

The Next IT Girl

By Shawnta S. Barnes – July 24, 2017



“Black women are more likely to express interest in majoring in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) fields when they enter college, but they are less likely to earn a degree in these fields.” -The American Psychological Association



This quote is on the homepage of The Next IT Girl's [website](#) and it drives the Founder and CEO Napiya Nubuya, an IT professional, to change this narrative.

SB: What caused you to launch The Next IT girl?

NN: I moved to Indy almost two years ago for a job in IT. I was at a crossroads. I thought, "What is my passion? What am I placed here on this earth for?" First, I decided to become a fashion blogger. I thought it was a good fit for me and would fulfill me.

When I graduated from my university, I was one of three Black girls in computer science throughout the years I was there. It wasn't until I started working in corporate America, I saw up close how few women – especially women of color there were in the tech industry.

I began contemplating all the pros and cons I faced during college and wanted to know why there weren't more women who looked like me in this field. I completely did away with my fashion blog and decided to take a different route and create a solution that would increase the presence of women of color. The Next IT Girl was then founded in 2015, in fashion, “the next it girl” is a popular phrase, so I took that to combine my love for fashion and technology and used it to name my organization.

SB: How does The Next IT Girl make a difference for girls of color?

NN: The Next IT Girl is comprised of a network of women of color in IT who are adamant representation matters. For example, when you have people come and speak at a school, but no one of color is a speaker, the message just does not translate the same to the children of color in the audience. When young girls see successful women who look like them, they are more likely to be receptive. Through The Next IT Girl, young girls can learn about the field from women of color in the field. We mentor, educate, and advance them and help them on the IT path.

We offer workshops that are open to the public. Our target is girls of color ages 8-22. This summer we are wrapping up a summer workshop series. Many underrepresented students don't have access to technology courses in their school. We want those students to have the opportunity to access that knowledge. Similar organizations may have a heavy focus on coding, but I wanted to be sure we covered various aspects of IT such as hardware versus software and database management.

SB: Do you have any partnerships?

NN: We partnered with [ACE Prep Academy](#). It's a new charter school in a great central location. We both want to create opportunities so these children will have a different tomorrow. We would love to partner with other community organizations also. We host workshops year round. If you are interested in becoming a partner or sponsor, we offer the resources and will work with you to determine the best workshop to meet your needs.

SB: How will you know that you have made a difference?

NN: I will know I have accomplished my mission when I have at least 20 girls walk across the stage with a technology degree, who wouldn't have considered a possible career in technology prior to joining The Next IT Girl.

SB: Final thoughts?

NN: I want people to know it takes a village. We can offer great workshops and resources, but the community and families have to support these children and encourage them to get involved in tech.

To sign up for The Next It Girl workshop, click [here](#).