

CROWN CASTLE HOSTS TECHNOLOGY EXPLORATION PROGRAM FOR MY BLOCK MY HOOD MY CITY YOUTH

It's an exciting time for technology in Chicago. The sector has grown by more than 270 percent over the last decade, making it the fastest-growing industry sector in the city. With that growth comes tremendous career opportunities in everything from artificial intelligence to data and automation.

To build excitement around Chicago's burgeoning tech sector, Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce member Crown Castle recently partnered with the My Block My Hood My City Explorers Program to introduce students from Chicago Excel Academy of Southwest to local careers in technology and innovation.

My Block My Hood My City is a nonprofit organization that provides Chicago teenagers from under-resourced communities with an awareness of the world and opportunities beyond their neighborhood. The Explorers Program takes high school-aged students on field trips to experience new aspects of the city and learn about potential careers.



Anderson Lee helps students assemble ethernet cables.

Crown Castle hosted a field trip for 12 explorers at the TechNexus collaboration center, home to over 60 growth stage technology ventures. Students had the chance to tour the space and survey the onsite podcast studio while learning how incubators boost young companies.



My Block My Hood My City Explorers from Chicago Excel Academy of Southwest with several of the event speakers.

Crown Castle also recruited several speakers, many of whom sit on the Chicagoland Chamber Technology Council, to share their experiences and offer career guidance to the students. Speakers included:

- Vikrant Vaze - RF Engineer with Crown Castle
- Akari Muhisani - Major Account Executive, Dell Technologies
- Tatiana Orlova - Data Scientist with Amper Technologies
- Jovana Florus - Senior Engineering Manager, Farmer's Fridge
- Anderson Lee - Workforce Solutions Manager at CompTIA
- Rudy Jauregui - Software Dev Engineer at Expedia Group
- Adam Sobol - Founder and CEO of Care Band



Vikrant discusses the role that Crown Castle infrastructure plays in connecting our world.

Each speaker brought something unique to the table. Vikrant discussed how Crown Castle's communication infrastructure helps make cellphones work, using sporting events to illustrate the need for data and cellular capacity. Akari explained his fascinating career journey and offered advice about overcoming obstacles. He also shared some of his diverse interests, from stock investing to DJ'ing, as a means of encouraging the students to follow their passions. Tatiana introduced the students to algorithms by playing an interactive game, and Anderson taught the group how to build ethernet cables. Jovana and Rudy each gave an overview of their day-to-day responsibilities, as well as what drew them to Farmer's Fridge and Expedia, respectively. Adam discussed all that comes with being a 27-year-old CEO.

"This experience with Crown Castle and all the project partners was invaluable for our teens," said Nathaniel Viets Vanlear, Program Manager for the My Block My Hood My City Explorers Program. "From touring the incubator to hearing engaging stories from the speakers, the students departed energized by all the exciting technology and innovation opportunities that exist in and around Chicago."

For more information on Crown Castle contact:
[Renee Morales, Renee.Morales@crowncastle.com](mailto:Renee.Morales@crowncastle.com)

For more information on My Block My Hood My City contact:
[Nathaniel Viets-VanLear, nathaniel@mbmhmc.com](mailto:Nathaniel.Viets-VanLear@mbmhmc.com)



Akari Muhisani shares his career journey to Dell Technologies



Tatiana Orlova uses an interactive computer game to teach students about coding.



Adam Sobol discusses his company Care Band, wearable technology for seniors living with dementia.

<https://wgntv.com/2019/11/18/2000-new-tech-jobs-slated-for-chicago/>

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