

DAMON PACKWOOD

Gameheads

2016 Black Male Achievement Fellow



BIG BOLD IDEA

Expand access to careers in the tech workforce to youth of color by teaching video game development skills, from coding and design, to animation, project management and idea creation.

ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Gameheads is an innovative program that gives low-income youth and youth of color hands-on training in video game design and development to prepare them for careers in the entertainment and technology industries. They train students to conceive of and design games, building skills across fields necessary to thrive in tech, from coding to visual art, creative writing, design thinking, project management, team collaboration, animation, and theory. Their vision is to diversify the video game and technology industries while elevating the voices of youth and communities of color by empowering them to create interactive content that can enrich us all.

PERSONAL BIO

Damon has more than 18 years of experience in the youth development and education fields, with positions at Juma Ventures, Hack the Hood, and Upward Bound. He has experience in several multimedia and tech industries including radio, mobile, video game journalism and the film industry. A native San Franciscan, Damon was motivated to pursue tech education when he watched the city's working-class community disappear with the rise of the Bay Area tech industry while his early students couldn't get jobs after graduating college. His passion for education, interactive media, and multiculturalism led him to a master's in multimedia tech with an emphasis on interactive design. For his thesis, he spent a year in the San Francisco Mission District studying the effect of technology on low-income communities. Damon is an Echoing Green Fellow, GSBI Fellow, former Stanford University Entrepreneur in Residence and a Facebook Gaming/VGA Global Gaming Citizen. Damon believes in building diversity from the ground up. He uses video games to teach game design development and DevOps to a carefully selected group of "cultural alchemists," tech zealots, digital rebels, and multimedia mavericks as a part of a ten year plan to influence the future of the tech and video game industries.

Issue area

Education

Organization/Fellow Location

Oakland, United States

Impact Location

North America
United States

Organization Structure

Hybrid

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