Saturday, April 9 Hackathon at UWG: Important Info for Mentors

**Hi, [Mentor Names Here]!**

Thank you for your willingness to mentor the teen/”youth” track at this weekend's Hackathon on Saturday, April 9. We are excited to have you on board!

I give more detailed information about the schedule below, but for now, the mentoring piece happens from ~9:45am-3:30pm, and you're welcome to remain from 3:30-5:30 for presentations and awards.

If you think what follows is a lot of info, don’t worry too much – I emcee the event, and I basically prompt the kids (and you) what to do as needed (as when we’re shifting to the next segment). If it helps to visualize it, here is an album of photos [hyperlinked] from last year.

**1) Location: UWG Biology Building**

The event takes place in the Biology Building on the campus of the University of West Georgia.

**2) Parking: Z-6 Parking Lot**

Park in the Z-6 Parking Lot, which is west of the Biology Building, and cross West Georgia Drive to access the Biology Building. See [Google Maps: Biology Building](https://www.google.com/maps/place/Biology+Building,+College+of+Science+and+Mathematics/@33.5736848,-85.1042973,18z/data=!4m5!3m4!1s0x888b2f7c4cc00001:0x6108c65dff008b96!8m2!3d33.5729125!4d-85.1037775) and [UWG Campus Maps](https://www.westga.edu/about-uwg/maps-and-directions.php). You do not need a parking pass.

**3) Hackathon Theme/Problem**

This year’s theme for the Youth Track (teen) Hackathon event is *Using the Carrollton Greenbelt*. We are excited to welcome[Link to Professor Name and Title], as she presents a challenge related to this topic to the group. Dr. [Name] will get everyone thinking about this topic to warm up for their application design and construction.

What kinds of apps/projects will kids make in response to this theme? Here is the[Linked to Google Slide with the Prompts] (see Slide 13 if it doesn’t go there automatically–don’t share: it’s a secret!) related to what kinds of apps they might make.

And here are some other ideas that we might see. Participants could make a Scratch application that…

* …measures trail participation on the Carrollton Greenbelt;
* …informs users about where and why to access or use the Carrollton Greenbelt;
* …motivates citizens to use or support local greenbelt projects (in West Georgia or beyond);
* …tells a story about someone who used the Greenbelt (like an inspirational tale to encourage use);
* …provides tips for Safety on the Greenbelt; or
* the list could go on!

I have informed the kids and their parents of this broad topic, and I encouraged them to read about the Carrollton Greenbelt at https://www.carrolltongreenbelt.com/

**4) Hackathon Platform: Scratch**

This year, we are using the web-based visual, block-based **Scratch platform** (https://scratch.mit.edu/) in the Youth Hackathon. The beauty of Scratch is that it allows for a wide variety of applications to be developed (from interactive "apps" to animations to presentations and other products).

In response to the Hackathon Theme/Problem, participants will be invited to design, develop, and present a Scratch artifact.

If you’re unfamiliar with Scratch, it would be good to take a few minutes to check out the Explore area of Scratch, where you can interact with published projects, and view the code inside. And the Scratch Tutorial (https://scratch.mit.edu/ideas) should get you up to speed in no time!

**5) Schedule**

| **What** | **Notes for Mentors** |
| --- | --- |
| **9:45am:** Check In Near Room 101 in Biology Building (2nd floor) | Please check in to get your T-shirts! Dress comfortably. Jeans, sneakers, etc. |
| **9:50-10:30am:** Opening Talks and Group Formation (Room 101 upstairs) | We love for you to be in this session with us to help break the ice, get to know the kids, hear about the hackathon theme from our presenter [Name], facilitate kids' forming of teams of 2-3 (4 max).  Also, I introduce the mentors during this segment. If you have a, say, 10- or 15-second self-introduction, you will be welcome to introduce yourself here. |
| **10:30am:** Code Start (TEALS Room downstairs) | This is where the real mentoring starts and continues till 3 when code stops. We probably won’t get down there till 10:45. |
| **12:30pm:** Lunch (2nd floor) | We are providing lunch from Chick Fil A. Wolfie [university mascot] may make an appearance then, too. |
| **3:15pm:** Code Stop (TEALS Room downstairs) | You can escape at this moment, or you can push on if you're curious! |
| **3:15-3:25pm:** Transitioning to Presentation Room (Room 125 upstairs) | You may leave or remain! |
| **3:30-4:15:** Youth Presentations (Room 125 upstairs) | Mentors, if you choose to stay beyond this point, please sit in the last 4 rows of this room. Kids are in first 4 rows. Judges in Row 5. Parents, mentors, etc. in last 4 rows. |
| **4:15-4:45:** Advanced Presentations (Room 125 upstairs) |  |
| **5:00-5:30:** Awards Ceremony (Room 125 upstairs) |  |

**6) What Does It Mean to Mentor?**

Mentoring takes many forms over the course of the Hackathon and could include:

* Introducing yourself;
* Chatting with the kids to help them generate ideas about the theme and ways they might respond;
* Modeling problem-solving processes;
* Supporting kids in narrowing down a focus;
* Encouraging planning (as opposed to kids just jumping into building a project) and persistence;
* Listening to kids communicate about their app as they practice for their presentation;
* Helping to motivate kids who may be withdrawing/disengaging from the event;
* Helping kids think more broadly or narrowly about some aspect of the theme;
* Being interested in whatever the kids are talking about or doing;
* Helping the kids figure out some technicality of Scratch – and if you’re not sure then to help connect kids to another mentor who may know how to move forward;
* Encouraging the kids to "figure something out;" and/or
* Modeling trouble-shooting.

There will be a table in the TEALs room where you can put your stuff. You are of course welcome to step out and take breathers and breaks. You are a volunteer, after all! We encourage you to wander the room and just ask the kids how and what they're doing. They generally are receptive to us "interested adults" watching them work on their apps and listening to them try to explain what they're doing.

**Other Info**

* Here are the [3 awards we're giving](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1eNLqVRTNEn7j1ivjGJMFfUr2Y3X5DGIjZcPuB34SHBw/edit) (as seen through the judging sheet, which I'll update for 2022 shortly!).
* In the last hour of the coding portion (from ~2:15-3:15pm), kids need to be sure they've submitted their projects (published Scratch projects) to a) our Scratch Studio, and b) a Google Form Link I'll share on the day of the event. In addition, if teams wish, they may create something like a Google slide presentation which they would also share through the Google Form Link. We want all finished products (Scratch and Google Slides) published to the web for public visibility. Again, you don't have to memorize all of this: I will remind you–and the kids–of this throughout the day. In that last hour, you might, as mentor, help them to test the public visibility of their products, by looking at them in, say, a new Incognito tab in which they are not logged in.
* Here is the [draft presentation slide deck] (Don’t share it–it’s a secret!) that I'll use throughout the day, and it'll be ready mid-Friday.

Thank you so much for agreeing to mentor this event! We could *not* do this without you.

What have I left out? Please let me know if you have any questions or comments.

If you want still more information, here [Links to Google Doc of Info Provided to Parents and Kids] is what I provided to the kids and their parents.

Thank you,

[Planner 1]