March 31, 2017 (Albuquerque, NM) Microsoft YouthSpark, an initiative of Microsoft, recently announced a grant award worth just under $300,000 to Cultivating Coders. The donation was made to the Albuquerque-based mobile coding bootcamp because of its commitment to provide opportunity to underserved youth in New Mexico. The cash portion of the grant will be used to support a summer coding camp in partnership with Native American Community Academy (NACA). Cultivating Coders will provide an intensive 8-week training workshop to up to 21 high school students. They will learn introductory coding skills that are aligned with the skill sets sought by employers in the current market. The award also includes software that students and instructors will use in training programs throughout the year.

A donation of this size from the world’s leading producer of computer software to a young, homegrown tech company in Albuquerque is promising.

“There are a lot of camps doing this work. We're different in that we're looking to support students who’ve never had an opportunity, due to isolation from resources,” says Charles Ashley III, Founder and President, Cultivating Coders. “We are in communities no one ever thought about before. We saw the untapped opportunity to equip Native American youth with computer science skills, and we figured out a way to make the training possible. For a company like Microsoft to recognize and support our mission of tech equity speaks volumes about the type of company it is and where we're all headed.”

“Microsoft is proud to support the non-profit Cultivating Coders’ mobile coding bootcamp, and students who will gain increased access to computer science education tools, training and resources,” says Celeste Alleyne, Director, Microsoft, U.S. Citizenship and Public Affairs. “YouthSpark initiatives like this support our digital literacy training initiative by helping close the skills gap through increased access to computer science education.”

Cultivating Coders will be conducting similar intensives in other locations in the coming months, including Gallup, the Navajo Nation, Albuquerque’s South Valley, and Clarksdale, Mississippi.

More about Cultivating Coders:

Cultivating Coders is on a mission to prime the next generation of coders to help create a better future for themselves and their communities. The purpose of Cultivating Coders is
to provide technology training and workforce preparation services to underserved people and geographies. As a mobile coding bootcamp, Cultivating Coders differentiates itself by bringing in-depth coding camps to the rural, Tribal, and inner-city areas where resources are not currently available for this type of training.