



*In 2007 the Charlottesville/ Albemarle Commission on Children and Families identified the expansion of affordable after-school programming for older youth as a major priority for the City and County. C4K is in the fortunate position to help meet this need through Teen Tech.*



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## Teen Tech: The Next Step

Graduates of Computers4Kids' (C4K) mentoring program now have additional opportunities to build their portfolio of skills through Teen Tech. Launched in the spring of 2009, Teen Tech is a new program that targets older students who have completed C4K's nine-month mentoring program and have the potential to benefit from on-going participation in meaningful after-school programming. Teen Tech offers students the opportunity to acquire advanced technology skills, develop college and career-related skills, and work collaboratively in a supportive environment. Teen Tech students benefit from the guidance of C4K staff and regular volunteers who offer their professional design and technology expertise.

### Program

- Teen Tech fosters a learner-centered environment where students are encouraged to discover their interests and apply their own ideas, as well as a community atmosphere where members feel they belong.
- The Teen Tech Learning Lab is open four days a week from 3pm–8pm, and students drop-in to work independently and collaborate informally with each other. C4K staff and volunteer professionals are on-hand to provide instruction.
- The curriculum requires students to develop a portfolio of advanced skills that align with the International Society for Technology Education's National Educational Technology Standards. Particular focus areas include technology, college and career guidance, and service to others (i.e. C4K peers and volunteer mentors).
- To-date over 80 students have spent 2,700 plus hours in Teen Tech. The program is increasing the amount of time C4K students stay involved in productive after-school activities, and helping them gain critical technology skills while working to set and pursue college and career goals.

### Job Training and Internships

C4K is currently raising funds to add a job training and a paid internship component to Teen Tech. Many students want to stay connected to C4K during their high school years, but due to their need to earn money to help support their families, jobs take precedence over unpaid extracurricular activities. Students would have the opportunity to obtain paid internships at C4K after receiving hard and soft job skills training through their participation in our Teen Tech program. This addition to the program would double our impact on our target population by helping our students earn needed funds while acquiring real-world experience in a supportive environment.

### Community Need

C4K created Teen Tech in response to an immediate community need. In addition to our older students requesting programming just for them, in 2007 the Charlottesville/ Albemarle Commission on Children and Families (CCF) identified the expansion of affordable after-school programming for older youth as a major priority for the City and County. Research shows the greater the frequency and duration of student



participation in mentoring and after-school programming, the better their academic and behavioral outcomes. Teen Tech is particularly critical given that a 2003 needs assessment of local residents by the CCF found that low-income and non-Caucasian young people were about half as likely to be involved in the extracurricular and after-school program opportunities already available. 90% of C4K students are minorities. Teen Tech builds on established relationships with existing C4K students and provides the ongoing programming needed to prevent risky behavior and ensure positive long term outcomes, including the achievement of academic and career goals.

### Community Support: Your Impact

You can make a direct impact on the life of a local student by investing in C4K. In addition to a track record of recognition for program success, C4K has a history of effectively drawing on community resources to both raise funds and keep costs low through donations of in-kind services. C4K's annual operating budget is below \$500,000. 90 cents out of every dollar donated to C4K goes directly to program costs and services provided to deserving students. The dedication and generosity of our supporters is what sustains our efforts to give students a vibrant learning environment and knowledgeable support system so that they have every chance of success. We need your help to continue actively breaking the cycle of poverty, not only preventing students from dropping out of high school to face unemployment, low wage jobs, or worse, but also helping students to realize their full potential and make a positive contribution to our local community.

