



# KIDS PROGRESS, INC.

Partnering to Improve the Quality of Life in Public Housing

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## PRESS RELEASE

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## KIDS PROGRESS, INC. RECEIVES \$25,000 GRANT FROM GOOGLE TO PROVIDE DIGITAL LITERACY TRAINING FOR PUBLIC HOUSING RESIDENTS

LOS ANGELES – Kids Progress, Inc. (KPI) today announced the 501(c)(3) has been awarded a \$25,000 grant from Google. The grant will be used to provide Digital Literacy training for public housing residents at Mar Vista Gardens in West Los Angeles.

The 601 unit property is one of two public housing sites participating in the Smart Housing Pilot Partnership, a first-of-its-kind, comprehensive initiative to get Los Angeles public housing residents connected to broadband. The Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA), its non-profit organization KPI, and the California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF) and other partners are working to develop a cost-effective model to connect public housing residents to high-speed Internet, provide bilingual Digital Literacy training, and offer low-cost computers. The goal is to expand the model statewide and bridge the Digital Divide in underserved and unserved communities. The Digital Literacy classes are scheduled to start in January 2014 at Mar Vista Gardens.

“There is a demographic and income gap when it comes to households that have access to the Internet. Four in ten Latinos, households earning less than \$40,000 a year, and people with disabilities do not have broadband at home. In Los Angeles County, 30% of all households lack broadband,” said Douglas Guthrie, President and CEO of HACLA. “We thank Google for their support as we work with our partner organizations to ensure that struggling families living in public housing communities can also be part of the digital world.”

The Broadband Initiative is being implemented as part of the Smart Housing Pilot Partnership with the California Emerging Technology Fund. CETF, under the leadership of President and CEO Sunne Wright McPeak, has been leading the charge to close the Digital Divide in California.

"Digital Literacy training is a linchpin to sustainable broadband adoptions, and we are pleased Google is joining the Smart Housing Pilot Partnership to help Mar Vista Gardens residents take fullest advantage of their home broadband connections," McPeak said. "This training will show residents how to access information and opportunities around education, jobs, health care and civic engagement. We encourage other Silicon Beach employers to join us to help close the Digital Divide in Los Angeles and beyond."



### **ABOUT KIDS PROGRESS, INC**

Kids Progress, Inc. (KPI) is a 501(c)(3) organization created by HACLA to support social service programs that enhance quality of life and ensure long-term academic and economic success for residents in HACLA's public housing developments

### **The Charge**

With HACLA's restricted budget and continuing cuts at the federal level, the needs of residents in public housing continue to grow. In order to build sustainable communities of choice in these public housing communities and reduce impoverished isolation, HACLA has identified five core areas to invest in people who lack access to key resources:

- Workforce Development & Lifelong Learning
- Education & Youth Development
- Health & Wellness
- Safety & Security
- Civic Engagement

These five core components of our mission cover a multitude of comprehensive areas to build strong communities. Utilizing the Jordan Downs Human Capital Plan as a model, the objective is to develop best practices for working with underserved populations. In an effort to increase economic, social and academic opportunities in the poorest communities in Los Angeles, the goal is to partner with existing organizations to mobilize resources to target charitable, non-profit and government investments in these areas.

### **ABOUT HACLA**

The HACLA is a state-chartered public agency. It provides the largest stock of affordable housing in Los Angeles, helping 75,000 low-income households by providing rental subsidy through multiple programs including public housing, Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8), Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) and other programs for special needs populations. HACLA's annual budget is more than \$ 1 billion.

The agency's effort stretches beyond City borders; HACLA's subsidiary, Los Angeles LOMOD Corporation, performs contract management services for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, providing over 47,000 households across ten Southern California counties with affordable rental units.

### **ABOUT CETF**

The mission of the California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF) is to close the Digital Divide in California by breaking down barriers to high-speed Internet access at home. The goal is to reach 98% of all residences with broadband infrastructure and to achieve 80% home adoption statewide by 2017. This statewide goal can only be accomplished if the following specific hard-to-reach target communities achieve at least a 70% adoption rate: low-income populations, Latino households, rural communities, and people with disabilities.

