

Denver Software Company Shares Passion for the Arts with Local High School Students through the YOUTH DESIGN Program

Local Matters Participates in National Teen Mentoring Program for Third Consecutive Summer

DENVER, August 17- The words Illustrator®, Flash® and InDesign®¹ don't mean much to the average high school student. But, to a budding art student, they are computer programs integral to transforming their talents into a future profession. With shrinking resources at a number of public high schools across the nation, how can a student prepare for the future? For the past three summers, Denver-based software publisher [Local Matters](#) has given local public high school students a solution—providing interns a glimpse into how a love of art can become a career.

Local Matters partners with [YOUTH DESIGN Denver](#), a paid internship program that exposes creative-minded high-school students to the design community. Piloted in Boston in 2003, YOUTH DESIGN now has programs in several locations, including Boston, Rhode Island and Denver. Local Matters, a Denver-based software pioneer in [online local search and advertising solutions](#), is the only Colorado company participating in the youth development process this year.

“Many art students struggle to find direction on how they can turn their talents into a profession,” said Jason Kallas, Creative Director at Local Matters and Youth Design program mentor. “Local Matters participation with Youth Design Denver gives us an opportunity to give students better visibility into the world of design. Our team gets to give back to our community and profession while investing in our youth.”

Kallas, a former college graphic design adjunct professor, and his team of designers and information architects mentor and share their collective experiences with this summer's intern Jaime Midgyett as she works on her independent project—researching, conceptualizing and developing an iPhone app designed to help budget-conscious students map out their weekend plans with friends. Midgyett's internship is highly structured, designed to balance the 6-week program between an independent project and job shadowing various designers in the Denver community.

“I am grateful to have ongoing support from committed professional designers like Jason Kallas and his team at Local Matters as we look to grow and expand YOUTH DESIGN across the country to reach more students,” said Youth Design founder Denise Korn. “Local Matters and AIGA Denver have been pivotal in keeping the program vibrant in Denver and set a perfect example for how everyone benefits from this type of mentoring. We find that our stellar kids, often under-served with the available resources in the schools, bring fresh ideas and perspective into the firms where they are placed and the mentees share their energy and enthusiasm.”

This fall Midgyett will begin her junior year at The Denver School for the Arts. Jaime's art teacher encouraged her to participate in Youth Design to help get better acquainted with the graphic design planning process and computer design programs, which are tough to teach during the school year. It's a decision Jaime's glad she made.

"Youth Design Denver has been an incredible experience," said Midgyett. "At Local Matters, I've learned a lot about what goes into designing a product for a client and the range of professions out there for people interested in design—everything from the study of usability to the construction of products. I honestly never thought about what goes into building a webpage or database that holds so much information or even the small things that a design team has to think about when pulling it all together."

Midgyett will present her final project work to Local Matters, Youth Design Denver leaders and other Denver area graphic design mentors at the program graduation on August 18th. Her work will also be showcased at the graduation at Boston's Institute for Contemporary Art on August 19th alongside the national participants from this summer.

The Denver community can also support young designers at the Sept. 30th charity fundraiser, Bordo Bello. Bordo Bello is an annual charity event hosted by AIGA Colorado, in which all proceeds from the auction go to fund local mentorship programs, including Youth Design Denver. In 2009, the event raised over \$6,500 to Access Gallery and Youth Design Denver. Learn more or RSVP at www.bordobello.com.

To learn more about the opportunities at Local Matters, please visit us online at www.localmatters.com/careers.

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Local Media Opportunities

- Follow Jaime's experiences on the Local Matters' blog at www.localmatters.com/blog.
- For more information on Youth Design Denver or the Bordo Bello fundraiser, contact Denver's Mentorship Director Elysia Syriac at 720.984.2801.
- For interview and/or photo opportunities, contact Jess at jnelson@localmatters.com.

National Media Opportunities

- For more information on Youth Design the National Media contact for all Youth Design inquiries is Youth Design Founder Denise Korn at 617.266.8112 or denise@youthdesign.org.
- Learn more about Youth Design at <http://youthdesign.org/>.
- Check out the work of Youth Design students in Boston at <http://youthdesign.org/blog/> or [find us on Facebook](#).

About Local Matters

Local Matters provides technology solutions to online publishers of local information to help them achieve leadership

in local search and advertising.

With over 18 million unique monthly visitors worldwide, Local Matters has the proven experience in technology, local search and consumer behavior to support your initiative. Local Matters empowers dozens of the world's top local media brands. With over 100 employees and offices in Denver, Amsterdam, and Melbourne, Local Matters has been an established leader in digital solutions for publishers since 2002. For more information, visit www.localmatters.com.

About Youth Design

Youth Design is a paid internship program that introduces public high school students to careers in design through hands-on work experience. Students spend the summer working side by side with professional designers in some of the best firms and design-driven organizations, exploring their creative passions while learning to transform their raw talent into marketable skills.

Mentoring organizations range from boutique graphic design firms to the creative departments of major corporations, and from printing companies to advertising and technology agencies. Each of these environments helps open a world of opportunity to inner-city kids – giving them firsthand insight into the profession, the chance to develop their design and technology skills, and the confidence they need to pursue a rewarding career in design. In turn, the students make valuable contributions to the offices where they work, offering fresh ideas and unique perspectives.

Piloted in Boston in 2003, Youth Design now has programs in several locations, including Rhode Island and Denver, Colorado. Youth Design builds community in the cities where it operates and injects energy and diversity into the region's creative workforce.

Footnote:

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