PRESS RELEASE:

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Title: CodeJIKA pushes for 1m to try coding on their phone during Computer Science Education Week

A domestic non-profit organisation dedicated to bringing coding and 21st century skills into every school in the country is calling for one-million young South Africans to try their hand at coding for one hour during international Computer Science Education Week, from 3 December to 9 December, 2018.

Computer Science Education Week is an annual program dedicated to inspiring learners to take an interest in computer science.

The CodeJIKA.com initiative, is dedicated to raising awareness around the need for computer science and coding to be formally adopted in schools across Southern Africa. It believes that exposing the youth to coding and computer-based skills develops their computational and critical thinking skills and shows them how to create, not simply use, new technologies.

Young people are then also exposed to a possible career path they would not have previously considered – or even known about. Computer science skills also prepare the youth for the technological demands of the jobs of the future, regardless of field or occupation.

"South Africans can become creators, not just consumers of technology, and the youth are the ones who are going to make this happen," says Code for Change co-founder Jonathan Novotny.

CodeJIKA's call for one-million South Africans to get coding is to increase awareness and encourage local policymakers to adopt legislation that supports children learning computer science as a subject in schools.

How to Take Action

To get involved, all you need to do is visit www.codejika.com/5min on your cellphone. This will take you to a page that will allow you build your first website in only five minutes and demonstrate how code works in HTML. It's a great first step for anyone wanting to learn how to code.

"It's a phenomenal way to engage and just have fun with a new skill which is future-safe and exciting" says Sibusiso Khoza, Provincial Coding League Manager at CodeJIKA.com .
Screenshot: 5-Minute-Website

If you're an educator or group leader with access to ten PCs, then organising a coding event around the 1-Hour-Website is the next step. Everybody can do this one, either with their church, their club, a birthday party or school class. The 1-Hour-Website is a way to bring everyone together and see who can complete it within the hour. There's a bonus section and a surprise result in the end.

It's a very dynamic, no-internet-needed event that creates a web landing page using what's already installed on the PCs - The built in browser, notepad and instructions. No installations are needed. Start here: www.codejika.com/1hour

Why is coding important?

As the workplace and job requirements evolve, candidates highly skilled in computer science, programming and coding are increasingly in demand.

International companies such as JP Morgan, Tesla and Microsoft encourage a basic understanding of programming and computer science for all their staff. Contrary to the perception that advanced computer skills are only valuable for information technology (IT) professions, over 70% of computing occupations are outside of the IT industry. A knowledge of computer science is increasingly critical in research, finance and manufacturing.

South Africa's Department of Education (DBE) has also acknowledged that computer skills drive innovation in almost all industries and fields of study, stating in a recent publication that, "Computing deals with information processes buried in the deep structures of many fields - for example, quantum waves in physics, DNA in biology, brain patterns in cognitive science, and information flows in economic systems."

About CodeJIKA

CodeJIKA's primary focus is the establishment of student-run coding clubs in secondary schools. These clubs compete for prizes and encourage other students to participate in coding, programming and computer science.

Code for Change has the following goals for education in South Africa:
- Introduce a new computer science (CS) Elective in secondary schools
- Ensure the new CS elective covers entry-level course requirements for CS University degrees
- Introduce mandatory ICT Classes for all 8th and 9th graders
- Encourage mobile operators to offer free access to mobile-friendly educational resources, especially those that offer CS themes

The organisation works closely with the DBE for the increased uptake of computer science in South African schools and ensure that what is learned can be transferred into policy or curriculum revision in the future.

The campaign has been adopted and supported by dozens of educational projects throughout the country and has seen a very enthusiastic uptake both online and offline in Mpumalanga and Limpopo. It also enjoys support from local and international corporates organisations such as Microsoft, Dell, DataTec, Tata Consultancy Services, PNET, IRESS and others.

To get in touch sign up at www.codejika.com or contact the team members below:

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