

## **Wanted: Virtual Mentors for Girl Game Company**

### ***What is Girl Game Company?***

The aim of the *Girl Game Company* is to increase middle school girls' interest, ability, and motivation to pursue courses and careers in computer science. Activities include after-school instruction in game design, field trips to local colleges and technology companies, family events, and career identity exploration that includes virtual mentors. The program is currently funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF) – Information Technology Experiences for Students and Teachers (ITEST). Education, Training, Research (ETR) Associates (a non-profit organization in Santa Cruz County) is working with the Pajaro Valley Unified School District's Extended Learning Program to implement the Girl Game Company with rural, middle school girls in Watsonville, California. Most of the participants are Latina girls, and 85% come from Spanish-speaking households. Currently, there are 55 girls involved, and they range in age from 11 to 13.

### ***What is the Goal of Involving Virtual Mentors?***

Virtual mentors will provide the students of the Girl Game Company with guidance and support to explore their interests in computer science careers and higher education. Mentors will answer girls' questions and provide information about their jobs or college experience, including their strategies and challenges for achieving their current position. This might include talking about balancing personal goals with family commitments, or dealing with diversity and equity issues in the workplace.

### ***How Does it Work?***

Mentors will interact with girls virtually, using an email/office which protects girls' privacy and prevents them from being exposed to spam. Mentors will receive an email stating that they have an email waiting for them from their mentee. A link will be provided within the email that will direct them to a site where they can respond to their mentee. Program staff will provide mentors and mentees with suggestions for questions to ask and topics to address.

### ***How do I know if I qualify to be a Virtual Mentor?***

These are the capabilities we are looking for:

- Work or study in a computational field
- Interested in supporting the dreams of young girls
- Have access to email
- Willing to respond to messages at least once/week
- Bilingual/bicultural mentors strongly encouraged

### ***What is the Time Commitment?***

The goal is for interaction to happen at least once a week through the remainder of the program (December 2008-July 2009). Some mentors may choose to continue communicating with girls after they graduate from the program (possibly playing a critical role in follow-up activities). Initially, there will be specific activities to help mentors get to know their mentee. Other activities will happen periodically throughout the program, but most communication will consist of weekly check-ins. No communication will be expected to take place during holidays.

### ***How do I apply?***

If you have any questions feel free to contact Jacob Martinez, project coordinator, at 831-331-7419 or [jacobm@etr.org](mailto:jacobm@etr.org).

### **Link to application:**

[https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=tqa5BHmV2rSwSTvSn7LT1w\\_3d\\_3d](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=tqa5BHmV2rSwSTvSn7LT1w_3d_3d)

Thank you,  
Jacob Martinez