

Code Summer+

Introduction

When America's youth become adults they need to be able to compete in a job market that is dominated by technology. In order for our youth to be able to enter a job market they will need to develop technological skills that are highly sought after by many employers. With this notion being taken into consideration this is typically not the case for most of America's youth particularly youth that are disadvantaged or economically disenfranchised. President Obama has also expressed his concerns about the state of America's youth. According to President Obama.

“America's young people face record unemployment, and we need to do everything we can do to make sure they've got the opportunity to earn the skills and work ethic that come with a job”(We Can't Wait, 2012). In addition to the record high unemployment youth also must be able to compete in a technologically driven job market of the 21st century (Codecademy Blog, 2012). Our youth need to gain a strong STEM education in order to be viable in the technological job market.(New Summer Jobs+, 2012)

On January 17, 2012 Aneesh Chopra, Chief Technical Officer of the United States presented Code Academy co-founder Zach Sims with a proposal to join the Summer Jobs+ initiative of the White House(Codecademy introduces, 2012). The Summer Jobs+ initiative which was announced by President Obama on January 5, 2012 after congress failed to pass the Summer Jobs Program for youth and the American Jobs Act. The American Jobs Act was created to increase the pace of job creation and provide job and training opportunities for

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youth affected by the economic downturn. This Act would also provide incentives for business

to hire, and bring investments to revitalize schools, neighborhoods, and community colleges

(The American Jobs Act: Impact for Youth and the Economy, 2011). Summer Jobs+ is a

collaboration between the private sector and federal government. These entities have made a

commitment to provide summer employment opportunities for America's youth. Together they

anticipate providing approximately 180,000 summer employment opportunities for America's

Youth!(We Can't Wait, 2012) Code Year is an online programming tutorial created by

Codecademy, this web-based tutorials teaches the basics of programming free of charge. (About

Codecademy,2012) Co-founder Zach Sims of Codecademy believes that "programming is the

new literacy", and envision "making everyone programming literate." Codecademy accepted the

White House's proposal and has launched a program in conjunction with the White House's

Summer Jobs+ program called Code Summer+. (Codecademy introduces, 2012). This is a

nationwide endeavor on behalf of Code Academy and the White House.

Program Functionality/Participants

Code Summer+ is a program designed to teach low-income and disadvantaged youth

the basics of programming through the course of the summer. Codecademy will present the

curriculum through an abbreviated version, of Code Year which was launched by Code Academy

January 2012. Code year is a free online programming tutorial. Code Summer+ will teach youth

the basics of programming through the development of innovative applications. Participants will

learn the basics of programming through an interactive web-based tutorial. Youth will have the

choice of engaging in the sessions online or in person at designated locations. Youth enrolled

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in the summer semester will learn Silicon Valley Coding Language as would a Silicon Valley intern. (Codecademy introduces, 2012). Programmers and tech companies are encouraged to donate coding lessons that supports application development, or by providing in person student support by acting as a mentor and hosting meetups. (Codecademy Blog, 2012). In order to participate in the program youth will need to have a computer as well as internet access.

Code Summer+ is beneficial to youth because it provides youth with the opportunity to hone technological skills that are highly sought after in today's job market. Code Summer may also help youth develop an interest in STEM. Once participants have completed Code Summer+ summer program they can continue to build upon the knowledge they have learned.

Applications/Implications

Code Summer+ has the potential to serve many disadvantaged and low-income youth. Youth who chose to engage in the online program will only need to have access to a computer and the internet. For youth with restrictions/limitation on bandwidth using a local library may be a more suitable option. Schools, libraries, and community centers could also utilize this online program or host meetups to help promote programming literacy in their area. This program could effectively serve youth who are not economically challenged or disadvantaged. Schools could use this program to aid a teaching aid for youth or adults that are attempting to learn the basics of programming. There are a few potential Implications in regards to accessibility. Youth with physical, visual, or cognitive impairments may have difficulty participating in the program due to interactive nature of the website. For youth who desire to attend meetups transportation may also be an access barrier, particularly for youth in rural areas. Another implication that

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the students of the program may be faced with once they have completed the summer semester course is continued educational development. Codeacademy could possibly address this issue by continuing to provide courses throughout the year. Issues may also arise from individuals who desire to host a meetup, but do not have access to space and the necessary equipment.

Code Summer+ has the potential to impact youth in a positive way, as well as provide youth the necessary skills to prosper in job market that is becoming rapidly engulfed by technology, and raise the level of programming literacy among disadvantaged youth.

References

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