



Ashley Rappa  
Director of Marketing & Communications  
Lincoln School  
401-455-1195  
[arappa@lincolnschool.org](mailto:arappa@lincolnschool.org)

Liz Buddington  
Assistant Director of Development  
Sophia Academy  
401-784-0021  
[lbuddington@sophia-academy.org](mailto:lbuddington@sophia-academy.org)

April 24, 2017

**For Immediate Release:**

**The Future is Female: Lincoln School and Sophia Academy Hackathon  
Paves the Way for Girls in Tech**

**Collaboration Between Two Schools Creates First All-Girls Hackathon in Rhode Island**

Providence, RI (April 24, 2017) — Lincoln School and Sophia Academy cohosted the first all-girls hackathon in Rhode Island, Girls Hack the World, to provide an inspiring space for hands-on coding, problem solving and collaboration. This event encouraged girls and young women to pursue an interest in computer science and tech fields, a necessary step to rectify the gender imbalance in STEAM professions.

On Saturday, April 22, Earth Day, an enthusiastic group of 75 students in Grades 5–10 from both Sophia Academy and Lincoln School worked together to build and code apps and games designed to create real-world solutions to help Rhode Island’s environment.

Girls Hack the World kicked off on Thursday, April 20, with two keynote speakers. Roopa Parekh, New England market vice president of [Konica Minolta](#), a sponsor of Girls Hack the World, shared life-changing experiences while attending school in Nepal. Parekh encouraged participants to step out of their comfort zones and see the world from different perspectives. Theresa Moore, the founder and president of [T-Time Productions](#), an organization that creates digital apps which reflect the country’s changing demographics, took the girls through an app creation with tips and information about the obstacles she has overcome.

The full-day hackathon was held on Saturday, April 22, at Lincoln School. The day started with speaker Sophie Houser, a Brown University sophomore, graduate of Girls Who Code, co-creator of the viral app Tampon Run, and co-author of the recently released [Girl Code: Gaming, Going Viral, and Getting it Done](#). Each participant received a signed copy of the book.

“There are lots of barriers that the outside world imposes on you, but don’t let your inner personal barriers — fears you won’t succeed, that you’re not smart enough or good enough — get in your way. If you put yourself down or don’t believe in yourself... then you

won't get anywhere. But if you pursue your goals, even in small ways, you'd be surprised about what you're capable of doing," said Houser.

Houser was introduced by Kimani Perry, senior at Lincoln and graduate of Sophia Academy.

"Sophia Academy taught me how to stand up for what I believe in, to be loud and be strong. It made me who I am today. Lincoln taught me to never back down, that women can do just about anything, and that our brains, not our bodies, are our strongest quality," said Perry. "We are so happy to welcome Sophie Houser, who found a way to channel her voice and show that women have the ability to dominate in any field, that woman can build and change the world. She, and all of us today, are making the slogan 'The Future is Female' a reality."

During the hackathon, participants were divided into teams of two to four students from both schools who worked with a mentor. The role of the mentor was to help the team organize the design process, guide them to use the code.org platform, encourage them to step out of their comfort zone and take risks to create a true hack.

"There was such a buzz in the room and so much creativity going around. Whether they came in with little coding experience or a lot of experience, they left with accomplished problem solving skills that will last a lifetime," said Susan Amsler-Akacem, head of Lincoln's Ed. Tech department and technology innovator.

Apps created at Girls Hack the World covered a variety of topics all related to Earth Day:

- **Compost Crunch:** This app has three bins: compost, recycling and trash. Objects come falling from the sky and the goal is to drag them into the right bin
- **Turtle Chaos:** The goal of this game is to guide a sea turtle to the ocean through an obstacle course of litter. Help her find her way home!
- **Plant Some Trees:** Plant some trees and clear the clouds! Each time you click the screen, a tree will be planted and the earth will be better off.

"The hackathon was a great experience that made me aware of my capabilities and how I can make my mark in society," said a student participant. "It was hard and we didn't get what we imagined. But we did get something better!"

Girls Hack the World is the first collaboration of this scale between Lincoln School and Sophia Academy, two all-girls independent schools offering unique and empowering educational opportunities helping young women to reach their full potential. Both schools integrate coding and technology into their curriculum and are excited to deepen their collaboration to address the lack of girls and women in the industry.

Girls Hack the World sponsors and donors for the event included: Microsoft, Konica Minolta, Cox Communications, Dassault Systemes, Ximedica, Center for Women and Enterprise, and Girls Who Code.

## ABOUT THE COLLABORATORS:



Lincoln School is an all-girls Quaker independent school for grades 1–12 and co-ed infant–kindergarten located on the East Side of Providence. Learn more at [www.lincolnschool.org](http://www.lincolnschool.org).



SOPHIA ACADEMY  
REFLECTING WISDOM IN THE GIRL

Sophia Academy is changing the lives of middle school girls from low income families through an empowering education; Sophia is located in the Elmwood neighborhood of Providence. Learn more at <https://sophia-academy.org/>.

## MEDIA CONTACT:

To find out more about Girls Hack the World, contact Ashley Rappa at Lincoln School, 401-455-1195 or [arappa@lincolnschool.org](mailto:arappa@lincolnschool.org); or Liz Buddington at Sophia Academy, 401-784-0021 or [lbuddington@sophia-academy.org](mailto:lbuddington@sophia-academy.org).

## Photos (attached in email):

**Hackathon1:** Speaker Roopa Parekh with Lincoln Head of School Suzanne Fogarty

**Hackathon2:** Lincoln Head of School Suzanne Fogarty, speaker Theresa Moore, Sophia Academy Head of School GiGi DiBello

**Hackathon3:** Two examples of student-created apps

**Hackathon4:** Keynote speaker Sophie Houser (green shirt) mentoring her team

**Hackathon5:** Hackathon participants, mentors, and volunteers