



Kitsap Regional Library

CHANGING LIVES, BUILDING COMMUNITIES

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## **Kitsap Regional Library Recipient of a \$200,000 Grant from the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation**

Kitsap Regional Library and the KRL Foundation are excited to announce that KRL has been awarded a \$200,000 grant from the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation for the purpose of creating a mobile technical lab designed to serve Kitsap County teens, especially those considered at-risk.

“This grant will help us bring technology to teens throughout Kitsap County,” said KRL Director Jill Jean. “We believe this grant gives us a way to launch what will be a long-term mission for KRL: Creating “maker-space” resources to help patrons become creators and not just consumers of information.”

The grant allows KRL to transport creative technology to our Coffee Oasis partner locations in Bremerton, Port Orchard and Poulsbo, as well as allowing us to develop “Creation Labs” in our libraries, Jean said.

“Our goal is for all participants to increase their soft skills such as collaboration, imagination and critical thinking, as well as functional science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) skills,” Jean said. “This pilot program will focus on developing tangible products that incorporate artwork, video and audio at each session. We are tentatively planning on starting new classes quarterly. Each class can accommodate up to 15 students per week at each of the three venues.”

Jean said KRL expects to have its mobile lab, called the “Flash Drive,” running by September of 2013.

Leigh Ann Winterowd, who serves as assistant branch manager and teen librarian at the Sylvan Way Branch Library, has been selected to lead the project.

The KRL Flash Drive will tour the county on a regular schedule to reach out to teens at Coffee Oasis locations in Port Orchard, Bremerton and Poulsbo and at KRL branch libraries. The van will transport equipment to the teaching locations.

Traditional libraries offer an irreplaceable wealth of knowledge and guidance that inspires teens to explore the worlds around and within them, but they often lack the cutting-edge technology and expert guidance teens need to activate their interests. This project will expand teens' access to traditional library resources while empowering them with the technology to express and create.

The Flash Drive will support building “soft skills” such as collaboration, imagination and critical thinking while also offering teens functional science and technology skills through the creation of gaming software. The program will focus on developing tangible products at each session, eventually encouraging teams to create games that incorporate artwork, video and audio.

Weekly Creation Lab sessions at Sylvan Way will have mentors available to help program members who are working on projects as well as interested library patrons from the greater community.

When the teen projects are complete, KRL will celebrate and share their accomplishments by showcasing their work in public spaces and adding them to the library catalog.

Successful participants will be expected to give back by becoming tutors and mentors in the subsequent programs or at the Creation Labs. The library will fund two teen interns to work directly with library program staff.

“The Paul G. Allen Family Foundation believes in the mission and impact of local libraries, and the contribution they make to vibrant communities,” said Susan M. Coliton, vice president of Allen Foundation, in announcing the award. “We want to help libraries maintain relevance and financial stability by building lasting and meaningful connections with their patrons, especially young people.”

Launched by Microsoft co-founder and philanthropist Paul G. Allen and Jo Lynn Allen in 1988, the Allen family’s philanthropy is dedicated to transforming lives and strengthening communities by fostering innovation, creating knowledge and promoting social progress.

Since inception, the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation has awarded more than \$454 million to more than 1,400 nonprofit groups to support and advance their critical charitable endeavors in the Pacific Northwest and beyond. The Foundation’s funding programs nurture the arts, engage children in learning, address the needs of vulnerable populations, advance scientific and technological discoveries, and provide financial relief amid the economic downturn. For more information, go to [www.pgafamilyfoundation.org](http://www.pgafamilyfoundation.org).