



## State grant helps Mission launch coding camp

### Effort provides high-demand computer job training and placement

**MISSION, Texas, July 28, 2016** - The Mission Economic Development Corporation, Workforce Solutions and Code RGV have launched an innovative new program - a coding boot camp - that will provide highly sought after computer training for dozens of students with the help of a collaborative matching state grant.

The Texas Workforce Commission's High Demand Job Training grant will fund a program that will consist of pre-work job readiness and will educate participants in computer coding taught by industry experts in a three-month long coding boot camp offered by the Mission EDC, Workforce Solutions (the local workforce development board) and Code RGV, a local educational non-profit that specializes in tech skills development.

The first cohort of students, after the rigorous prep, code and job readiness training, will be certified in Full Stack Web Development - a high-demand career in Texas. The aim is to place students in high-demand high-pay occupations with employers as programmers that develop web, backend, and mobile applications with the latest industry tech and skills.

"Digital literacy and computer training is a must for nearly every business, and we have to develop innovative ways to train students to be job-ready and meet industry demands here in the Rio Grande Valley," said Julian Alvarez, Texas Workforce Commissioner representing Labor. "We are very pleased to collaborate with Workforce Solutions, Texas Workforce Commission and Code RGV and offer this program to meet employers' needs while increasing competitiveness."

Ten students were selected out of 425 applicants equipped with their own laptops and supplied meals during the program's first course. Training is taking place at the Mission EDC's offices and typically is 12 hours a day, five days a week. Students selected for the program are also awarded a monthly financial stipend and can a bonus stipend for finishing the program. "We believe in providing our students with the resources and training material that ensures a quality education for our students," said Olmo Maldonado, Code RGV President and (boot) Coding School Director. "Becoming a Full Stack Developer in 12 weeks is a daunting task, but by providing the students with monthly stipends, equipment, and industry mentors we put all of our efforts to ensure all of our students learn the skills and get a high paying job after the program."

Mission EDC matched the state's \$75,000 grant to create a \$150,000 fund for the job training. Mission EDC has worked closely with Workforce Solutions to bring the award to fruition. In the grant agreement, the two entities concur the High Demand Job Training program will assist individuals with certified training and job placement where possible. At the end of the course students receive an industry-recognized certificate. "Technology permeates our everyday lives, at home and in business. If we are to remain competitive, we must better understand the language and skills to master this technology," Mission EDC CEO Alex Meade said. "In the future, learning how to code will be as necessary as knowing how to read and write."