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## Scenes from Miami Hack Week: And the winning hack is out of this world

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Nancy Dahlberg  
January 28, 2022

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What a fitting finale for the 2022 Miami Hack Week: The winner was Cosmic NFT, a team from the Hard Tech House that launched a weather balloon into space and minted the world's first NFT in space.

The group of hackers (some of them shown above) at the Hard Tech Miami House gave a voice to the growing, ambitious population of Miami engineers and founders building tech companies that involve more than pure software, said Channing Pear, founder of Hard Tech Miami.

“They launched weather balloons with a geospatial satellite communication system to space in order to mint an NFT,” Channing said. “They built an industrial robotic arm and computer vision system to harvest mycelium. They built brain sensing glasses that help you stay productive. In teams of wide ranging skillsets, they hacked day and night to get to expo and show what can be built in Miami.”



Hard Tech Miami ([hardtechmiami.com](https://hardtechmiami.com)) is a community of ambitious founders, engineers, investors, advisors, and the surrounding ecosystem of people enthusiastic about solving frontier technology problems, he said. They started mid 2021 and have grown to 200 members, all working in industries like robotics, manufacturing, biotech, and even quantum computing. They're on a mission to develop Miami into a hub for this type of innovation, and their presence in Miami Hack Week is just one piece of the puzzle. Pear says if you'd like to get involved, follow @HardTechMiami on Twitter and look at their website, [hardtechmiami.com](https://hardtechmiami.com).

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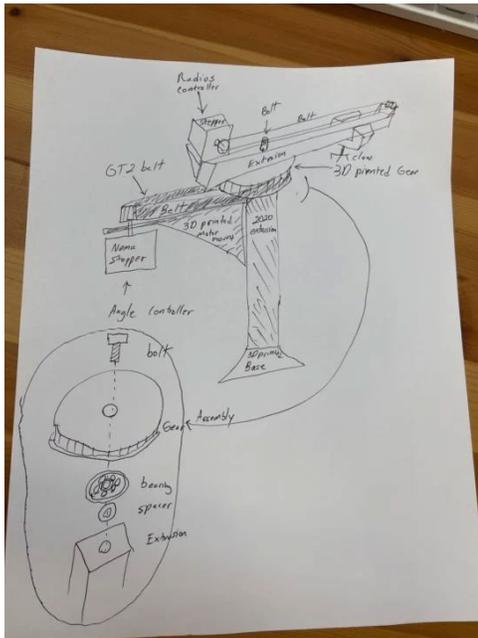
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Scenes from the Hard Tech House. Yea, this looks hard.





The Hard Tech House was just one of two dozen around the city that opened up to hacker groups, in addition to co-working spaces, Hacker HQ and Hack@Campus.

“It’s unbelievable to see Miami Hack Week come to life! I’ve met developers who flew in from all over the world to build something together with complete strangers. The level of innovation, skill, optimism, and collaboration is something unique to Miami. Building down here for a week whether it’s a part of Miami Hack Week or not is something I highly recommend for developers everywhere to do at least once. You’ll never get the full understanding from an article or blog post. You absolutely have to experience it to understand it,” said Michelle Bakels, who gave a talk on developer health at CIC and helped organize the Shrimp Society women’s brunch.

Over at Hack@Campus, for Miami Dade College and FIU students, Kennashka DeSilva’s team of four was building on the polygon blockchain.

The team created an application that provides blockchain rewards for students who complete community service hours, and included the API from the City of Miami 311 database to create a student initiative in community clean-up and governance, said DeSilva, an MDC student who is VP of the Tech Society Club. “Students can receive rewards when they complete a community service project through our token: MDC Coin. The Miami Dade College Coin is an ERC-20 token that represents proof of participation and is deployed on the polygon blockchain. All projects go through a governance process and are certified on the blockchain,” she said.



Kennashka DeSilva, right, with teammates Cassandra de la Cruz-Munoz, Adrian Valdés Díaz and Genesis Guardado,

 **Vanessa Calás**  
@vanecalaas

🌟 Just moderated an incredible, highly informative, interesting, and intimate fireside chat with [@collectionist](#) 🙌🙌

As a fellow art lover and web3 enthusiast, it was fascinating learning about what's next in art, community & decentralized web. Bullish on [@MiamiHackWeek](#) 🚀🚀



7:24 PM · Jan 27, 2022

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And over at Polygon House, hackers listened to a talk by Connor O'Hara on Zero Knowledge (ZK) Rollups.



But hacking at the Tiki Hut was pretty nice too.



“There’s something special about coming together at a hacker house and working on code for hours on end while making friends left and right. It’s an exciting time to be building here in Miami with the constant flow of the new ideas and the latest technologies as we build the future,” said Jared McCluskey, a stealth crypto metaverse founder at the Polygon House.

Of course this being Miami, there were plenty of parties too. Ja’dan Johnson and his Miami Hack Week team created the platform for techies to connect, and groups and organizations helped fill out the calendar with events and parties, Sleep, who needs it?



**Don't miss** the Miami Tech Pod's drop on Monday with an on-site podcast from Casa de Quicknode and more!



Cesar Fernandez, left, and Maria Derchi, right, with the Miami Tech Pod at Quiknode, with CTO and co-founder Auston Bunson, plus Michelle Abbs and Esteban Dalel.

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Maria Derchi Russo contributed to this report.

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I am a writer and editor with extensive media experience and a passion for journalism and serving the community. Most of my career has been spent with the Miami Herald in business news. I am now writing about tech and entrepreneurs. I love hosting this blog for Refresh Miami and we aim to provide South Florida startup and tech news, features and views. Have news? Contact me at [ndahlbergbiz@gmail.com](mailto:ndahlbergbiz@gmail.com) for reading!

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