



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 2019

## **TeenHacks LI: Empowering Youth Through STEM**

Student-run Hackathon in Long Island

**Old Westbury, NY** - Technology is the past, present, and future. As our world advances, it is crucial to raise the next generation of coders and entrepreneurs. TeenHacks LI aspires to foster an environment where coders can work collaboratively in a creative space and utilize technology to solve real-world issues. A completely high school student-run event, TeenHacks LI was founded by students Jeffrey Yu of the University of Pennsylvania and Wesley Pergament from Jericho High School. With many schools lacking a concrete STEM curriculum, TeenHacks LI aims to bring a coding community to Long Island - open and free for all - and so far, they have “done an amazing job bringing the thrill of coding to Long Island’s youth,” according to Dr. Nada Marie Anid, Vice President for Strategic Communications & External Affairs at the New York Institute of Technology (NYIT). Empowering teens to become more involved in STEM, TeenHacks LI encourages students to join the effort in “hacking” for our future.

Last spring, over 200 students from across the Northeast gathered at NYIT to take part in the second TeenHacks LI 24-hour hackathon. Students were allowed to share their ideas, learn about technology, and collaborate with other like-minded individuals. Furthermore, participants were able to partake in a myriad of team bonding activities, such as cup stacking, Kahoot, and karaoke. At the event, participants not only acquired valuable skills and insight needed to compete in today’s computer science industry but also collaborated and applied their STEM backgrounds to tackle a pressing global issue of their choice. For example, projects ranged in topics including ones aiming to combat climate change, detect lead poisoning in water, streamline charitable giving, raise awareness of homeless youth, and much more. The first place title was awarded to “BiParse,” a team from the Milton Academy near Boston and another from the Wheeler School in Providence, R.I. Through the implementation of neural networks, this team was able to design and create a Google Chrome extension that recommends users news stories related to a topic - offering them more balanced information from a variety of media sources.

With many of the Spring event team members going away to college, a new team of enthusiastic, bright students from all over the Northeast have joined the organization to carry the torch left behind. As TeenHacks LI works to engage more females into the STEM community, new

Executive Director, Snigdha Roy of Mount Sinai High School has joined TeenHacks LI to host the largest TeenHacks LI event yet!

On November 9th-10th, TeenHacks LI will be hosting their third hackathon event - this time, aiming towards 300 participants. The hackathon will once again be hosted at NYIT, an institution that has encouraged technological innovation within the Long Island area and is “delighted to serve as the site of their biggest 24-hour hackathon of 2019”, with an even larger hacking space than before! Previously, TeenHacks LI had invited speakers from Apple, DealerTrack, and even Nassau County Legislator Joshua Lafazan. Currently, the TeenHacks LI team is working to bring in more mentors and speakers from tech giants like Microsoft, Amazon, and Google to join them in creating the best hacker experience possible!

From beginner to advanced, every coder that attends TeenHacks LI will come out with motivation to investigate enduring issues, create new solutions, and share their discoveries. “History shows us that great innovation and discovery can happen at any age. Now more than ever, our future depends on the next generation’s ability to collaborate to harness creativity in order to solve some of the most intractable challenges we face,” said Laura Curran, Nassau County Executive. “TeenHacks LI is vital because they promote breakthroughs in scientific innovation but also inspire our young people to pursue careers in STEM.”

High school students can apply now at <https://teenhacksli.com>.

For more information about TeenHacks LI, please contact:

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# TEEN HACKS LI



*Spring 2019 Workshop Area*



*Spring 2019 Main Hacking Space*