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Tech Fixes That Changed My Thinking

Volunteer Project Summary

Date: July 16, 2025

Location: Inspiredu Tech Center, Atlanta, GA

Participants: Willian Prado (City of Refuge student - Npursuit)

Mentors: Mario Alexander and Tyran Johnson (Inspiredu Technical Team)

**Title: Digital Equity in Action: A Step-by-Step Laptop Refurbishment
Volunteer Project**

Project Overview:

This project documents a full day of volunteering at Inspiredu, a nonprofit organization dedicated to closing the digital divide by refurbishing laptops for community distribution. On this day, I applied what I've learned in my cybersecurity training and built new skills by processing six laptops—completing five, and preparing one for follow-up. This detailed guide outlines not just what I did, but how and why each step matters. It's written so future volunteers or those curious about IT support can follow along.

Volunteer Schedule:

- **4:45 AM:** Wake-up and prepare for the day.
- **6:00 AM:** Leave home.
- **7:15 AM:** Arrive at City of Refuge.
- **8:00 AM – 2:30 PM:** Attend cybersecurity class.
- **2:30 PM – 2:57 PM:** Travel to Inspiredu.
- **2:57 PM – 4:55 PM:** Volunteer at Inspiredu.
- **6:30 PM:** Arrive home.

Device Refurbishment: Step-by-Step Workflow

Before beginning any work, all volunteers must check in by scanning the barcode at the Inspiredu entrance. After that, the laptop refurbishment process begins. To work

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efficiently, I created a printed checklist with these 8 key steps, and used it to track my progress. I was able to work on 3 to 4 laptops simultaneously using this method.

Step 1: Check the Linktree Icon

Purpose: The Linktree icon provides a shortcut to a collection of important setup links and tools.

What to Do: Ensure it appears on the desktop. If it's missing, retrieve and restore the shortcut.

Why it Matters: Many of the tools for future users and IT staff are located in the Linktree.

Step 2: Test Camera Functionality

Purpose: Confirm that the laptop's webcam works properly.

What to Do: Open the Camera app. Check image clarity, focus, and positioning.

Why it Matters: Students and professionals often rely on webcams for online learning and meetings.

Step 3: Test Microphone, Volume, and Speakers

Purpose: Ensure the audio system functions correctly.

What to Do: Use the Sound Settings to test the microphone and speakers. Speak into the mic and play a test sound.

Why it Matters: Audio is critical for communication, online classes, job interviews, and accessibility tools.

Step 4: Set Chrome as Default and Pin to Taskbar

Purpose: Chrome is commonly used for browsing and should be easy to access.

What to Do:

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- Open Chrome.
- Set it as the default browser in settings.
- Right-click on the icon to pin it to the taskbar.

Why it Matters: Simplifies navigation for users who may not be tech-savvy.

Step 5: Pin Zoom App to Taskbar

Purpose: Zoom is a vital tool for communication in school and work.

What to Do: Locate Zoom in the Start Menu and pin it to the taskbar.

Why it Matters: Makes joining classes or meetings easy and accessible.

Step 6: Clear Camera Roll and Recycle Bin

Purpose: Remove leftover videos from hardware testing.

What to Do:

- Go to the Camera Roll and delete all video files.
- Empty the Recycle Bin.

Why it Matters: Ensures privacy, frees up storage, and maintains a clean user experience.

Step 7: Perform Windows Updates and Restart

Purpose: Keep systems secure and up to date.

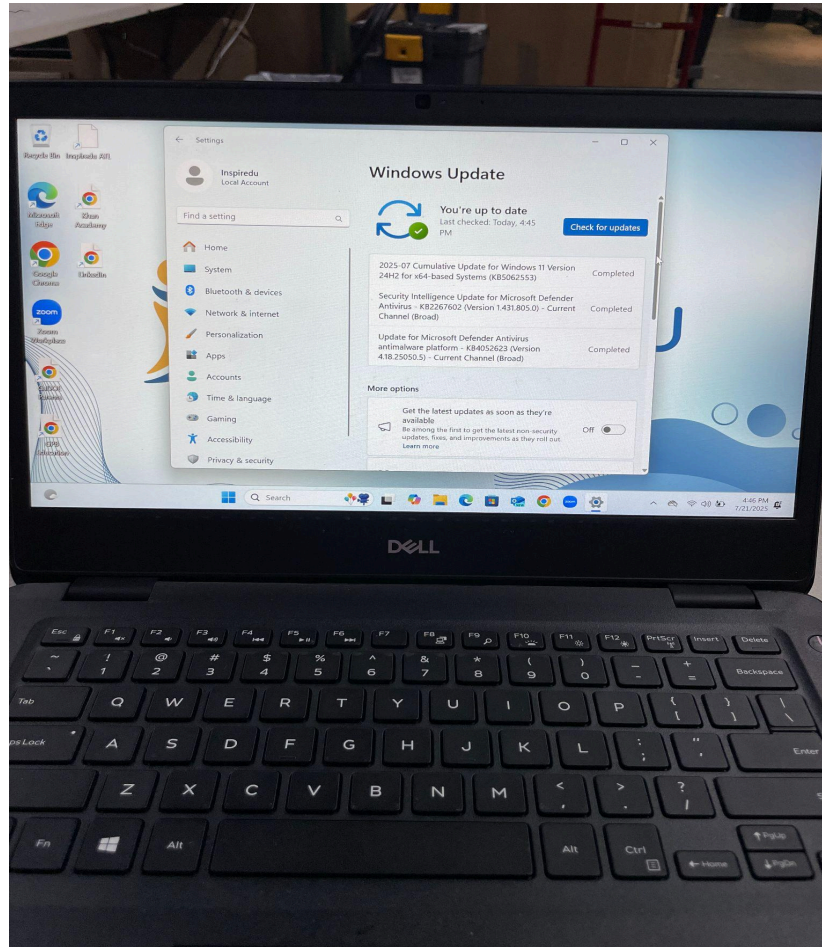
What to Do:


- Go to Settings > Update & Security.
- Install all available updates.
- Restart the computer. Repeat the process until the green check mark appears.

Why it Matters: Updates fix bugs, improve performance, and ensure compatibility with modern tools.

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Windows Update: Mission Complete  Time to roll!

Step 8: Apply Microsoft Authorized Refurbisher (MAR) Sticker

Purpose: Label the laptop as officially refurbished and approved for redistribution.

What to Do: Place the sticker on the bottom of the laptop near the other stickers.

Why it Matters: Signals quality assurance and compliance with Microsoft's refurbishment standards.

Final Step: Place Laptop on Completed Shelf

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Purpose: Keep refurbished devices organized and ready for deployment.

What to Do: Place the device in the designated “Complete” area. If a laptop needs further work (e.g., unresolved audio issues), label it with a sticky note for follow-up.

Why it Matters: Ensures no device is deployed without final QA.

Impact Reflection:

This was one of the most productive and inspiring days I’ve had. Not only did I apply what I’ve been learning in class, but I also learned how to improve workflow efficiency, multitask, and troubleshoot real-world hardware issues. Working with mentors Mario Alexander, Tomi Coker, Tyran Johnson, Tomi Coker and Teleo Laury Jr., made the experience even more valuable.

I also want to give credit to all the staff at Inspiredu for their welcoming attitude and support with any questions I had during the process. They are top notch and amazing people to work with. Special thanks to Teleo Laury Jr., Tomi Coker, and Tyran Johnson for their help today.

Call to Action:

Inspiredu accepts working laptops to be refurbished and distributed to students, families, and community members in need. If you or your company would like to contribute, please consider donating or volunteering. Technology can be a bridge to opportunity, and your support makes a real difference.

Together, we can empower futures—one laptop at a time.

Technical Glossary:

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- **Linktree Icon:** A desktop shortcut that links to a webpage containing important resources and tools.
- **Recycle Bin:** A Windows folder where deleted files are temporarily stored before permanent removal.
- **Taskbar:** The bar typically located at the bottom of a Windows screen where apps can be pinned for quick access.
- **Default Browser:** The web browser that automatically opens links unless another is chosen.
- **Zoom:** A video conferencing application used for virtual meetings.
- **Chrome:** Google's internet browser, widely used for its speed and compatibility.
- **Windows Updates:** Security patches, performance improvements, and new features released by Microsoft for Windows.
- **Camera Roll:** The folder where photos and videos from the laptop's camera are stored.
- **Microsoft Authorized Refurbisher (MAR) Sticker:** A certification label that indicates the device was refurbished under Microsoft's quality standards.
- **Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs):** Written instructions that describe step-by-step processes to ensure consistency and accuracy in task execution.

Tags:

#InspiredU #DigitalEquity #TechForGood #LaptopRefurbishment #VolunteerImpact #EntryLevelIT
#ITSupport #Windows11 #MentorshipMatters #CityOfRefuge #DeviceRefurbishment #HandsOnLearning
#MicrosoftAuthorizedRefurbisher #Dell #ThinkPad #Lenovo #HP