

Pointers For Parents

Bringing High-Tech Opportunities To Children

(NAPSA)—Making technology compute for your children could help them later in life. The U.S. Department of Labor reports that computer and information systems managers, software developers and other high-tech and scientific careers are expected to have higher-than-average job growth through 2012.

However, many children do not have access to computers, making it difficult for them to learn important skills and increasing what analysts refer to as the “technology gap.”

Statistics show that people in Hispanic communities may be particularly affected by the gap. Hispanic people make up 11 percent of the national workforce but hold only 3 percent of the jobs in the science and engineering fields. Fortunately, a national program may help. Called La Familia Technology Week (LFTW), the national public awareness campaign helps inform Hispanic parents about the value of science and technology education. It also helps to teach people about the variety of career options for students who perform well in those areas.

Since its inception five years ago, LFTW has hosted hundreds of computer classes and technology and Internet workshops—in many cases providing participants’ first encounter with computers. IBM sponsors LFTW and



Science and technology knowledge could literally pay off.

a number of other programs meant to introduce technology to Hispanic students. The company says the initiative has helped train thousands of Hispanic people across the U.S.

Students at this year’s La Familia Technology Week heard firsthand accounts about careers in technology when they met astronauts, engineers and scientists.

The National Association of Colleges and Employers reports that the average starting salary for a graduate with a bachelor’s degree in computer engineering averaged more than \$51,000 two years ago. It’s thought that programs such as LFTW may help make such salaries a reality for more people.

For more information, visit www.ibm.com and lafamilianet.net.