



Computer Clubhouse Case Histories Speak for Themselves: *Latoya R.*

Even though 15-year-old Latoya must take an hour-long train ride by herself to get to the Clubhouse after school, she is motivated. She especially likes to come on Mondays when as she says, “no guys are allowed.” The Clubhouse sets aside Mondays as **Girls Day**, a special time for young women to work with technology in ways that are relevant and inviting to them, with the support of female mentors and staff.

“What has been my biggest achievement since I came to the Clubhouse? That would be my balloon project. It’s a weather balloon with a cricket, a microcomputer that records data. I had to program it. I went up on the roof with the balloon and took the temperature every 10 seconds. I got this really cool graph. The project got second place

in the Boston science fair. I’m moving on to something else now. I’m thinking about my next idea. But for now...there are a whole lot of guys here who make movies so I suggested to the girls that we make a movie. I’m the director. My friend Alexia is the main actress, and she’s done most of the music. A couple more edits and we’ll be done. The movie’s called ‘The Last Time’. It takes place on a train with a guy, and a girl and her friends who try to help them get back together. We leave it as a cliffhanger...you decide what happens. What it’s about is the past. When you see it, you either have to face it, or scratch it and start over again. I have a pretty clear picture of what I want to do. I want to be a computer engineer. I didn’t like science at first, but now I love it, and I love computers.”

Latoya was introduced to the Clubhouse through **Beyond Black Boxes**, a special science program for girls developed by the Computer Clubhouse in collaboration with the Girl Scouts. Now she is a teen mentor at the Computer Clubhouse, inspiring younger girls to explore their interests and ideas in the supportive environment of the Clubhouse. Although she is only 15, she knows she wants to go to the New York Institute of Technology, Rutgers University or Boston University. She says she found NYIT on the web and was impressed, has been to Rutgers for a visit and thought it was “awesome” and is on the BU campus often to use the library and other resources. To see Latoya’s weather balloon, go to <http://www.computerclubhouse.org>

