**The Journey that Led to the Creation of Modern Adas**

Girls Who Code (GWC) is a non-profit organization that aims to support and increase the number of women in computer science (or fight for equity in tech). In high school I was interested in pursuing computer science in college, but I never had any real experience programming. Luckily, my calculus teacher mentioned GWC’s 7-week Summer Immersion Program where I could learn the versatility of computer science and how to code. I was thrilled when I was accepted and began my journey with Girls Who Code.

Fast forwarding three years to the year 2022, I am now a sophomore at UC San Diego majoring in cognitive science - human computer interaction. Although I imagined I would pursue computer science, I fell in love with my major and future career as a UI/UX Designer. As a UI/UX Designer I would work closely with developers so my interface designs could come to life and help address people’s needs. Even though I focus more on designing interfaces, I plan to continue learning more programming to simplify the handoff process and help develop my future projects.

After seeing an email appear from GWC about a Virtual Mentoring Program opportunity, I felt as if I had received a message from an old friend. I applied and was accepted into the 6-month program, allowing me to reconnect with the GWC community. While I was in the program, I received an email from GWC about a new program they created called the Leadership Academy. When I looked further into the program, I realized how closely it aligned with my goals and applied.

**GWC Leadership Academy & Creation of Modern Adas**

My old friend, Girls Who Code, emailed me with great news once again, I had been accepted into their inaugural Leadership Academy hosted by Raytheon Technologies. I would begin this 4-month program just before the start of my junior year.

In addition to attending cohort meetings and program sessions that focused on leadership development, career readiness, technical interview preparation and project management skill building, a large part of this program was creating a giveback project. Our giveback project had to meet the following criteria:

1. Focus on education or career opportunities within technical roles
2. Create an impact in a community
3. Target women and non-binary folks between the ages of 10–26 years old

With those criteria in mind, I decided on creating a website called Modern Adas to celebrate the resilience of women and non-binary folks of color in tech. Often times women and non-binary folks of color in tech brave many adversities, so I wanted to create a place where they could read about, connect with, and be inspired by women and non-binary folks like them.

**Data Collection – surveys**

So far, I have only received a total of six survey responses. Although, I had originally aimed to reach a minimum of 10 individuals in my community, I am still hopeful that I will be able to collect more survey responses and reach more individuals. I recently improved and shared the Modern Adas website on my social media accounts. My surveys I used to collect stories are also open to the public (which can be accessed through the website), so more stories from women and non-binary folks of color in tech can be collected and I can continue expanding my website.

**Designing Modern Adas**

I spent days mocking up different designs, feeling overwhelmed at approaching deadlines, and facing setbacks that caused me to redirect my project. Through this experience, I believe I have learned the importance of time management and how import having a support system is.

Wireframing and outlining website content !

**Developing Modern Adas**

-HTML and CSS

-design to development struggle

-forgot mobile view

-finished but then didn’t like idea anymore

**Redesigning Modern Adas**

-due to time constraints just did lo fidelity sketches and decided to build off of old website

-but new home page idea wasn’t working out (flashlight)

-thought of new idea & just did lo fidelity sketches and decided to build off of old website

-but responsiveness with home page, and stories page

**Lessons Learned & Skills Gained**

Overall, this project was a great learning opportunity for me. Before this program, I had only ever designed prototypes but never experienced developing something I designed or even handing off one of my designs to be developed. After completing the interface design of my site and beginning the development process, I realized two things: I forgot to wireframe the mobile view of the site and some parts of my design might not be feasible (at least with my coding skills).

After realizing this I sketched the mobile view of my site, while keeping the sites responsiveness in mind, and contacted a friend majoring in Computer Science. I talked my friend through the issue I was facing, but after hours of working together on the phone, I decided to finally scrap the design I had originally imagined. I had spent too long working on this part of my website and with deadlines approaching, redesigning was the smarter option.

This was a very valuable learning moment for me because now, in the future, when I have to design an interface, I will be able to put myself in the shoes of a developer and deliver a design that can actually be brought to life. This moment of difficulty also put me in the position of deciding when you should continue to work on something or pivot and change your project

-still need to get better at design to development process!

1. What did you learn about yourself as a leader by doing this Give Back Project? What leadership skills did you develop and hone through this project?
   * Note: you can think of this through GWC core values of Bravery, Sisterhood, and Activism.
2. Which of your original goals did you not achieve, or what were some challenges that came up? How did you navigate those challenges and what did you learn through things that may not have gone how you had planned?
3. What did you learn about project management and execution?
   * Note: look through your project proposal and your project timeline to think about all the elements of how you managed your project. What specific deliverables or responsibilities were most challenging or more successful?

**Closing Notes**

A piece of advice I would give to anyone who is developing themselves as a leader is to not be afraid to ask for help and build connections! We are stronger together.

1. met deadlines
2. drafted proposal and timeline
3. created project from scratch (0 → 1?)
4. collaborated with others
5. conducted surveys