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City to Host Third Annual DigiCamp

Microsoft YouthSpark DigiCamp available to Albuquerque students

Albuquerque, N.M. – Over the next two days, Albuquerque middle school students will participate in a free Microsoft YouthSpark DigiCamp to learn about careers in technology and connect with Microsoft Corp. employees and local business leaders. This is the third year having this program in Albuquerque and over 140 seventh grade students from Garfield and Hayes middles schools have signed up to attend the camps. Once this year’s DigiCamp is complete, Microsoft will have trained approximately 400 youth on coding and other tech skills.

The camps will be held at the Albuquerque Epicenter, a gathering space for educational programs, entrepreneurship training and support located inside entrepreneurial hotspot Innovate ABQ. The classes for young women will be on Monday, March 21st and for young men on Tuesday, March 22nd. Students will be given the opportunity to participate in hands on computer and technology workshops to learn more about digital literacy, basic coding, and business development in the industry. This year, Startup Teen Service Learning Group is providing two high school student speakers to motivate and be peer mentors for the students who want to broaden their education outside of the classroom.

In 2013, Mayor Richard J. Berry met with Microsoft representatives in Washington DC, where he encouraged the group to consider providing services in Albuquerque. Microsoft’s regional team then met with the mayor in person in Albuquerque to design the camps and confirm details. Since that meeting the DigiCamps have become an annual event for Albuquerque’s youth.

“We need new and innovative ways to get the future generations engaged in the job-rich, high paying field of technology. This program does just that, by providing amazing opportunities for Albuquerque students to get first-hand experience and knowledge directly from innovators working for a premiere software and computer corporation,” said Mayor Berry. “I’m thrilled Microsoft is coming back to our city and I look forward to continuing and growing this great alliance.”

The 50 Microsoft Surface Pro 3s with Windows 10 being utilized by DigiCamp students were donated by the Albuquerque Community Foundation’s Cinco Amigos Fund. This generous \$50,000 donation allows each student access to the latest technology, Microsoft Surface Pro 3. DigiCamps are designed to give young adults whom are eager to learn about the ever-evolving world of technology, the opportunity to explore future career paths in the high-tech industry. The Cinco Amigos, five Albuquerque businessmen, sponsor an annual fundraising event each September, Concours du Soleil. Funds raised from the annual event are used to fund local nonprofits and programs such as this. This year specifically the funds will be used to pay for the student’s transportation.

“As local businessmen, the Cinco Amigos feel it is important to participate in economic development initiatives and educational opportunities in our community. We expect this partnership to support both,” said Jason Harrington of HB Construction

“Microsoft is pleased to support students in the City of Albuquerque. We believe that the power of technology helps individuals and communities do more and achieve more, so they can ultimately realize their full potential,” said Celeste Alleyne, Director, Microsoft Citizenship & Public Affairs. “We continue to see that when students have access to foundational coding and computation skills at an early age — and are encouraged throughout their education and at home — they will continue to pursue science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields.”

Microsoft YouthSpark is a global initiative to increase access for all youth to learn computer science, empowering them to achieve more for themselves, their families and their communities. *Learn more at www.youthsparkhub.com.*

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