

# News Release



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For Immediate Release

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## **Bridgestone Hosts “Code Academy” Showcase and Competition with Boys & Girls Clubs of Middle Tennessee**

- **Bridgestone welcomed Club kids from Boys & Girls Clubs of Middle Tennessee to Bridgestone Tower for a showcase and competition celebrating the culmination of this summer’s “Code Academy” program.**
- **Nineteen Club teams showcased app projects they developed with computer coding skills learned during the program to compete for a top prize and “People’s Choice” award.**
- **This year’s Code Academy was made possible through a \$100,000 Technology and Transportation Grant from Bridgestone’s *Driving Great Future* initiative.**

**NASHVILLE, Tenn. (July 28, 2023)** – [Bridgestone Retail Operations](#) (Bridgestone), a subsidiary of [Bridgestone Americas](#), today welcomed Club kids and their families to Bridgestone Tower for a special STEM showcase and competition celebrating participants of this summer’s Boys & Girls Clubs of Middle Tennessee “Code Academy.” The program, which provides area youth the opportunity to learn about computer coding and shift their perception on careers in technology, was made possible this year through a \$100,000 donation from Bridgestone’s *Driving Great Future* initiative with Boys & Girls Clubs of America.

The main event followed a series of lead-up competitions and featured Code Academy’s top 19 teams pitching their app projects to a panel of professionals who selected a winner. Attendees including President of Bridgestone Retail Operations Marko Ibrahim, CEO of Boys & Girls Clubs of Middle Tennessee Eric Higgs, civic leaders, Bridgestone teammates, and Club families, staff and board members also voted on a “People’s Choice” award.

“At Bridgestone, we understand the power technology carries and the pathways it opens for young people to unlock their full potential, but not every child has equal access to those resources,” said Marko Ibrahim, President, Bridgestone Retail Operations. “We’re honored to support Boys & Girls Clubs of Middle Tennessee as they change that dynamic and provide our hometown youth with critical STEM skills that drive great futures.”

Earlier this year, Boys & Girls Clubs of Middle Tennessee were one of four Clubs nationwide to be awarded a \$100,000 Technology and Transportation Grant from Bridgestone's *Driving Great Futures* initiative. The funding allowed their Code Academy, now in its third year, to double its number of sites across Davidson and Williamson counties and expand to both summer and school-day engagement. This year's Code Academy has reached more than 500 area youth to date, with a goal of 650 by the end of 2023. A survey of recent Code Academy participants found 85% were interested in a career in STEM or coding and 91% believed technology can change the world, indicating growing youth interest in STEM when compared to results from the previous year.

"It's hard to be what you can't see," said Eric Higgs, CEO, Boys & Girls Clubs of Middle Tennessee. "Code Academy is allowing young people to see the various pathways into the tech industry, the career opportunities and what that future could look like. Most importantly, it allows them to see what that future could look like because they are in it."

In 2015, Bridgestone established its national partnership with Boys & Girls Clubs of America with the mission of making out-of-school programming more accessible to Club youth and their families. Through donations collected at the company's 2,200+ retail stores, Bridgestone has contributed more than \$20 million to address transportation-related needs, including maintenance and repairs of existing Club vehicles and the purchase of new vans, as well as bridge technology divides through investments in new computers, hotspots and more that support in-person Club programming, virtual classroom learning and other technology infrastructure needs.

The Bridgestone *Driving Great Futures* partnership aligns with the Bridgestone E8 Commitment that consists of eight Bridgestone-like values starting with the letter "E" to realize a sustainable society. The Driving Great Futures initiative is an example of the company's commitment to "Empowerment," which is defined as contributing to a society that ensures accessibility and dignity for all and "Emotion", defined as inspiring excitement and spreading joy to the world of mobility.

For more Bridgestone company news visit [BridgestoneAmericas.com](https://www.bridgestoneamericas.com).

**About Bridgestone Americas, Inc.:**

*Bridgestone Americas, Inc. is the U.S.-based subsidiary of Bridgestone Corporation, a global leader in tires and rubber, building on its expertise to provide solutions for safe and sustainable mobility. Headquartered in Nashville, Tenn., Bridgestone Americas employs more than 50,000 people across its worldwide operations. Bridgestone offers a diverse product portfolio of premium tires and advanced solutions backed by innovative technologies, improving the way people around the world move, live, work and play.*

**About Bridgestone Retail Operations, LLC:**

*Bridgestone Retail Operations, LLC (BSRO) is headquartered in Nashville, Tenn. and operates the largest network of company-owned automotive service providers in the world — more than 2,200 tire and vehicle service centers across the United States —*

*including Firestone Complete Auto Care, Tires Plus, Hibdon Tires Plus and Wheel Works store locations. Credit First National Association and Firestone Complete Fleet Care operations are also part of BSRO. BSRO is a member of the Bridgestone Americas family of companies.*

**About Boys & Girls Clubs of America**

*For over 160 years, Boys & Girls Clubs of America ([BGCA.org](https://www.bgca.org)) has provided a safe place for kids and teens to learn and grow. Clubs offer caring adult mentors, fun and friendship, and high-impact youth development programs on a daily basis during critical non-school hours. Boys & Girls Clubs programming promotes academic success, good character and leadership, and healthy lifestyles. More than 5,000 Clubs serve over 3.6 million young people through Club membership and community outreach. Clubs are located in cities, towns, public housing and on Native lands throughout the country, and serve military families in BGCA-affiliated Youth Centers on U.S. military installations worldwide. National headquarters are located in Atlanta. Learn more about Boys & Girls Clubs of America on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).*

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