PRESS RELEASE
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Correction to Photo 1

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Imagination and Innovation Fueled
BETA Camp's Fully Virtual Event

Nassau, Bahamas -- This year's 100% virtual platform for BETA Camp was such a success that the first virtual BETA Hackathon slated for November 20-22, 2020 is bound to be just as exciting. Co-founders Trenicka Rolle-Dukes and D'André Wilson-Ihejirika were thrilled that the 35 students, ages 11 to 14 years of age from The Bahamas, Jamaica, Canada, and Scotland, excelled in their new learning environment.

BETA Camp 2020 which ran for an extra week focused on sustainability and resiliency with an emphasis on renewable energy, agriculture, and manufacturing. The teams created a 3-D greenhouse using a variety of software. Participants used coding and video games to present their innovation. The learning streams specific to engineering included electrical, mechanical, civil, biomedical, and chemical, as well as computer science and web development. Speakers from The Bahamas and Canada shared their knowledge over Google Classroom and the students also received a virtual tour of the Caribbean Bottling plant in New Providence.

Kaeden Levarity who is 12 years old and hails from Freeport, Grand Bahama has spent the past 3 summers with BETA Camp. She along with Thomas Lockhart led their team which comprised of students from Grand Bahama, Nassau, and Abaco.

"We had a variety of speakers," said Kaeden. "Some spoke about carbon and how it affected climate change. We made a scaled greenhouse for plants to grow in our harsh summer climate. If plants have too much humidity they will die, so, we used a humidifier and a temperature gauge to solve that problem." Kaeden further expressed that the camp expanded her knowledge of biology, taught her about making a living from farming and how things work.

In Toronto, Canada, Genson Pageot, 15, and his brother Soneal, 14, embraced different streams. This year, Genson chose civil engineering - his team won in 2018, while Soneal, joining for the first time, chose electrical engineering, and his team won this year's competition. As leader of his group, Soneal recommended the Minecraft game to build a greenhouse.

"I was able to apply what I learned about circuits, and about electrical fields, breakers and grounding. It was intimate and we were able to build machines and contraptions that are used in a greenhouse," said Soneal. "We used Red Stone for daylight sensors to transfer water from the machine, and we were able to show how rainwater could be transferred from a machine. We were proud to have a winning team!"

It was not only the students who gained knowledge. Instructor Edison Hanchell said that in many ways he enjoyed the virtual classroom. "We had the opportunity to speak to the students individually and since everyone was online, we learned together. When we stopped to help one person, everyone else had to watch. It was more interactive and informative."

Cloud Carib was a silver sponsor for the BETA Camp, sponsoring students from the family islands and donating laptops.

Olivia Dorsett, senior marketing and communications manager, explained their role. "Cloud Carib is always eager to invest in the youth and especially in the field of technology – this is where we can nurture and engage with the next group of engineers and it is important for the country to start as early as possible. If we, as a nation, start young, it makes it possible for them to see the opportunities that they have now. And we want to help by paving the way to a path in STEM. We need these bright minds to be fed and developed."

For the online BETA Hack! scheduled for November 20–22, 2020, students in grades 7-12 interested in developing technology skills through hands-on STEM activities, have a chance to participate. More information can be found at www.weareBETA.co/apply-BETA-hack/
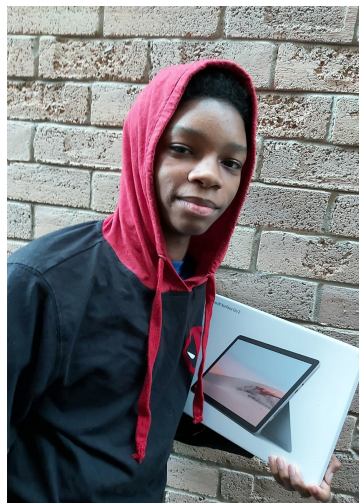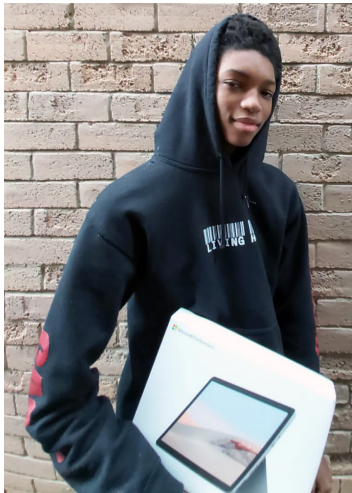
Photo captions:

Photo 1

Shown in the photo are some of the first time BETA Camp participants who recently picked up their prizes from Cloud Carib, a silver sponsor of the 2020 camp. The learners all expressed delight in their first year and look forward to returning next year. Shown in the back, L-R: Anthony Forbes, Edison Hanchell, BETA Camp, Olivia Dorsett, marketing manager, Cloud Carib. Sitting in the front row, L-R: Vanessa Claridge (L) who learned coding and found the camp inspiring and eye-opening and Diamond Lundy (R). Photo by Azaleta Ishmael-Newry

Photo 2

BETA Camp instructor Deshinka Bostwick (R) presents a Microsoft Surface Go Tablet with accessories to BETA Camp winner Vanessa Claridge. Photo by Azaleta Ishmael-Newry

Photos 3, 4 and 5

From Toronto, Canada to Freeport, Grand Bahama, Genson Pageot 15, left, Soneal Pageot, 14, middle, and Kaeden Levarity, right, who is 12-year-old, enjoyed their positive experiences with the 2020 BETA Camp program. Photos supplied by learners.

#BetaCamp #STEMbahamas #engineering #STEMeducation #virtuallearning

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