SILICONHILLS

TECHNOLOGY NEWS ABOUT AUSTIN AND SAN ANTONIO

Google Gives Grants to Austin Public Library Foundation for Digital Inclusion Program

May 19, 2016 by lalorek

The benefits of having Google Fiber in Austin go far beyond higher broadband speeds.
That can be seen in Google's latest gift to the Austin Public Library Friends Foundation. This week, Google and Google Fiber awarded $145,000 to the foundation to support a new digital inclusion program. The funds will go to buy new videoconferencing technology for several libraries around the city and to teach technology skills to adults and help children with homework online, according to a news release.
Libraries are like the brains of any community and they can reach some of the people who most need to acquire new technology skills but don't have access to the technology otherwise.

"We are thrilled that these grants will allow us to provide more digital literacy support for Austinites and bring videoconferencing capabilities to those people who don't have ample access to technology," Tim Staley, executive director of the Austin Public Library Foundation, said in a news release. "The library plays a critical role in bridging the digital divide as the place where people find much of their access to technology. The applications of this technology and support and what can be accomplished with them are only limited by Austinites' imaginations."

The Austin Public Library Foundation plans to use a $75,000 grant from Google to help adults with computer skills like creating a resume or applying online for a job and to help youth with school work at the Ruiz and Carver library branches. It also includes plans for workshops and events focusing on science, technology, engineering or math or STEM skills. It also includes classes in coding, web development and entrepreneurial skills for adults.

Another $70,000 grant will go to buying flat screen TVs and Google hangout technology cameras and microphones. It will also go to train the library staff on how to use this technology. The equipment will be installed in 12 community rooms at the Austin Central Library and seven branches including Spicewood Springs, Hampton Branch at Oak Hill, Carver, Ruiz, Little Walnut Creek, Manchaca Road and Yarborough.
"Having access to the internet today can be the difference between keeping up or falling behind," Parisa Fatehi-Weeks, head of community impact programs and investments for Google Fiber in Austin, said in a news release. "We are lucky to have a strong public library system that wants to find new ways to open doors of opportunity for Austinites. These investments and the hard work of community partners will allow for additional one-on-one support and educational programming to help students and job-seekers new to technology use it to succeed."
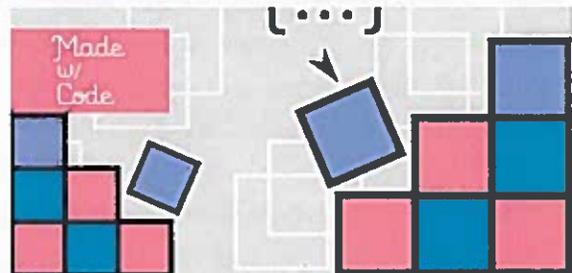
Installed:
- Austin City Hall
- Austin Public Library -- Twin Oaks Branch (1800 S. 5th St)
- Long Center for Performing Arts

Short-Term Pipeline
- Ann Richards School
- Travis High School
- Texas Civil Rights Project
- One Texas Center
- YWCA Greater Austin
- Austin Public Library -- Ruiz Branch

Library partnership:
- Several STEM events for kids
  - Made with Code and Virtual Reality activities
    - Branches: Ruiz, Southeast, Twin Oaks, Hampton Branch at Oak Hill
  - Twin Oaks had a Minecraft kids event on August 7 -- using their Fiber gig

Made With Code

Made with Code is a Google initiative to get all young people interested in coding and to celebrate creativity through fun projects. Families are invited to come and give coding a try!

Upcoming Events

Saturday, September 17, 2016

1:00 PM **Made With Code**
Southeast Branch

Saturday, October 1, 2016

1:00 PM **Made With Code**
Twin Oaks Branch

Tuesday, October 18, 2016

6:30 PM **Web Development: Let's Break it Down - General Assembl...**
Twin Oaks Branch

Saturday, October 22, 2016

1:00 PM **Made With Code**
Hampton Branch at Oak Hill