

Outreach-in-a-Box: Discovering IT



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Outreach At-a-Glance

What is Outreach-in-a-Box?

Outreach-in-a-Box: Discovering IT is a complete set of classroom resources developed for computing professionals to use with middle-school students and educators during a class visit. Outreach-in-a-Box is an inclusive, activity-based classroom experience that gives male and female students an exciting introduction to information technology (IT): its core concepts, uses, possibilities, and career opportunities.

Why IT?

The number of students choosing to enter IT fields is diminishing just as the job opportunities are growing! Outreach-in-a-Box seeks to change students' perceptions of IT and encourage them to apply their creativity and skills to this exciting field. Sparking girls' interest is particularly important since they are significantly underrepresented in IT.

Imagine the Possibilities

Many adults recall an experience in youth that set them on their career path. Outreach-in-a-Box is your chance to engage and inspire young people at an age when they are excited about scientific and technical fields and respond positively to activity-based learning programs.

The Program

The class visit has three main components: Introduction to a computing professional from the students' very own community; Exploration of how students' interests and the world around them are shaped by technology; A "hands-on, minds-on" inquiry activity with a robotic car (NCWIT has one for you!) that helps students explore computing fundamentals.

Inside the Box

Outreach-in-a-Box provides all the components you need to deliver a successful classroom presentation at a local middle school. Simply download the "Box" from the NCWIT Web site at www.ncwit.org/outreach and follow the Program Guide as you "unpack" it, introduce it to your local school, and customize the materials for your own use.

Outreach-in-a-Box Materials List:

Advance Materials

- An introductory letter to school educators
- Set-the-stage and extension activities for the hosting educator
- Information for acquiring a robotic car, purchased for you by NCWIT Program Guide
- Preparation and presentation tips
- Ideas for engaging youth

Program Guide

- Preparation and presentation tips
- Ideas for engaging youth
- Lesson plan and extension activities that introduce computing fundamentals (no technology needed)

Presentation Template

- Slide presentation template

Extensions and Web Resources

Takeaway Tech

- A brochure that encourages students to explore opportunities, from virtual programming to camps, clubs, and competitions
- An extensive Web index of resources for students, their parents, and educators

Resources at the Ready

Visit the NCWIT Web site (www.ncwit.org/outreach) and download the materials you need for an inspired and inspiring program. Here you'll also find ideas for preparing and customizing materials for your visit, extension activities, sample letters, and a slide presentation.

Are you a teacher?

Invite a computing professional to visit your school and share Outreach-in-a-Box with him or her. A sample letter is included in Outreach to help you extend your invitation.

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