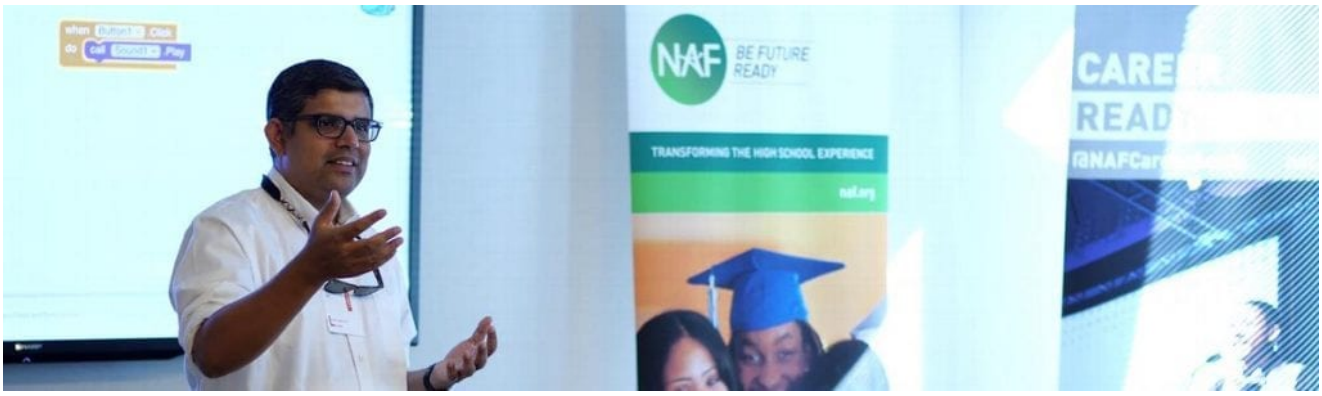
Teachers Train to Empower U.S. Students to Develop Mobile Apps

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By Matt Zielinski, President of Lenovo North America Intelligent and Devices Group

On November 29 and 30, 20 teachers from across the U.S. went back to school, attending mobile app inventor training, hosted by the MIT App Inventor team, at Lenovo's headquarters in Morrisville, NC. The training was in conjunction with the Lenovo Scholar Network, a partnership with education nonprofit NAF, to engage high school students in STEM studies and careers. NAF's focus on creating work-based learning experiences in high-need communities aligns with Lenovo's interest in advancing STEM education programs and increasing access to opportunity for diverse populations.

The mission resonates with me personally as well. I studied electrical engineering at the University of Michigan, and that experience opened up an exciting career journey. I also have an affinity and tremendous amount of respect for the teaching profession; my mother was a teacher in Michigan for more than 25 years.

Through the Lenovo Scholar Network, students learn to code and develop mobile apps using a curriculum developed in partnership with MIT. NAF and Lenovo launched the program in 2013 with 10 NAF Academies and 400 students. Today, the network supports 6,000 students at 133 academies in 18 states and Washington, DC. Many of the NAF Academies participating across the U.S. have been able to offer an app development course for the very first time through this program.



Video: Watch the video on YouTube
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PDoVQLYoGvM

Another cool aspect of Lenovo Scholar Network has been enabling apps to market on the Play Store. Each year, student teams can submit their apps for a nationwide competition. More than 400 apps have been developed and submitted to the competition to date. Examples of winning submissions include apps focused on healthy eating and exercise, pulmonary rehabilitation, and public speaking.

At Lenovo, teachers from all over the country came together for a special training customized to their needs, with programming for those new to the program and for those returning this year. New participants received an overview of MIT App Inventor and even had the chance to try their hand at building two apps! NAF teachers left the training prepared and excited to share their knowledge in their home communities.



Why NAF Matters

While it's hugely important to us, the Lenovo Scholar Network is just one component of NAF. NAF is a national network of education, business, and community leaders who work together to ensure high school students are college, career, and future ready. The educational design is innovative and unique – careers in STEM abound at companies like Lenovo. In addition, NAF's focus on creating work-based learning experiences in high-need communities aligns with Lenovo's interest in advancing STEM education programs and increasing access to opportunity for diverse populations. We've also experienced first-hand NAF's tremendous impact on young people. In the summers of 2017 and 2018, Lenovo employed more than 80 Triangle-area, NC NAF student interns who held positions across multiple business units.

The implications of these efforts are exciting and important, and I'm grateful to all of our NAF educators who took the time to join us this week. I'm also very proud of Lenovo's commitment to developing the next generation of (STEM) professionals. I hope you'll take a closer look at NAF and volunteer opportunities, including corporate support for NAF programs. Click here to learn more and get involved. Together, we can inspire and nurture even more young people to be future ready.