

News Release

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For Immediate Release

INNOVATIVE CODING WORKSHOP FOR GIRLS

Harford County Public Library, Harford County Office of Information and Communication Technology offer Craft the Code! to middle schoolers

Belcamp, Md., September 3, 2015 -- Craft the Code!, an innovative computer coding workshop for middle school girls focusing on fashion and design, is being offered in October by Harford County Public Library and Harford County Office of Information and Communication Technology.

The workshop, for girls in grades 6-8, takes place at the Abingdon Library from 3:30 to 5 p.m. on October 6-9 and October 13-16.

Craft the Code! participants will use laptop computers from the library's new Innovation Lab to learn how to program a computer and apply science skills to create, solve problems, tell stories and make things happen with technology.

The series of eight classes will use Google CS First's Fashion & Design materials, which will teach participants how computer science and technology are used in the fashion industry. They will build fashion-themed programs, such as a fashion walk, a stylist tool and a pattern maker.

The sessions will be lead by Kelly Mills, a library educator from Harford County Public Library, and Dawn Haag, programmer analyst II – applications team lead, from Harford County Government.

Craft the Code! is the result of a discussion last December between Ted Pibil, director of the Harford County Office of Information and Communication Technology, and Mary Hastler, CEO of Harford County Public Library.

Pibil knew that Harford County Public Library was working to create coding programs for all ages and contacted Hastler to collaborate on an idea to get young women more interested in computer science, specifically software coding. Reaching out to girls prior to high school with a program like Craft the Code! is a way to close the gender gap in the field.

“There are efforts nationwide to close this gender gap by encouraging young women to explore software coding before they discount it as a career option. With this workshop, and hopefully future ones to follow, Harford County is acting locally to create an environment where knowledge-based workers can thrive,” Pibil said.

With a sizable number of high-tech companies already in Harford County and the expectation that number will grow in the future, providing programs to interest students in software coding will ultimately help with the county’s workforce needs.

“We are thrilled to offer Craft the Code! to our customers,” said Hastler, the CEO of Harford County Public Library. “Encouraging STEM education is a high priority for the library, and providing a software coding program for middle school girls is helping the future workforce of Harford County. The library is pleased to collaborate with the Harford County Office of Information and Communication Technology on this exciting new program.”

Harford County Public Library operates eleven branches located throughout Harford County. The library serves more than 181,000 registered borrowers of all ages

and has an annual circulation of more than 3.8 million. Harford County Public Library is committed to connecting people with information and promoting the love of reading in the community.

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