Texas Workforce Press Release

TWC Awards Grants for 1,024 Students to Attend Camp Code for Girls

AUSTIN – The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) awarded eight grants totaling $599,681 for Camp Code to focus on increasing the interest of middle school girls in coding and computer science by providing summer camps. Camp Code will offer hands-on experiences that provide students with challenging and innovative concepts and experiences in learning, problem solving and analytical skills while fostering an interest in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) related careers with a focus on computer science.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2015 American Community Survey, only 25.8 percent of employees in computer and mathematical occupations in Texas were women. The grants awarded to independent school districts, universities and higher education institutions are designed to spark girls' interests in careers in computer programming from an early age, and for them to consider careers in these highly sought after fields.

"Texas must continue to attract more students into STEM fields and meet the growing demand for high skilled technical workers," said TWC Chairman Andres Alcantar. "I am committed to supporting efforts to attract more girls into critical STEM fields of study and to develop a more robust pool of graduates pursuing rewarding careers in high-tech fields."

Creating summer camps that offer computer science projects that incorporate art and storytelling with robotics, video games, websites and applications can also further interest in the coding field. The coding education includes the most in-demand and popular computer science languages, such as Java, SQL, C++, Net, Perl, Ruby and JavaScript.

"To increase the recruitment and retention in high-tech industries, Texas' schools must foster girls' interests in computer science," said TWC Commissioner

Representing Employers Ruth R. Hughs. "If we encourage their enthusiasm for learning and engage them in STEM fields at a young age, they are more likely to follow these interests throughout middle school and high school, thus preparing themselves for postsecondary education and rewarding career opportunities with Texas employers."

Camp Code provides students with activities and lessons that encourage their interest in high technology, such as working in teams to use programming languages to build games, web pages and robots. These activities can enhance girls' interest in the industry.

"Careers in computer programming and software development continue to grow and command competitive salaries," said TWC Commissioner Representing Labor Julian Alvarez. "Camp Code gives young girls a glimpse into the world of computer programming and hopefully will inspire them to pursue coding careers."

The eight recipients of the Camp Code scholarships are:

- **Brownsville ISD**, $47,992 — 120 scholarships for the Girls Can Code Camp, a summer program in partnership with University of Texas Rio Grande Valley to provide students with an introduction to coding and programing.
- **Pharr San Juan Alamo ISD**, $100,000 — 200 scholarships for the JavaGirlz - Just Code camps that introduces students to computer programming and practical application of code through robotics.
- **Region One Education Service Center**, $100,000 — 100 scholarships for STEM Coding Camps for Girls introducing students to computer science and providing hands-on projects applying computer science to robotics and devices.
- **Southern Methodist University**, $85,991 — 240 scholarships for programming camps introducing students to game design, robot programming and embedded systems programming.
- **St. Mary's University of San Antonio**, $71,870 — 120 scholarships for Girls Code! camps for students interested in computational thinking, web programming, game development, robotics and cybersecurity.
- **Taylor ISD**, $26,392 — 40 scholarships for their Code Like A Girl camp introducing students to hands on activities for game design development, career pathways development and coding skills.
- **The Urban STEM Corporation (U.S.T.E.M.)**, $72,486 — 100 scholarships for summer coding camps for students interested in building and coding with Raspberry Pi, Arduino, robot design, web development and game design.

- **University of the Incarnate World**, $94,950 — 104 scholarships for miniGEMS Summer Programming Camp providing students with project based learning activities including environmental sustainability, robotics and computer programming.

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