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A year ago I would have told you that 2019 marked a major turning point for Code in the Schools. We completed a year-long strategic planning process with our staff and board, and began to operationalize our shared vision. Returning from maternity leave in February 2020, little did I know that 2019 would have nothing on the coming year. The tumult of 2020 challenged every aspect of our organization, strengthening our commitment to our mission and expanding the scope of how we approach it. What we do—empower historically excluded young people in Baltimore to learn and use technology to shape the world around them—and why we do it—to challenge structural inequities in education and industry—has never been more important.

When schools, libraries, and community organizations suddenly closed last March, we responded immediately by virtualizing our programs for K-12 students and making them available for free online. But we knew that those efforts were meaningless for families in Baltimore without computers and internet access. The long-existing digital divide came into stark view, so we joined forces with the school system and a city-wide coalition of organizations to work together to close this gap in Baltimore. We refurbished equipment and distributed to it to hundreds of students and families in need, and we established a tech support hotline for people using the equipment.
Completely changing our programs model to online/virtual while standing up an entirely new line of business with device distribution would have been more than enough work for our small team, but we are mighty. In addition to the new work brought about by the pandemic, we continued our core work of expanding access to computer science education through our partnerships with city, statewide, and national organizations.

In the coming pages you will see how our work has led to more students than ever before who have access to computer science education during the school day. As we look ahead to the years beyond the pandemic we see the role evolving to address new challenges. Over the next 3-5 years, we will begin to reduce our footprint in school-day enrichment programs. While providing programming when needed, we will focus on expanding professional development and capacity-building work to support classroom teachers and districts across the city and state. We envision our role as a close partner to provide high-quality professional learning experiences to enable teachers to bring engaging and relevant CS instruction with confidence to their students.

Our vision also includes expanding the Prodigy Program and CodeWorks, as well as partner programs that take place outside of the school day. By offering experiences that are not always possible in school, these programs allow us to work more closely with students who demonstrate an interest in CS. Through these programs we have seen students find professional opportunities and mentors that have been life-changing.

Our work in both the community and in schools is not possible without the support of our donors, sponsors, volunteers and partners who have helped us accomplish what we have in our first eight years. If you are already a supporter of Code in the Schools, we sincerely thank you. If you are just getting acquainted with our organization, we welcome you.

Gretchen LeGrand
CEO
OUR MISSION

We empower Baltimore County City youth to thrive in the 21st century economy by expanding access to quality computer science education and building innovative pathways from school to jobs and higher education.

By focusing on youth historically excluded from and underrepresented in technology fields, we work to eliminate structural barriers and inequities in education and industry while helping students develop agency over and expand options for their futures.
YEAR AT A GLANCE

15  public school partnerships

31  community partnerships

300+  computers donated

385  hours of free tech support

540  hours of free online programming

7000+  youth served

9,215  hours of Prof Learning for educators

Student demographic and gender identification

- African-American: 78.0%
- Hispanic: 12.0%
- Other: 4.0%

- Female: 49.5%
- Male: 50.4%
To ensure Baltimore City youth have access to quality Computer Science education, equipment, and opportunities, and educators deliver the best outcomes for students, we do the following work:

- **Partner with Baltimore City Public Schools**
  to provide in-school enrichment courses in computer science for elementary and middle school students, and consult on high school course content and work-based learning opportunities.

- **Partner with community organizations**
  on programs, workshops and events to increase exposure to and engagement in computer science.

- **Run our own after-school & summer programs**
  and events in game development, web and app development, cybersecurity and other computer science topics.

- **Provide quality professional learning to educators**
  across Maryland and the region.

- **Address the digital equity gap in Baltimore City**
  by refurbishing and donating computers to families and community organizations, providing a free tech support hotline, and working with a broad coalition of organizations.

- **Engage the local tech industry**
  to consult on curriculum, in-demand skills and job readiness, and work-based learning opportunities.
The COVID pandemic exposed vast digital inequity in Baltimore City and across the United States. School closures put millions of students who lack computers and internet access at risk of being cut off from continuing their education for months, despite tireless efforts of schools and others.

Code in the Schools began in March to address this issue in several ways: 1. Lending computers on hand to schools and families, 2. Collecting and refurbishing donations of tech equipment that we in turn donate to families and organizations, 3. Establishing and staffing a free tech support hotline to assist families with equipment and connectivity, and 4. Joining dozens of other local organizations to form the Baltimore Digital Equity Coalition, to provide families with devices, internet access and support while advocating for long-term solutions. By the end of August 2020, we had refurbished and donated dozens of computers and staffed nearly 400 hours of tech support.

A generous contribution from Firaxis Game Studio allowed us to continue and expand this work into the summer. In addition to ensuring youth had access to participate in online programs, we joined Central Baltimore Partnership to refurbish used computers they collect through donation drives and, after refurbishment give out to community organizations. We have also provided professional development at no cost to community organizations and city agencies to help them provide their own remote programs.

Last but far from least, AFCEA Central Maryland Chapter provided a very generous grant to allow us, in partnership with Baltimore City Public Schools, to purchase and donate laptops in Fall 2020 to high school students in vocational pathways with coursework that uses software requiring high computing power.
Maryland Codes is the name of Code in the Schools’ Professional Learning organization, in partnership with The Council of Educational Administrative and Supervisory Organizations of Maryland (CEASOM). Our mission is to bring quality Computer Science professional learning to every school district in Maryland.

For several years, Maryland Codes has coordinated Professional Learning summer workshops for Computer Science educators in the region, as Code.org’s regional partner and working closely with Maryland’s Center for Computing Education (MCCE). Our collaboration with MCCE deepend in Summer 2020, in turn expanding the opportunities for CS education across Maryland. Teachers from Baltimore City, all 23 counties in Maryland, Washington DC, Delaware and Virginia participated, resulting in over 9,000 hours of professional learning.

For the first time we partnered with the Maryland Juvenile Services Education System (JSES) to create a special cohort of JSES teachers from across the state in order to provide training in introductory Computer Science courses.
PARTNERSHIPS & PROGRAMS

Through engaging partnerships, programs and events, we enable students to enter college or the workforce with a valuable set of tools that better qualify them for almost any career. Students learn to think critically, approach complexity with creativity, and develop technological solutions for real problems. We supply instructors, curriculum, and materials to bring computer science education to thousands of Baltimore city youth.

Community Organizations

Through partnerships with both large and grassroots community organizations across the city, we offer after-school and summer programs on a range of topics from software application development to robotics. We provide curriculum, materials, and instructors to ensure high quality programs with measurable outcomes. Partners in 2019 included the Hampden Family Center, Lafayette Outreach Organization, SAFE Alternative Foundation for Education, St. Francis Neighborhood Center, The Village Learning Place, and the Y of Central Maryland, and others. While COVID limited many of these programs in 2020, we continued to partner to provide virtual programs, including the Y of Central Maryland and Hampden Family Center. We also provided professional learning our partners to assist them in delivering their own virtual programs.
Baltimore City Public Schools

Through our partnership, we provide elementary- and middle-school Computer Science instruction during the school day. These project-based enrichment classes expose youth to computational thinking and a wide range of CS concepts. For the 2019-20 school year, we partnered with 15 schools to provide full- and part-time programs. With the COVID-19 closures, we moved online, creating free virtual learning programs for students in grades K-12 while continuing to support school partners with virtual programs.

Over the past years we have worked closely with the district to build their capacity to deliver CS education through curriculum and professional learning because it is a foundational subject for the 21st century. The team at City Schools has made amazing progress in integrating computer science education into the school day, including the following accomplishments:

- Board approval of a full K-12 pathway of CS curricula
- Expansion of CS in grades K-8 through instructional technology teachers and CITS instructors to bring CS education to over 80% of elementary and middle school students
- Roll-out of the Foundations of Computer Science course as the required technology credit, so that by the 2021-2022 school year, every high school student in the district will take CS

Looking ahead over the next 3-5 years, we will begin to reduce our footprint in school-day programs to focus on expanding professional development and capacity-building work in support of classroom teachers and districts across the city and state. We envision our role as a close partner to provide high-quality professional learning experiences to enable instructors to bring engaging and relevant CS instruction with confidence to their students.
The Prodigy Program

The Prodigy Program is our flagship after-school computer science education program designed to bring advanced technology skills to middle- and high-school youth. Participants have the opportunity to learn Web Development, Game Development, Python, Data Science, and CyberSecurity while working on projects with industry professionals that benefit our city and community. The 2019 school-year program culminated with a truly impressive event at Spark Baltimore co-working space, with Prodigy students presenting their analysis of Baltimore City facilities maintenance data gathered through a Twitterbot they coded to a panel of experts from city agencies and the tech industry. Interrupted temporarily by the COVID-related shutdown, the 2020 school-year program ended strong with a virtual program comprising synchronous and asynchronous sessions.
CodeWorks and CodeScholar

CodeWorks and CodeScholar are five-week summer programs where youth are paid to develop CS skills in partnership with Baltimore City’s YouthWorks summer jobs program and in 2019 with the University of Baltimore. CodeWorks offered older students the opportunity to earn a transferable college credit and work on projects with industry partners while learning Game Development, Web Development, Javascript, and Digital Forensics. CodeScholar helped prepare rising ninth graders for high school by exposing them to different CS subjects and giving them practical on-the-job experience. In 2020, CodeWorks absorbed CodeScholar, and went virtual, with nearly one hundred youth learning remote work skills while developing technology projects using industry-standard tools like GitHub and Repl.it. Tracks in Advanced Python and Application Development were added to the summer’s options. Students enjoyed daily advisory meetings to discuss feelings and practice leadership skills, as well as weekly financial education workshops through our partnership with Watt Kids.
Girls in Computer Science Summit

The Girls in Computer Science Summit was sponsored by AT&T and hosted by the Johns Hopkins Carey Business School in February 2020 at their beautiful waterfront campus. Close to 50 middle and high school girls participated in a wide range of computing related workshops hosted by professional women, including Coding for a Better Government, Hacker Start-up, Sewable Circuits, and Automating Social Media, among others. After lunch, Shervonne Cherry, Director of Community & Partnerships at Spark Baltimore, moderated a unique panel discussion of artists, entrepreneurs and youth, covering topics including the intersection of creative and computer science communities and how that combination is helping to build a unique tech ecosystem in Baltimore.
ANNUAL EVENTS

Game Jam

During our 7th annual Game Jam in Oct 2019, middle and high school from across the city and around the region came together for a fun, challenging and free one-day video game development competition. Professional game industry volunteers mentored 18 teams of aspiring game developers as they designed and built an original video game around the theme “Late 20th Century Pop Culture.” Participants used a variety of game engines and tools learned during free workshops prior to the event. At the end of the day, games were presented by each team to the group while a panel of tech professionals judged the results.

Hour of Code

Sponsored by Code.org. Hour of Code is a global movement reaching tens of thousands of students in over 180 countries during Computer Science Education Week in early December. In 2019, in collaboration with Accenture and Baltimore City Public Schools, hundreds of volunteers from local businesses and the community helped us reach thousands of students across Baltimore City. Volunteers donated their time to lead a fun hour-long activity on basic computer science concepts to demystify the field and prepare students for a future where cs skills are fundamental. In 2020, we encouraged schools to host a virtual hour of code with the support of our instructional staff.
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