

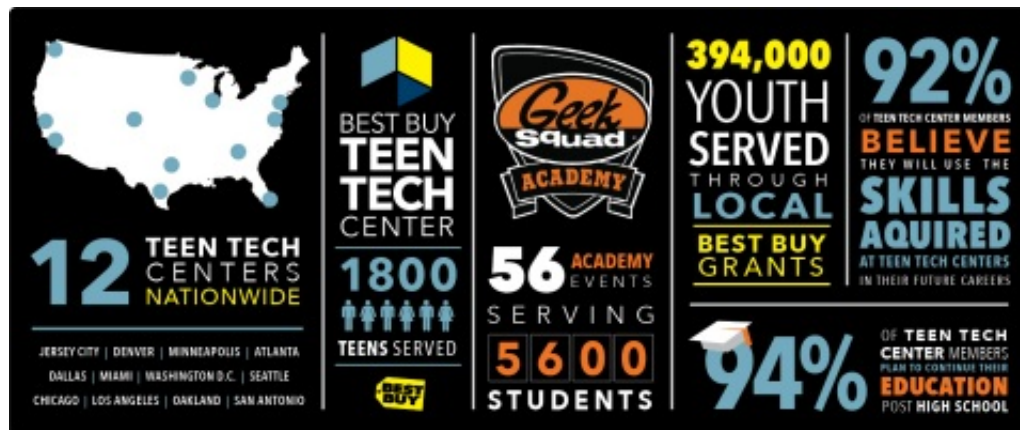
## Best Buy Intensifies Efforts to Help Underserved Youth Bridge the Nation's Technology Gap

Thursday, March 17, 2016 01:00:00 PM (GMT)

- ***New Best Buy Teen Tech Centers in Atlanta, Dallas, Los Angeles and Oakland will give teens access to technology year-round.***
- ***10th-annual Geek Squad Academy program will offer 30 free summer camps with hands-on training to 6,000+ young people ages 10-18.***
- ***Grants to 16 national nonprofit partners will support a broad tech training curriculum for teens and families.***
- ***HUD ConnectHome participation will provide digital literacy training and connected devices to hundreds of families nationally.***

In the next 10 years, 77 percent of all jobs will require technology skills.<sup>1</sup> Yet despite incredible advances in technology to help us connect and interact, more and more young people are being left behind.<sup>2</sup>

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Best Buy is intensifying efforts this year to confront the nation's growing technology gap through expanded programs and partnerships that help underserved young people develop the skills for a tech-reliant future.

"For 50 years, Best Buy has been a catalyst in the rise of

Best Buy Community Relations Programs (Graphic: Best Buy)

technology as a means to improve virtually every aspect of our lives," said Susan Bass Roberts, senior director of Community Relations, Diversity & Inclusion at Best Buy. "We are committed to giving underserved youth access to the tech training and tools they need to further their education and careers. Together, we believe we can help nurture and inspire a new generation of engineers, entrepreneurs, teachers, designers, artists and dreamers."

### **Best Buy Teen Tech Centers and Geek Squad Academy camps reach youth where they live.**

This spring, the Best Buy Teen Tech Center network will achieve a milestone of one dozen urban locations when four new centers begin offering year-round after-school programming. And from May through September, more than 6,000 students will attend free [Geek Squad Academy](#) (GSA) two-day sessions in communities around the country. Teen Tech Center and GSA curriculum encourages teens to explore technology through immersive training in digital music and film production, digital photography, coding, 3D design, robotics and more.

Following an open grant submission process, Best Buy has selected the [Atlanta Fulton Public Library System](#) in Atlanta; the [Juanita J. Craft Recreation Center](#) in Dallas; the [P.F. Bresee Foundation](#) in Los Angeles, and [Alternatives in Action](#) in Oakland, California, as partners for four new Best Buy Teen Tech Centers. Opening this spring, they will join existing centers in Chicago; Denver; Jersey City, New Jersey; Miami; Minneapolis; San Antonio; Seattle, and Washington, D.C.

Geek Squad Academy will kick off in Atlanta in May and include a total of 30 camps. Since its inception in 2006, Geek Squad Academy has served more than 25,000 teens through its summer program. The full 2016

summer schedule will be announced in April.

### **Seven new national nonprofit partners receive grants this year.**

Best Buy makes grants to national nonprofit partners who provide educational resources to foster success in a world filled with technology. This year, Best Buy has partnered with seven new organizations, bringing its national partnership total to 16. The new partners are:

- [BDPA](#) – Since 1986, the BDPA Student Information Technology Education & Scholarships (SITES) program has been a leader in technology- and STEM-based training. Through the years, the SITES program has introduced and provided advanced technology training to tens of thousands of students across the country through workshops, webinars and other activities.
- [Cyber Seniors](#) – Cyber Seniors trains teens to teach technology to older adults to help bridge the generational technology gap and help expand both teens' and seniors' social networks.
- [DePaul University/Digital Youth Network](#) – DePaul University's Digital Youth Network (DYN) develops the people, tools, practices and infrastructure necessary to power equitable learning ecosystems that prepare *all* youth with the digital and computational experiences and tools necessary to question, change, design and build their worlds. As stewards of Chicago City of Learning, DYN has built a strong social and technical infrastructure designed to create equitable pathways to opportunities for all of Chicago's youth.
- [EveryoneOn](#) – EveryoneOn is a national nonprofit that aims to eliminate the digital divide by making high-speed, low-cost Internet, computers and free digital literacy training accessible to all unconnected U.S. residents. EveryoneOn has connected almost 200,000 low-income households.
- [Games for Change](#) – Founded in 2004, Games for Change (G4C) is the leading organization promoting games for social impact and learning. A NYC-based nonprofit, G4C incubates game projects, engages the public through events and arcades, engages professionals and youth through game design challenges, and provides platforms for the exchange of ideas and resources. G4C works with funders, content specialists, learning experts, and creative teams to create and distribute successful impact games.
- [Hispanic Heritage Foundation](#) – Established by the White House in 1987, the Hispanic Heritage Foundation (HHF) inspires, prepares and connects Latino leaders in the classroom, community and workforce to meet America's priorities in areas including technology. HHF offers a continuum of programs, including the Hispanic Heritage Youth Awards, Latinos On Fast Track (LOFT), Hispanic Heritage Awards and public awareness campaigns.
- [LRNG](#) – Working together with schools, city leaders, businesses and community institutions such as Boys & Girls Clubs, libraries and museums, LRNG is building an online platform of learning experiences that combines in-school, out-of-school, employer-based and online learning into a seamless network that is open and inviting to all youth. When students complete activities, they earn digital badges to use as credentials on their resumes and/or college/career applications.

Returning national partners include [After-School All-Stars](#), [Common Sense Media](#), [Dreaming Tree Foundation](#), [FIRST](#), [GRAMMY Foundation](#), [Mouse](#), [Science Buddies](#), [The Clubhouse Network](#) and [Youth Radio](#).

### **Hundreds of families will receive training via Best Buy's HUD ConnectHome participation.**

Best Buy will continue to support this new [national initiative](#) to help narrow the digital divide for children and families living in HUD-assisted housing.

As part of the HUD partnership, Best Buy will provide free digital literacy training and Geek Squad Academy courses to teens in public housing in more than 20 cities. Teen Tech Centers will be used as training and distribution locations for ConnectHome families receiving devices and Internet services.

Best Buy will also provide digital literacy training and a Geek Squad Academy at the Durant, Oklahoma-based Choctaw Nation, the only tribal nation to participate in the ConnectHome program.

For more information about Best Buy's 2016 community programs, partnerships and tech education initiatives, click [here](#).

<sup>1</sup> [IDC Research](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Pew Research Center "Digital Divides 2015" Study](#)

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**Languages:** English

**Primary Identifiers:** BBY-US

**Related Identifiers:** BBY-US

**Source:** Best Buy

**Subjects:** Contract/Agreement, Product/Service, Photo/Multimedia, Nonprofit