



## Maker Spaces in the U.S. Virgin Islands



### Addressing the Digital Skills Gap

- **Public school students (and at-risk children) in the U.S. Virgin Islands have limited exposure to STEAM paths due to strained budgets and staff shortages.**
- Technical skills are useful in any career, and to apply for jobs. Students involved in STEAM/STEM activities are more likely to benefit even if they end up in non-technical areas.
- Pay scales, managerial and entrepreneurial opportunities are greater for those with STEAM/STEM backgrounds – even in non-STEM fields!
- Increasing opportunities for women, as minorities overall continue to make inroads into scientific arenas.

### Lack of Resources

- **Budget cuts force educators to purchase materials needed to support specialized student learning.**
- Lower adult digital literacy rates and less encouragement for STEM/STEAM endeavors.
- Lack of modern materials to spark interest for students and have available for educators.
- Public school teachers have larger class sizes and the challenge of stimulating minds and holding students' attention – many hands make light work!
- Busy parents who may not be able to transport children or limited public transportation options.

### Solution: STEAM Forward for Success

- **5-week and individual programs with activities and training in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics delivered direct to students.**
- Experiential, hands-on sessions to engage students socially and intellectually.
- Pre-testing, training and post-testing to track progress for measurable outcomes.
- In schools, maintain contact with instructors to track post-program progress and personal growth milestones.
- Opportunity for public/private partnership with multiple and long-lasting benefits.

### Carrying the Torch Forward

- **We would like to provide teachers with a lending library of quality resources with proper support.**
- viNGN's experienced Community Outreach Team along with civic-minded staffers will provide the variety of professional outlooks. We are good at this.
- Train the Trainer conducted by viNGN staff.
- We will be transforming classrooms into maker spaces.
- Community showcases will allow students to demonstrate their newly-acquired skills.
- We will require instructors to provide brief reports to viNGN each semester on how the equipment is being used.



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