Immediate Release

"Level Up: A Hackathon for Gaming with a Mission" at NYU Tandon will help students advocate for social justice through interactive gaming

BROOKLYN, New York, Thursday, March 14, 2019 – Tech Kids Unlimited (TKU), a tech-based organization for children and teens with special needs, will host "Level Up: A Hackathon for Gaming with a Mission," at the NYU Tandon School of Engineering on **Saturday, March 30, from 11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.** This hackathon is sponsored by The FAR Fund, FedEx, Giphy Engineering, and Yext.

Gaming for social good has become a conversation in the tech industry. Games such as Tampon Run, a game created by two high school students to destigmatize periods, as well as TKU's app, LOLA, an app that guides users with learning and neurological differences to complete day-to-day tasks through the use of humor, are just two examples incentivizing the possibilities of tech.

To continue the trend, the hackathon aims to guide teens to create new games that are both and for the greater good of the world. "Level Up: A Hackathon for Gaming with a Mission" is for young people ages 14 to 21 with learning and emotional disabilities such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorder, Sensory Processing Disorder, Auditory Processing Disorder, Anxiety, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD), and Dyslexia. Students who attend TKU have either an IEP or 504 designation through the New York City Department of Education.

The event will take place at NYU Tandon at MAGNET, on the eighth floor of 2 MetroTech Center in Downtown Brooklyn. Experienced educators and special guests will outline the issues and challenge students to think critically about the topic. No prior tech knowledge is required, and the $10 fee will include all instruction, materials, and lunch. Comedian and writer Ziwe Fumudoh from the new Showtime series *Desus and Mero* will open the day. Indie game designer John Stavropoulos will speak to the students about game design.

TKU was founded by NYU Tandon Adjunct Digital Media Professor Beth Rosenberg and her son. The non-profit gives children and teens with learning and emotional disabilities valuable tech skills through weekly, summer, and evening programs like the annual hackathon.

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TKU works in partnership with The Ability Project, founded by the NYU Tandon Integrated Digital Media Program, NYU Steinhardt Occupational Therapy Program, and NYU Tisch Interactive Telecommunications Program.

Register at www.TechKidsUnlimited.org/hackathon.

About the New York University Tandon School of Engineering
The NYU Tandon School of Engineering dates to 1854, the founding date for both the New York University School of Civil Engineering and Architecture and the Brooklyn Collegiate and Polytechnic Institute (widely known as Brooklyn Poly). A January 2014 merger created a comprehensive school of education and research in engineering and applied sciences, rooted in a tradition of invention and entrepreneurship and dedicated to furthering technology in service to society. In addition to its main location in Brooklyn, NYU Tandon collaborates with other schools within NYU, one of the country's foremost private research universities, and is closely connected to engineering programs at NYU Abu Dhabi and NYU Shanghai. It operates Future Labs focused on start-up businesses in downtown Manhattan and Brooklyn and an award-winning online graduate program. For more information, visit http://engineering.nyu.edu.

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