FUNDING APPLICATION

GENERAL INFORMATION

Organization Information

Legal Name:	Federal Tax ID#:	Are you a 501(3)(c) charity?	
Elizabeth Jayne Talley	81-1634308	Yes	

Address:	City:	State:	Zip Code:
7254 Blanco Road, Ste. 202,	San Antonio	Texas	78216

Website:	Fax:	
www.youthcodejam.org	(726) 444-0925	

Head Of Organization

Name:	Title:
Lori Price	Executive Director

E-Mail Address:	Phone:
lori@youthcodejam.org	(210) 843-5974

Application Contact

Name:	Title:	E-Mail Address:	Phone:
Liz Talley	Community Engagement Manager	liz@youthcodejam.org	(210) 765-1569

Previous funding received from The Gordon Hartman Family Foundation	
Year	**Funding $**
2017	$3,000
Total	$3,000

Has the organization applied to the Gordon Hartman Family Foundation in the past and been declined?

No

Grant Amount Requested $:	**Total Project Budget $:**	**Organization's Annual budget $:**
$15,000	$15,000	$525,000

Mission Statement:

Youth Code Jam makes computer science and coding fun, sociable, and accessible to all by providing inclusive opportunities focused on serving underrepresented groups in tech, like neurodiverse learners, students with special needs, girls, students of color, and those in low-income areas.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Program / Project Title:

Jam in a Box Expansion to Serve the Special Needs Community

PROJECT TIMELINE	
Start Date	**End Date**
01/01/2021	12/31/2021

Program / Project Description:

At Youth Code Jam (YCJ), we believe the ability to navigate a computer confidently is an essential life skill no different than reading, writing, and arithmetic. In Texas, computer learning is not a requirement for Special Education (SPED) students. Only 3% of learners in a typical classroom setting graduate high school with a computer science (CS) credit.

We're the only computing content expert in the San Antonio area intentionally engaging the special needs (SN) community in CS, computational thinking (problem-solving), and coding. YCJ specializes in fun, interest-based learning to introduce tech as a tool instead of a toy, and a way to create life-long opportunities.

Since 2012, we've hosted free Community Code Jam events across the state, along with Low-Sensory Jams for neurodiverse learners, and Virtual (online) Code Jams. Our events offer interactive CS learning opportunities for students, their significant adults, and peers free of financial barriers and predisposed notions of what someone "can" and "cannot" do.

Like all YCJ programs, our events are ability-based and provide a judgment-free zone for ALL learners to explore at their own pace. For many, our events are the first introduction to CS; this is particularly true for neurodiverse learners who - often unknowingly - have a clear and documented pathway into the technology workforce.

Today, computing is the #1 source of new jobs in the US; 33% of those openings are middle-skilled roles. Many companies including H-E-B, Microsoft, IBM, and Dell, have initiatives to nurture the natural skills of neurodiverse learners to build an inclusive, diverse workforce.

H-E-B's "Bridge the Gap" program created an opportunity for Jared, a 31-year-old with autism. After many interviews, Jared found himself working an entry-level customer service role while holding a Computer Engineering Degree. His circumstance was not due to lack of effort, but because of communication challenges making it difficult for him to convey his expertise and experience. "Bridge the Gap" landed Jared an IT internship which ultimately turned into a full-time position as a Developer.

Tina James, H-E-B's Chief People Officer, said it best "Too many times, companies and society in general, dismiss people with autism and never get to see what's hiding underneath...All we want is to give them a chance. We're not lowering the bar on talent. We keep the same high standards but give them the support they need to reach their fullest potential."

We echo that message.

Since 2016, we've met 20,600+ students and estimate 20% are neurodiverse. These learners are underrepresented in the tech sector but have high potential to hold the key to innovation. In 2018 we blueprinted our successful event model with our Jam in a Box (JIAB) initiative; a turn-key solution for educators to host their own (in-person or virtual) Code Jam to build awareness and excitement around CS. We designed JIAB to make CS attainable for teachers who believed in its importance but didn't know how to start.

JIAB currently includes:

- Ability to serve 200+ participants

- Materials for 6 TEKS-aligned coding activities in English/Spanish

- 10 micro:bits

- Guidebook with detailed planning templates

- Unplugged activities for expanded access

- Survey platform for data collection

- Take-home resources

- Professional development training(s)

- Coaching/support from YCJ

JIAB data shows:

- 96% of attendees say they know the next steps to explore CS/code.

- 93% of attendees expressed an increased interest in coding.

- 76% of attendees showed an increased interest in CS/code six-months after participation.

To date, 94 schools have hosted Jams in 37 cities. As awareness of JIAB grows, we no longer solicit for interest; educators contact us months before a semester hoping to receive a grant-funded kit.

Today, YCJ has launched three successful cohorts with this model. In 2021, we want to expand into 501c3 organizations that focus on serving individuals with SN. We know many passionate organizations don't have the time or training to implement sufficient CS opportunities; JIAB bridges that gap.

Recently, we've seen inquiries grow from organizations/schools serving the SN community, looking for enrichment opportunities as COVID-19 has shined a grim light on the imbalance of CS education. It's evident that these students, their accommodations and potential tend to be an afterthought as schools are overwhelmed and understaffed. As technology has become the most basic steps to success, SPED curriculum outlines have stayed the same, void of any technological advancements, courses on digital literacy, or teaching students to use computers as a tool for the future.

For YCJ, CS for all truly means all; not an easily reachable and convenient subset. As we build relationships within the community, some reference attending a Low-Sensory Jam, some mention finding us on the internet, but they all recognize the divide, importance, and impact in CS education.

Currently, JIAB creates a dynamic bridge between schools, teachers, students, families, and professionals. We envision an amplified effect in the nonprofit sector. JIAB comes hand-in-hand with volunteer and funding opportunities that shine a light on the capabilities of ALL people. These events give tech professionals an account of community needs and how they, as individuals, can make a difference. Our event experiences also often lead to long-lasting corporate partnerships and create investment in the next generation of leaders with inclusive career pathways.

We credit much of our success to collaborations with community partners and our ability to develop programs to meet the unique needs of the individuals they serve. Conversations have begun with organizations like Autism Community Network, Lighthouse for the Blind, Any Baby Can, and the Achievers Center, who are willing to partner as we develop/adapt curriculum for additional diverse populations.

By taking JIAB to the SN population, we can reach hundreds of learners like Jared in their comfort zone, at their skill-level, and unveil their talents and full potential as we guide them to success.

We humbly propose partnering with the Gordon Hartman Family Foundation to expand our JIAB program to:

- 5 area organizations that serve the SN community ($10,000)

- Develop new content to specifically address digital literacy, computational thinking, and the needs of the population ($5,000)

Evaluation Plan:

The GHFF Jam in a Box expansion will enable nonprofit organizations that serve the special needs community an opportunity to discover new talents and unveil their full potential. As we launch the new development, we will report information in 3 ways:

Participant survey data:
The number of organization participants served
Primary diagnoses for participants
Age and grade-level (if applicable) of participants
Number of participants enrolled in SPED
% of participants with interest in forming/joining a Coding Club

We will also receive reports from the organizations to gage community investment:
- Corporate-level interest for future involvement
Recurring volunteer groups showing investment in the cause

Youth Code Jam will track inquiries from similar institutions for future opportunities and track demand and interest levels for phase 2 and 3 of the overall program.

Plans to sustain project beyond the term of this request:

Annually Distribute JIAB to 5+ more like-minded organizations via additional grant funding.

Develop a Coding Club partnership between YCJ and a "hub" organization for those expressing interest in CS and coding. Responsibilities would be defined and shared amongst the two organizations.

Morgan's Wonderland Inclusion Foundation would be an ideal fit via a program like Morgan's Buddies. Additionally, once a Coding Club is established, STEM activities could be folded into regular programming or additional offerings for Morgan's Wonderland and Morgan's Wonderland Camp guests to expand the reach of Coding Club and JIAB efforts.

The partnership could offer two ability-based programs for ongoing CS opportunities:

Potential ideas include:

Club "1": Name TBD
Ability-level: Computer confident. Familiar with coding and tech. Has expressed interest in exploring CS career pathways.
A mentorship program with industry professionals or college students
Monthly meetups
Ask a question" portal (form)
Resume and portfolio building
Tech Jobsite tours
Invites to additional online camps, sessions

Club "2": Name TBD
Ability-level: Entry level
Has expressed interest in learning more about computers and how to use them. Participants learn at their own pace and can opt to join

A mentorship program with industry professionals or college students
Monthly meetups
Begin with basics: icons, shortcuts, etiquette, etc.
Move towards intro to scratch, python, etc.
Invites to additional online camps, sessions

Phase 3:
Build co-partnerships between a "hub" organization and YCJ to identify companies in San Antonio to create a jobsite program. Phase 3 opportunities would be open to students approaching HS graduation and/or aging out of SPED services. Youth Code Jam has existing ties to Microsoft, Rackspace, and H-E-B.

Line item Budget:

Line Item Description	Total Project Funds Allocation	Gordon Hartman Funds Allocation
Jam in a Box toolkit	$10,000	$10,000
Development of new customized cirriculum	$5,000	$5,000
TOTAL:	**$15,000**	**$15,000**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

LIST OF BOARD DIRECTORS

Name & Office Held	Corporate Affiliation
Jeff Hawthorn, Chairman	BBVA Compass