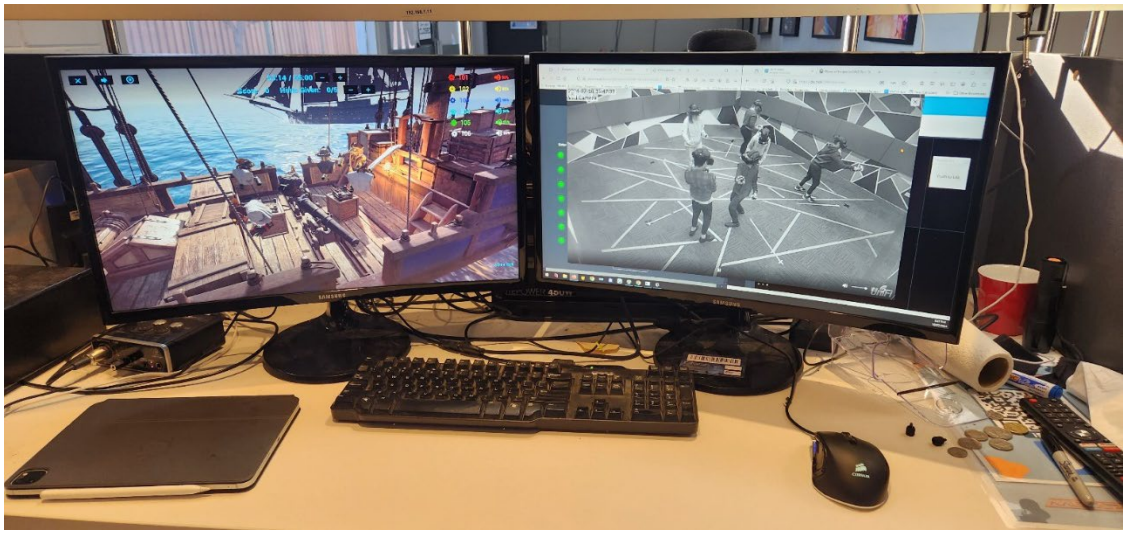
IMPACT STORY: Canberra, Australia

Regional Teen Summit Leads to a Member Job

YWCA Canberra Clubhouse

During the Regional Teen Summit, teen members experimented with coding and gaming. Some took an excursion to the Academy of Interactive Entertainment (AIE), an Australian video games and computer animation school, where they participated in a game development workshop using Unreal Engine. Another excursion took members to Metaphysica Virtual Reality, which offers action games, immersive escape rooms (in which members participated), and a gaming coding camp for young people.

One 12-year-old Clubhouse member named Samuel Jordan became especially interested in game development. After the Summit, he went on to participate in the GMTK Game Jam, an annual game-making marathon where individuals and teams try to make a game that fits a theme in a very short time period. The theme for 2024 was “Built to Scale” and participants had 4 days to complete their new game. Building on the skills he acquired during AIE’s workshop with Unreal Engine, he created a game called “Catch the Mouse” where a player must move through a virtual house to find and catch a mouse. Due to many obstacles along the way, a player must change their height and weight to move through these successfully.



Samuel was also one of 2 recipients of a paid scholarship to complete Metaphysica’s Code Crafters Club. This is a fun, interactive program for teens to learn more about computers, coding, and how to make their own computer games.

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After a few weeks of completing this 9-week course, Samuel approached the founder and CEO at Metaphysica to ask about getting a job there. He presented the relevant Australian Capital Territory legislation showing the parameters of employing someone of his age, and **he got hired**! He now works at Metaphysica helping to set up the VR escape rooms and assisting customers with adjusting the VR gear.

"We are proud of Samuel, who has always shown a consistent drive to challenge himself. He is an inspiration to his fellow members and Clubhouse staff." - *Annie-Lea Rowley, Clubhouse Coordinator*

Watch this short video made by 2 other members from the YWCA Canberra Clubhouse: https://youtu.be/Buv1JvIlqtQ (01:30)

And to learn more about the Clubhouse in Canberra, please visit https://theclubhousenetwork.org/locations/canberra/

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