

Talent Center in Action: CTY Greece

Transforming problems and challenges into ideas and opportunities:

New digital summer courses

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“The measure of intelligence is the ability to change.”

— Albert Einstein

The dismay and confusion stirred by the COVID-19 outbreak across Europe didn't take long to reach our doorstep here at CTY Greece. In the last months, schools were closed down, social distancing was enforced and the country finally came to a complete lockdown in late March, to help control the spread of the virus.

And as scientists were racing to understand and contain this

novel virus, CTY Greece began turning the coronavirus pandemic into an opportunity for change and improvement, adopting a mindset of progress through new ideas and ways of offering educational experiences to its students. It is not the first time that CTY Greece has been fast at adapting to real-world conditions (let us not forget the financial crisis Greece faced in 2015 with major economic consequences for its citizens and stakeholders). But being a talent center, CTY Greece's people have always been geared toward flexibility, re-design, innovation and an unceasing drive to advance and improve every program and service they offer. After all, these are the kind of principles that are passed onto the talented students who join the CTY Greece community. They are encouraged to express their ideas and are empowered to believe that their contribution can (and will) make a change in the world they live in. So, it was actually quite natural for something new to emerge swiftly given the current worldwide situation. Thus, a new digital program - the **CTY Greece Digital Summer Program** - has been developed for the gifted and talented youth of Greece and Cyprus.

As educators, we are challenged in teaching face-to-face classes when the health and safety of students and teachers need to be guarded, as is the case in these extraordinary times. However, as pedagogues, we have the duty to serve the needs of our students regardless of impediments. Thus, the new digital program emerged as an addition to our existing online program. The program will be based on a combination of synchronous and asynchronous teaching. And of course, it will incorporate a fun activities program aimed at providing opportunities for students to play, have fun and bond with their peers. Already it is looking like an

amazing program that will spark student enthusiasm and provide unique academic experiences to our students. Let us not forget that talented students, like all students, have different learning styles and we have seen from our existing online programs, that some students can really sparkle in



an online learning environment – we are referring to those particular students who stress in brick-and-mortar schools and who unleash their talents when they feel they are not fully exposed. We need to provide blended learning experiences to all of our students, combining online, digital and face-to-face opportunities according to their needs and to the situations that they face.

But apart from an unparalleled experience for its students, CTY Greece views the new digital summer program as a superb training opportunity for its instructors to reach a higher level of professionalism. CTY Greece educators have already begun to be trained in the technology needed for their online courses and are becoming equipped with best practices and strategies that go hand in hand with effective online teaching.

For CTY Greece the difference between status quo and reaching higher goals, for both students and educators, is based on a pro-active improvement attitude, on innovative thinking and on working hard as a team to turn problems into solutions and opportunities!

“However difficult life may seem, there is always something you can do and succeed at.” Stephen Hawking

Link: <https://www.cty-greece.gr/en>