



## BUILDING FUTURES, ONE COMPUTER AT A TIME

PARTNERS COME TOGETHER TO HELP AREA STUDENTS LEARN HOW TO BUILD STATE-OF-THE-ART COMPUTERS WHICH THEY THEN WERE ABLE TO KEEP.

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**SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS** – One hundred middle and high school students from the San Antonio, Harlandale, Edgewood and South San Antonio independent school districts recently took a big leap forward in their educational pathways as the first group of participants in an exciting new program that allowed them to build, and then take home, their own state-of-the-art personal computer valued at approximately \$3,000 each.



The first Build Your Future cohort was made possible through an array of donors, including EK Fluid Gaming, who contributed a combined total of more than \$200,000 to the Port-affiliated Kelly Heritage Foundation — a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that is focused on supporting educational and workforce development initiatives.

The Kelly Heritage Foundation helps to connect people with learning and eventual career paths in advanced technologies growing on the Port campus and across the region, such as cybersecurity/information technology, aerospace, robotics, advanced manufacturing, national defense and space exploration.



Deserving students were selected by their schools and received advanced training through the San Antonio Museum of Science and Technology (SAMSAT), which has been based at the Port since 2017 and launched its new exhibit space, AREA 21, at the Boeing Center at Tech Port in 2022 — just down the hall from the arena where the Build Your Future program took place.

During the event, the students put their classroom training into practice as they were each given a kit that they assembled during the course of the day, with the support of 50 industry mentors, including several from the Port-headquartered 16th Air Force

— the cybersecurity arm of the U.S. Air Force Other mentors who also helped run the event included several employees from EK Fluid Gaming —one of the world's leading manufacturers of high-end liquid-cool computer systems. The company also provided the systems at a significant discount.

Once they finished building their computers, the students tested them by playing video games on the new systems. At the end of the day, they took their new state-of-the-art systems home.

"Our campus, our customers, our community, our private sector and our military partners came out to engage the students and work with them on building these PCs," said Will Garrett, Port San Antonio Vice President of Talent & Technology Development & Integration. "This is absolutely just the beginning for what the Kelly Heritage

Foundation is going to do. This program was a validation for a lot of the corporate partners and individuals that have supported the foundation in its philanthropic efforts that shows the real true measurable impact of what the foundation can do."

"We were invited to build our own PCs, which we're going to be able to take home at the end of the day," said student Ariel Barrier. "I want to be a web developer, so I've always like coding. Overall, I'm really excited, and this is really a big opportunity."

"I'm really happy to be here, I'm really enjoying it and I'm really thankful that SAMSAT is giving us this opportunity," said student Kevin De La Garza.

"This is an amazing event; I didn't imagine something to this scale being done," said parent Preston Barrier. "They've had their box of components out on the table. I know my daughter saw it and she was overwhelmed."

"The fun with gaming will come, but they're really life tools for them as they go on their career journeys," continued Garrett.

