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Springboard To Opportunities Recognized by Google RISE Awards: "Springboard Cyber Summer" Program Announced

Jackson, Mississippi, April 20, 2016: Springboard To Opportunities, a not-for-profit organization focused on working with residents of affordable housing to help them reach their goals in school, work, and life, announced today that they have received a 2016 Google RISE Award for a summer program to increase access to computer science education for youth.

The Google RISE Award will fund a 12-week summer program targeting middle school students in six federally subsidized, affordable housing communities in Mississippi. Through a partnership with Kids Code Mississippi, the "Springboard Cyber Summer" will offer 12 two-hour sessions led by professionals in computer-science related fields. The course will explore computer science concepts and skills related to game design, interactive storytelling, vector art creation, and 2D animation. On the last day of the Springboard Cyber Summer, teams representing each community will compete against each other in a coding "hackathon."

Springboard To Opportunities Executive Director, Aisha Nyandoro, said, "There is no state in the United States that has a greater need for a community-based computer science education program addressing low-income minority youth than Mississippi. We have the highest national poverty rate, consistently lag behind the rest of the country in the development of an innovation economy workforce, and the vast majority of our students do not have any opportunity to learn coding in school. This 2016 Google RISE Award is enabling us to reach young people in Mississippi in need of innovative learning opportunities."

According to Kids Code Mississippi Co-Founder, Randy Lynn, "The Springboard Cyber Summer will provide young Mississippians with the opportunity to learn skills that are important for success in today's technology careers. We're excited to be partnering with Springboard To Opportunities on this initiative because we see computer science as a pathway out of poverty and also an opportunity to diversify our state's technology workforce. We believe that computer science education and the jobs that come with it should be available to all students in our state, not just a lucky few."

"This collective effort to inspire our next generation of technology innovators and creators will reach tens of thousands of students this year," said Nicky Rigg, Google's RISE Awards program manager. "We are excited to include Springboard To Opportunities in our recent cohort of 28 organizations across 16 countries. Our RISE Awardees make up a community of passionate

and vibrant educators and advocates; they are change-makers that engage, educate, and excite students about computing through extracurricular outreach."

About Springboard To Opportunities: Springboard To Opportunities is a 501(c)3 certified nonprofit organization working with residents of affordable housing to help them reach their goals in school, work and life. Springboard To Opportunities' does this by working directly with families, as well as by establishing strategic partnerships with other organizations that help residents achieve their goals. The overall goal of the organization's "radically-resident driven" service delivery model is to increase the self-efficacy of vulnerable families through resident-driven and resident-focused programs and services. Website: [Springboard to Opportunities](#)

About Kids Code Mississippi: Kids Code Mississippi was founded in 2013 as an advocacy initiative to increase access to K-12 computer science education in Mississippi schools. The initiative is a project of Fast Forward Mississippi in partnership with the Jackson, Mississippi advertising agency, Maris, West & Baker. Website: [Kids Code Mississippi](#)

About the Google RISE Awards: The Google RISE Awards is an annual grant program for informal education organizations around the world that promote computer science for K12 and pre-university age youth. The program emphasizes participation from girls, youth in low income communities, and minorities who have historically been underrepresented in the field of computer science. Since 2010, the Google RISE Awards have contributed over $5 million dollars to 239 organizations across 28+ countries reaching over 850,000 people. Website: [Google RISE Awards](#)