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NorCal Hackathon (Oakland, CA)
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Education, Features, Technology

Oakland & Compton, CA Students Compete in Labor Day Weekend Hackathon Using Computer Coding and Virtual Reality Technology
~ *"We Are Code" VR Hackathon | Sept. 3-4, 2016* ~

In the technology industry, demand is rapidly growing for professional applications, systems, web and mobile development programmers. According to a May 2016 marketsandmarkets.com report, among the fastest growing demand is for Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) programmers. The Labor Department predicts that tech jobs will grow faster than the average for all jobs at a rate of 12% this decade. Two non-profit organizations are fervently exposing underserved youth to technology skills and career options in order to better position them when applying to colleges and universities, and for scholarships and employment.

OAKLAND/COMPTON, CALIFORNIA: Two urban community non-profit organizations have made it their mission to improve high tech acumen for underserved black and brown youth. Dhat Stone High Tech Learning Academy and Bay Area Tutoring Association, founders and co-producers of the highly-anticipated **"We Are Code" V**irtual **R**eality **Hackathon**, regularly provide young people with access to computers and technology skills training. During the Labor Day weekend (Sept. 3-4, 2016), the organizations will host the first annual **"We Are Code"** programming competition between youth teams in Compton, CA (SoCal) and Oakland, CA (NorCal). The event will involve one hundred 7-to-11th graders from each area.

The students will go head-to-head in a live streaming competition using the latest programming languages and working with professional programmers, engineers, designers and entrepreneurs to build smart device applications and website designs. The event's two 12-hour days will also be comprised of technology presentations and coding classes with mentors, in between hearty meals and healthy snack breaks.

Jan. 30-31, 2016 HACKATHON VIDEO: Silicon Valley Black Youth Hackathon

~ more ~

Accomplished and versatile stage and film actor and singer Ben Vereen—who will be on-site in Compton, CA on both competition days—said, "Give the young people the tools they need today to make our tomorrow better and brighter with positivity." Additionally, one of the 21st century's most revered singer-songwriters and founder of the Agape International Spiritual Center Choir, Rickie Byars Beckwith, will perform two solo selections on Saturday evening. Acclaimed hip-hop rapper Nipsey Hussle will perform live for the youth and make a contribution to "We Are Code."

SIMULTANEOUS WAC HACKATHONS: Sat. & Sun., Sept. 3-4, 2016 | 8am-8pm

- **NorCal:** East Oakland Youth Development Center (EOYDC)
    8200 International Blvd., Oakland, CA 94621
    Register online: blackchamber.com/wearecodevrhackathon/

- **SoCal:** NASA Columbia Memorial Space Center (CMSC)
    12400 Columbia Way, Downey, CA 90242
    Register online: http://hackevents.co/hackathons/2112

Hacker registration deadline: Sunday, Aug. 14, 2016
(Signed parental permission slip required)

"I look forward to **We Are Code** Hackathon to provide a transformative and potentially mind-changing experience for young people that will bring a sense of hope and possibility for success. It can create a kind of technology thinking that could counteract the lack of diversity and innovation in the tech industry," commented Dr. Tariq Sawandi, Dhat Stone Academy co-founder.

Professional computer programmers, technologists and entrepreneurs will mentor the young hackers who possess varied coding literacy skill levels. All competitors will receive gifts donated by sponsors. First place Hackathon winners in both Compton and Oakland will receive cash prizes, VR headsets provided by Oculus VR, Inc.—a virtual reality company recently acquired by Facebook, Inc.—and a chance to have their mobile app ideas developed through a business incubator. Unofficial Cardboard will create engaging virtual reality experiences using smart phones.

SPONSORSHIPS
We Are Code VR Hackathon producers are grateful for sponsor's generous contributions and the support of its partners: NASA Columbia Memorial Space Center, East Oakland Youth Development Center (EOYDC), Priority Housing (Compton), San Jose/Silicon Valley Center for Entrepreneurial Development, Oculus VR, Inc., Unofficial Cardboard, SCiOart. Inc., Warner Brothers, NanoVR, Vision for Compton, Kapor Foundation, David E. Glover Center for Technology, Dhat Stone Academy and Bay Area Tutoring Association.

In-kind and monetary sponsorships are encouraged to support youth in this planned ongoing program. Please consider lending support to **We Are Code** VR Hackathon. The event producers' stated goal is to create a learning environment where students from underserved, urban communities can participate in STEM education and technology design, and explore careers in the digital work space. Parties who are interested in becoming an event/program sponsor, please contact **We Are Code** partner representative, Helen Norman (normahel11@yahoo.com)**.**

"WE ARE CODE" VR HACKATHON FOUNDERS/PRODUCERS:
- Bay Area Tutoring Association, San Jose, CA | 408.945.8003
    Founder, Chris Norwood | BayAreaTutor.org
- Dhat Stone High Tech Learning Academy, Compton, CA | 818.408.9761
    Co-founders, Drs. Tariq Sawandi and Charles Thomas | dhatstoneacademy.org

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