NEWS RELEASE
FEDERAL RESERVE BANK of KANSAS CITY
DENVER • OKLAHOMA CITY • OMAHA

KANSAS CITY FED ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF ANNUAL CODE-A-THON
Pittsburg State named champions, UCM awarded second place

KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI – The Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City announced a team from Pittsburg State University (PSU) won first place in the fourth annual Kansas City Fed Code-A-Thon. This was the first year that PSU participated in the two-day virtual event, which drew 11 teams from nine universities across the country.

"I was truly amazed at the professionalism, the depth of thought the competitors put into the subject matter and the polish on these applications in less than 48 hours," said Brian Faros, vice president and chief information officer at the Kansas City Fed.

The Kansas City Fed Code-A-Thon is an annual event to encourage and inspire computer science and engineering collegiate students. The competition kicked off Oct. 25 and teams worked for 48 hours to come up with software solutions for a problem presented by Kansas City Fed staff. Kansas City Fed IT professionals worked with Community Development advisors to determine the challenge for this year's participants: develop a tool to help entrepreneurs create or support their small business. Finalists presented solutions to judges on Nov. 7.

"You learn so much by doing these Code-A-Thons," said Chris Evans, team leader of the winning PSU team, Gorillaz. "Getting to meet people who think entirely different from you – it really challenges you to make amazing things."

Team Gorillaz' first place solution was a social media platform called Entrepreneurchute, which connects small business owners with mentors and entrepreneurs who can offer support for specific problems. A team from the University of Central Missouri (UCM), Fighting Mongooses, won second place for their website Binder, which links business owners with potential employees.

"Not only does this teach us a thing or two about tech and working with people, but it builds camaraderie for everybody participating," said Marco Tordero, a Fighting Mongooses team member and repeat Code-A-Thon participant. UCM teams won first place in the 2017 and 2018 Code-A-Thons.

The third-place team, GitWrecked from the University of Kansas, presented ValleyFind, a website that provides data on area businesses, real estate prices, traffic and air quality to help entrepreneurs determine the best location for their business.

"Each team should feel very proud of themselves for what they put into developing their solutions," said Jackson Winsett, assistant vice president and Community Affairs officer. "I can see each solution being used by entrepreneurs, economic development organizations and even a part of mainstream social media applications."

Nearly half of Kansas City Fed employees are IT professionals. Through Code-A-Thon and other programs, the Bank supports STEM education efforts and develop a talent pipeline. Information regarding next year's Code-A-Thon will be announced on the event's webpage.

As the regional headquarters of the nation's central bank, the Kansas City Fed and its branch offices in Denver, Oklahoma City and Omaha serve the seven states of the Tenth District: Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Wyoming, northern New Mexico and western Missouri.

###