



## Upping the **STATS** for the **AP COMPUTER SCIENCE EXAM**

A group of students preparing to take the AP computer science exam hope to inspire minority students statewide to pursue science, technology, engineering and math.

FutureINDesign, a nonprofit STEAM career development program for marginalized young adults, is helping a group of high school students and young adults learn to program, so they can take and pass the AP computer science exam.

In 2015, 39,000 AP exams were taken, and only 123 students took that AP computer science exam. Of those 123 students, 12 were female, nine were Asian, three were Hispanic, one was Native American.



FutureINDesign students learn to code with the City Creek Microsoft team



When Nicholina Womack, founder and chief executive officer of FutureINDesign, discovered the statistics were so low, she created a six-week coding course for a group of high school students and young adults.

“With so many students underrepresented, we decided to break the mold, and we started an intensive computer science course for minority, low-income students,” Womack said. “For these students it’s not just about passing the test, it’s about the fact that they took the test, that they got here, so that others can see what they are doing and say ‘I can take that test. I can do computer science.’”

FutureINDesign’s mission is to narrow the digital literacy gap in Utah through immersive training in key technology and life skills, thereby reducing the constraints of intergenerational poverty and creating a pipeline of talent for Utah’s growing tech workforce.

Learn more about STEM Action Center programs at [stem.utah.gov](http://stem.utah.gov)

**“FutureINDesign students learn how to code with the City Creek Microsoft team.”**

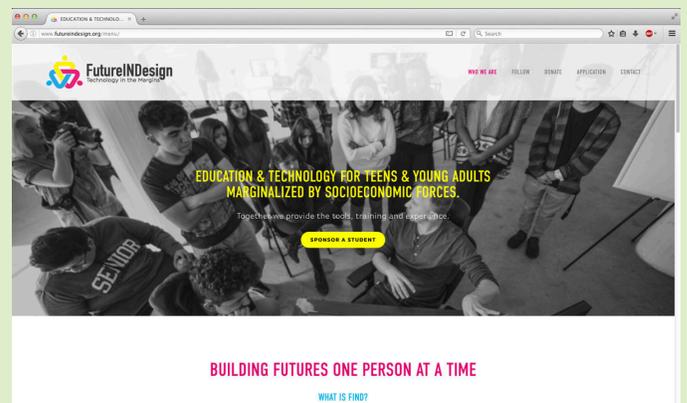


“The reason I joined the program is because I didn’t think I could have a career in technology,” said Heba Geiang, a senior at Cottonwood High School. “I thought it was too difficult, but I decided to take the risk and join this program. I really enjoy the design part of it. I’ve done a lot with Illustrator and Photoshop and to get a career out of that is amazing. I didn’t know that art is a huge part of technology. I didn’t know you could do those things in technology.”

Along with receiving a grant from the Utah STEM Action Center, FutureINDesign works closely with companies who see their vision, including Microsoft, which provides curriculum for the computer science course.

“A huge part of Microsoft’s culture is community development, and when I heard what FutureINDesign was doing I reached out,” said Valeria Rodriguez, product advisor with Microsoft. “These students are learning lifelong skills, and we’re so thrilled for them to take the AP computer science exam.”

To learn more about the FutureINDesign program visit <http://www.futureindesign.org/contact/>



Learn more about STEM Action Center programs at [stem.utah.gov](http://stem.utah.gov)

