

## Base Camp Coding Academy Newsletter

COVID-19 has changed our world, at least for the time being. At Base Camp this has meant a time of learning, adapting, and creatively solving challenges.

### Interim Executive Director:

Kagan Coughlin, co-founder of Base Camp Coding Academy, will serve as the Interim Executive Director through these challenging times. 2020 was expected to be an exciting and challenging year for Base Camp as the program transitioned out of its pilot phase and into a fully scaled coding academy and anchor of the new Everest facility. **That has not changed.** With the added complexity of the global pandemic, we are pleased to have Kagan at the day-to-day helm through this period.

After a short pause our Board of Trustees will continue its search for a permanent Executive Director. If you know of candidates please pass them along to Kagan or Glen.

### Class of 2020:

The class of 2020 transitioned to distance learning in March. Our instructors and students have worked together to develop schedules and processes that help everyone with time management and remote collaboration.

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, the class presented their thesis projects virtually to the Base Camp board and this semester's mentors. Each year this is an exciting day, the culmination of a year of learning and hard work. This year was especially uplifting, to see these young professionals pushing through yet another layer of adversity, and delivering final projects that showed creative technical and social strategies to fulfill their project requirements.



*A very different Thesis Presentation day.*

**Graduation:** The in-person graduation ceremony for the class of 2020 has been postponed. Classes and course-work will be complete on May 8<sup>th</sup>, and a virtual gathering will be held to congratulate the students on their accomplishments. Chris Winton, Vice President of Human Resources at FedEx, will give a virtual commencement address and interact with the students.

**Employment:** Many companies are uncertain of their hiring needs at this time. Base Camp students have had a limited opportunity to interview remotely, thank you to those companies that have made these accommodations. Base Camp is committed to supporting this class through the interviewing and employment process, optimally later this summer or in the early fall. **If your company is looking for hard working, dedicated software developers, now or in the near term, please contact [Kagan@basecampcodingacademy.org](mailto:Kagan@basecampcodingacademy.org).**

### **Incoming Class of 2021:**

We are very excited about the students accepted to the incoming class of 2021, with this year again seeing the addition of new high schools joining our nomination network. Our processes have had to adjust in this space as well, as public schools have been out of session since spring break this year. Nominators are not at work, and their students are not in school. Thank you to all the nominators who have continued to serve their students from a distance!

The 2021 class start date may be delayed, and our instruction team is planning a rigorous onboarding to help our incoming students build their skills quickly when they are able to attend class. This may have an impact on graduation timelines for next spring, and we will work with our industry partners to align with their hiring needs. (The new Everest facility will allow for parallel programs, with the class of 2021 completing their full curriculum work, and the class of 2022 starting on schedule in their own space.)

### **Everest, Mississippi's First Rural Education and Innovation Hub:**

So many folks have risen to the challenges of these past few months. The teams that are renovating our future home are stand-outs, implementing health and safety procedures to adjust to the current environment, and miraculously *staying on schedule!*

We are on track to move Base Camp Coding Academy and a satellite campus for Northwest Mississippi Community College into Everest late this summer.



*Mayor Donald Gray speaking at the Everest groundbreaking January 24th.*



*Same space, same time of day, mid-April.*

### **Sean Anthony, Executive Director Emeritus:**

Sean Anthony was the first Base Camp Coding Academy hire in the spring of 2016. Sean was a crucial member of the planning and strategy team behind Base Camp, served in the classroom for 2.5 years, and has led the organization as Executive Director for the past 18 months. Sean's unparalleled gifts of organization and system building underpin every aspect of this program. Every past and future success of Base Camp Coding Academy is a straight-line result of his hard work and dedication.

We are excited about the impact Sean will have on the world in his next phase, and we will forever be grateful for the time he spent at Base Camp. (We are pleased to name Sean our Executive Director Emeritus, effectively keeping him forever in our support network.)

### **Thank You:**

Base Camp exists because of the people, companies, and organizations that stand behind it. Thank you to everyone who sees our youth as the foundation of Mississippi's tech future.



*For the fourth year Leigh Anne and Sean Tuohy's Making it Happen Foundation took the Base Camp class on a shopping spree for a week's worth of business clothing to prepare for their new careers! (This happened in February, pre-pandemic.)*

## **Base Camp Coding Academy Phase 2.0**

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Leigh Anne and Sean Tuohy with Making it Happen Foundation

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