M&T Bank Newsroom

M&T's Coders Club Builds Buffalo Students' Technology Skills

BUFFALO, N.Y., Dec. 17, 2019—Today, a new cohort of 16 local students completed M&T Bank's six-week Coders Club program, an initiative designed and led by M&T Tech, the bank's technology division. The students attend Westminster Community Charter School and Highgate Heights Elementary School, two of the schools supported by the Buffalo Promise Neighborhood initiative.

M&T's Coders Club program teaches students the basics of software development with one-on-one mentorship and engaging, interactive tools. It provides each participating student with a foundational understanding of computer science in order to spark their interest in ongoing exploration of the technology field. Technologists from M&T Tech created the program and volunteer time to provide instruction.

"Locally and nationally, there's a huge demand for technology talent, but there's often not enough qualified candidates to fill the open jobs. That's a big reason why we launched the Coders Club," said Mike Wisler, M&T Bank Chief Information Officer. "We believe Buffalo's technology talent pipeline should start in our community's schools, and we want more local students to have access to the opportunities available in the tech sector."

The Coders Club program was piloted earlier this year at Westminster Community Charter School, and for this new cohort of students, it was expanded to Highgate Heights.

"When we started the Coders Club, we saw its potential to inspire kids and get them excited about technology. It makes coding approachable and fun, and it helps students envision themselves in technology careers," said Bea Smallets, Group Vice President and Director of Technology for M&T Bank. "We hope to expand the program to more schools in future years."

Demand for technology talent remains high. Nationally, there were more than 3.7 million job postings for tech occupations last year and over 200,000 in New York State alone, according to the 2019 Cyberstates report compiled by industry association CompTIA.

The Coders Club is one component of M&T's wider efforts to expand the technology workforce in Western New York. Recently, M&T started a Technology Development Program, which builds on the bank's longstanding Management Development Program and helps college graduates jumpstart tech careers through a combination of classroom, on-the-job and leadership training.

The bank previously announced plans to hire 1,000 technologists over the next three to five years to support the rapid development and deployment of new technology, as it builds out its new Tech Hub collaborative workspace at the Seneca One Tower in Downtown Buffalo.

At the Coders Club completion ceremony that M&T held Monday, the students showcased their software creations and received a copy of Coding Games in Scratch to keep learning after the program's conclusion.

About M&T Bank

M&T Bank is a financial holding company headquartered in Buffalo, New York. M&T's principal banking

subsidiary, M&T Bank, operates banking offices in New York, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Connecticut, Virginia, West Virginia and the District of Columbia. Trust-related services are provided by M&T's Wilmington Trust-affiliated companies and by M&T Bank.

Media Contact:

Julia Berchou, (716) 842-5385, jberchou@mtb.com

https://newsroom.mtb.com/2019-12-17-M-Ts-Coders-Club-Builds-Buffalo-Students-Technology-Skills