**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**
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# TeenHacks LI: Expanding the Horizon of Virtual Hacking

**Old Westbury, NY—** Founded on the fundamentals of expanding the programming community through an emphasis on entrepreneurship and innovation, TeenHacks is a student-led organization that sets out to bring a myriad number of opportunities to the programming landscape in Long Island. They hope to impact as many students as possible by providing free opportunities to learn more about programming and to work together collaboratively with other driven hackers.

Ultimately, TeenHacks' objective is to transform the negative perception of the word "hacking," which is usually associated with illicit behavior that allows unauthorized access to technology. Instead, TeenHacks works to reinforce positive real world implications of hacking, from solving environmental issues to easing the socioeconomic disparities in society. The collaborative community created under our hackathons are an outlet for creative and innovative work through workshops that illustrate the power of programming, creating ripples within our society and set a precedent of change for future generations.

Under these unprecedented circumstances, TeenHacks LI is expanding their horizon to present a virtual triathlon which will provide the same opportunities as an in-person hackathon and allow students to take advantage of the same opportunities in a safe way. TeenHacks will present three different days for the participants that will emphasize a different skill, with the Learn-a-thon hosted on November 7, the Build-a-thon hosted on November 14, and the Share-a-thon hosted on November 21. This virtual triathlon will utilize a multitude of platforms for participants and substantially expand the possibilities that come with participation in this virtual hackathon, allowing and encouraging participants to have the best possible experience, remotely.

During the Learn-a-thon, TeenHacks will hold multiple virtual workshops in which sponsored companies will bring professional skills and lessons to the table, yet at an accessible level. Workshops in past hackathons have featured significant companies, such as Microsoft–which featured at our last hackathon and provided a workshop on blockchain technology. Other workshops included Women in STEM, in the effort to displace the disparity found in STEM fields such as programming, and help young women realize their true potential, and show them anything is possible no matter the circumstance, as well other companies such as Emporwerly, Bestfit, Major League Hacking, and Guardian Life that provided their own workshops and prizes. The information used in the Learn-a-thon will then be utilized in the Build-a-thon, in

which teams use their newly learned knowledge to develop projects using both software and hardware. The Build-a-thon is an ode to TeenHack's original hackathon, and it will be similar to our in-person events, but the virtual aspect introduces freedom, allowing teams to decide which time and when they want to work. Along with informative workshops, both the Learn-a-thon and the Build-a-thon will feature exciting games for our participants and teams will be able to communicate their ideas to mentors in their field, creating the collaborative community that the founders of this organization envisioned. Lastly, to conclude our virtual triathlon, the Share-a-thon will be an outlet for participants to share their projects.  Through our judging system, which features different prize tracks, prizes will be mailed to the winners that used their knowledge in unique ways and tied in powerful implications to better our community.

When a pebble is thrown into a lake, the ripples that follow it are always larger than the pebble itself. When a butterfly flaps its wings in Peru, it may cause a typhoon in Japan. Likewise, the individuals within TeenHacks LI and the participants at hackathons like ours are creating ripples that will better society through ethical, collaborative hacking. Although these ripples originate from within local high schools and communities in New York, these ripples will spread out to larger magnitudes and have many implications,  just like that single pebble thrown into the lake.

TeenHacks LI is unlike anything anyone's ever seen—and we hope you'll join us in our quest to empower teenage hackers. High school students are encouraged to apply now at teenhacksli.com.

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