongly agreed that participating in **CRISP will help them to acquire a job** in the future.

“I learned techniques to improve on interviews, such as listing strengths and redefining weaknesses as strengths.”

“I learned what to say and how to act during a job interview and went over my resume.”

Support & Engagement:

Supervisors praised the program for empowering interns, preparing them for the workforce, and fostering professionalism. As one supervisor remarked:

“They are amazing! TKU did a great job at empowering them and equipping them for the workforce. I felt lucky to be their supervisor!”

In regard to workplace etiquette, a supervisor noted that the intern:

“Maintained a professional presence, showed respect for others by saying good morning and have a good day with anyone he encountered, arrived on time, met deadlines.”

Interns echoed sentiments about the program's value in gaining practical skills and networking opportunities:

“I learned how to give my supervisor an overview of my completed work. I also learned how to collaborate online with my team to maintain a clear understanding of what we're doing and for decision-making.”

Interns achieved notable milestones during the program, including:

Professional Networking

“As a CRISP intern, I was able to get into contact with 2000+ principals across the five boroughs, and I also learned about seeing strengths in other people.”

Practical Deliverables

“I learned how to grow my network on LinkedIn and I learned how to create a professional resume.”



Neurodiversity Advisory Council (NAC)

The Neurodiversity Advisory Council (NAC), brings together 10 participants monthly to share insights, provide guidance, and influence the future of TKU's programming. The council fostered collaboration, creativity, and advocacy, with participants contributing to meaningful discussions and initiatives as indicated through surveys.

Collaboration And Decision-Making

Participants indicated the following as contributions and decisions they made at TKU:

- Provided feedback on the proposed PSA and suggested next week's topic
- Planned new workshops for TKU
- Participated in brainstorming for social events and technology discussions

Engagement

Participants expressed pride in their contributions to the growth of TKU.

"I helped shape TKU in a positive light to inspire and empower future generations."

"I feel that I advise about programs that will be helpful or enhance what currently exists."

"I feel good that future students get the best they can."

Community

Participants appreciated NAC's diverse and supportive environment.

"It's a space to discuss advocacy as well as workplace topics."



ALUMNI

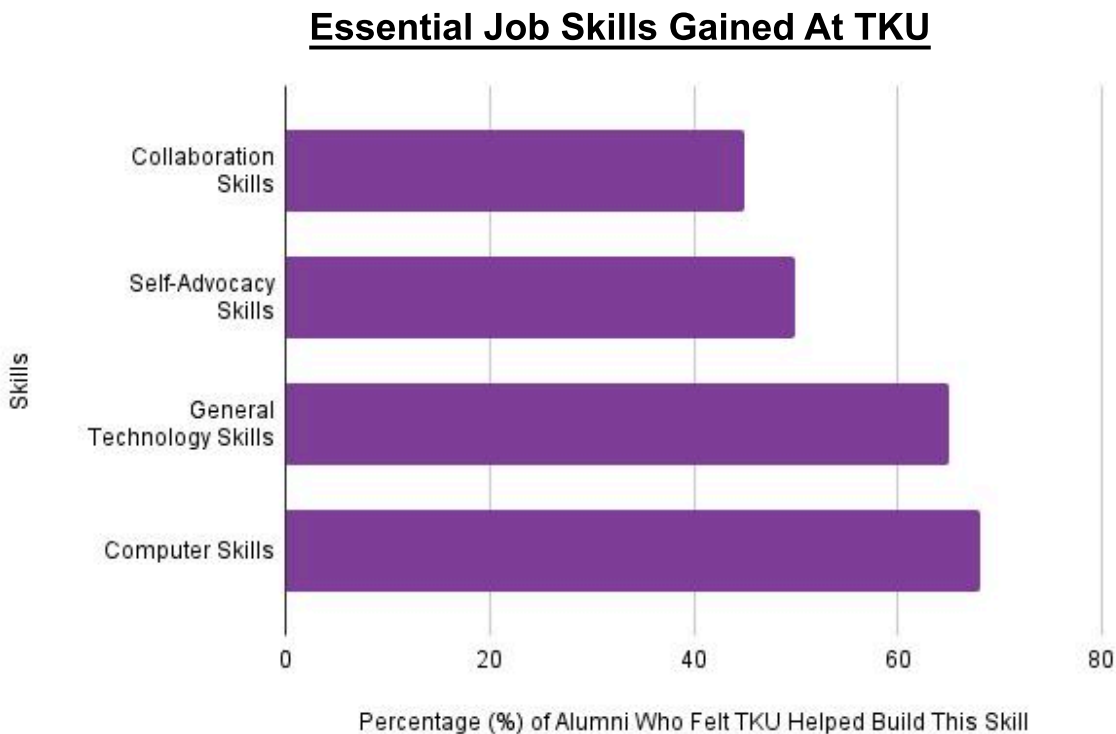
TKU evaluated its Alumni Network gathering responses from 72 alumni and 49 family members. This evaluation assessed the outcomes of TKU's programs on alumni, highlighting their career readiness and their families' perspectives.

Outcomes

The 72 alumni surveyed represented a diverse age range, between 17 and 25 years old.

Key Findings:

- **Educational Pursuits:** 23.6% of alumni have started at a 4-year college, while 18.1% are attending 2-year community colleges. A smaller group (15.3%) is enrolled in vocational training programs.
- **Workforce Participation:** Over half (58.3%) of alumni have held paying jobs, with the majority engaged in part-time roles. Job types included office work, camp counseling, food service, and freelance positions.
- **Entrepreneurship:** A smaller percentage (10.5%) have pursued entrepreneurial activities, such as selling goods on platforms like Etsy and eBay.



FAMILY PERSPECTIVES

The 49 families surveyed provided insights into their children's experiences and growth.

Table: Top 4 Skills Families Reported Their Child Learning At TKU

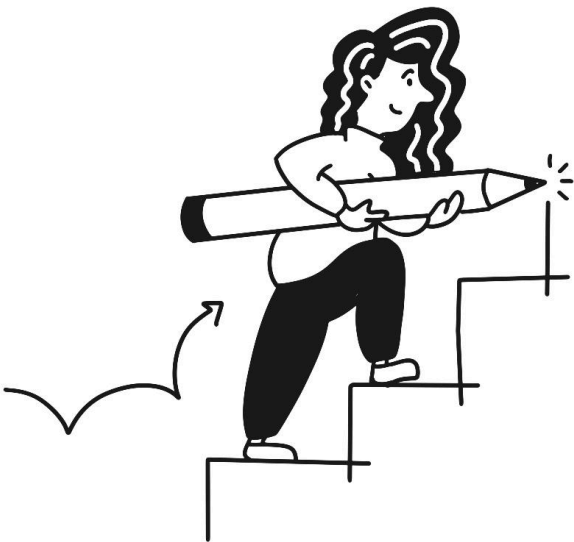
Skill Category	Percentage Of Families Noting This Skill
General Technology Skills	73.50%
Computer Skills	67.30%
Collaboration Skills	59.20%
Self-Advocacy Skills	57.10%

- **Career Readiness:** Families noted improvements in job skills, confidence, and independence. One parent shared:

"[My child] graduated in June 2023 with a CDOS certificate. He is [...] working towards a GED diploma."

- **Broader Impact:** Families praised the holistic benefits of programs, with a parent noting:

"He's figuring it out! He loves working with people and animals and enjoys the creative aspects of the tech he's learning at TKU."



For more information, contact info@techkidsunlimited.org

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