

PANASONIC AND THE HISPANIC HERITAGE FOUNDATION LAUNCH CODE AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN NEWARK, NJ, TO INTRODUCE STUDENTS TO NEEDED TECH SKILLS

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NEWARK, NJ – The Panasonic Foundation and the Hispanic Heritage Foundation (HHF) will launch a Code as a Second Language (CSL) effort in four cities across the country starting with Newark, NJ, followed by Reno, NV, Atlanta, GA, and Calexico, CA as hundreds of students will be introduced to and taught computer coding.

The CSL Academy in Newark will launch on April 18th, 3:30 – 5:00 pm at the Salvation Army Boys & Girls Club Newark – Ironbound, 11 Providence St Newark, NJ. – press ops will be available

“Educating the next generation of workers means training more coders, software engineers, web developers and others with skills in computer science,” said Governor Phil Murphy. “I am grateful to the Panasonic Foundation and Hispanic Heritage Foundation for partnering to expand computer science education for Newark students and preparing them for jobs in the 21st-century economy.”

The effort is designed to bridge a gap between the business community’s need for talent with technology skills and for students to be exposed to computer science. Among Black and Hispanic students, those who take Advanced Placement Computer Science in high school are 7 to 8 times more likely to take computer science in college, according to [Code.org](#). In the United States, there are 500,000 [unfilled jobs](#) in tech, which is estimated to nearly triple to 1.4 million unfilled tech jobs by 2020.

“Congratulations to the Hispanic Heritage Foundation on receiving this generous grant from the Code as a Second Language (CSL) Academies in partnership with the Panasonic Foundation,” said Superintendent of Newark Schools Roger León. “This investment in Newark’s children today will provide a good foundation for their future.” The Superintendent added, “It is our goal to ensure every Newark student has a computer science education. In Newark, we have developed an aggressive program to ensure all of our students develop computational thinking and problem-solving skills and knowledge through coding and programming in- and out-of-school classes and activities. This initiative with the Hispanic Heritage Foundation, Panasonic and The Salvation Army Boys & Girls Club Newark-Ironbound will afford our students access to the very best in education so that they will become global citizens to meet the growing demand of computer science careers.”

Through this partnership, [Panasonic](#) and HHF will teach middle and high school kids to code and will expose them to tech professionals, who can serve as mentors.

“This collaborative partnership helps us address one of the most critical issues minority students are facing today,” said Alejandra Ceja, Executive Director Panasonic Foundation. “The harsh reality is that a lot of students of color in predominantly low-income areas do not have access to the full range of stem courses in their schools. Through this partnership, Panasonic is providing more students with hands-on access to innovation and technology that is crucial to the 21st century workforce.”

The Coding as a Second Language Panasonic Foundation effort will include Coding as a Second Language Academies, which are 6- to 8-week coding courses with students meeting once a week for 1 to 1.5 hour, either as part of their school day or as part of an afterschool program.

"Driving CSL is the fundamental belief that all youth deserve access to technology-based programs and the opportunity to enter the workforce in a stronger position which will help America move forward," said Antonio Tijerino, President and CEO of HHF. "The Panasonic Foundation shares that vision and we are

grateful their leadership in preparing Latino youth for the classroom and workforce."

The students will also be referred to the LOFT (Latinos On Fast Track) Network for ongoing on-line instruction and will connect to other students, mentors, networking, resources, STEM-related events and later potential internships and full-time positions with Fortune 500 companies. By 2020, more than half of all jobs will require technical skills, but a majority of students wouldn't have learned coding in school. Coding will also enable students to be creators, innovators and entrepreneurs rather than just consumers of technology. CSL was established in Los Angeles in 2013 and by the end of this year will be in 75 regions, including Puerto Rico and Mexico, reaching more than 100,000 students.

About the Hispanic Heritage Foundation

The Hispanic Heritage Foundation, a national nonprofit, concentrating on education, workforce, culture and leadership with a special focus on technology through the Code as a Second Language (CSL) program which includes academies, bootcamps, workshops, apprenticeships and sourcing talent for Fortune 500 Companies. HHF is headquartered in Washington, DC, and Los Angeles, with satellite workspaces in New York, Silicon Valley, San Antonio, and Miami (Visit www.HispanicHeritage.org).

About the Panasonic Foundation

Panasonic Foundation is an operating, not grant-making, non-profit foundation whose mission is to advance equity in PreK-12 public education in the United States. From its creation in 1984, the Panasonic Foundation has been deeply rooted in advancing equity as the driver to improve the academic and social success of ALL students. The Foundation invests in the incubation of new ideas and public/private partnerships that directly support student achievement and in the development of skills and credentials students need to lead fulfilling and successful lives. Learn more about Panasonic's Office of Corporate Social Responsibility at <https://na.panasonic.com/us/CSR>.

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WHERE :

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