



MEDIA CONTACT:

Mona Quintanilla - City PIO
Office 817.410.3463 / Cell 817.773.3306
monaq@grapevintexas.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Grapevine Public Library Awarded \$75,000 Grant to Fund New eSports Academy

"The hub will ensure that the community has an entryway into the arena of eSports and the benefits awarded to its participants."

Grapevine, Texas (January 11, 2021) — **(Grapevine, TX)** The Grapevine Public Library is a proud recipient of a \$75,000.00 grant from the Texas State Library & Archives Commission (TSLAC) that will be used to create the all-new Grapevine Public Library eSports Academy. The new Academy will allow gamers and gaming teams access to high-powered equipment, high-speed data communication, and will offer a collaborative space for team building, learning, practicing, and competing. This project is just one of 44 made possible this year by a grant from the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services to the Texas State Library and Archives Commission under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act.

"We are incredibly grateful to be given the opportunity by the Texas State Library & Archives Commission to show how growing a program like eSports in our community will help lead to job creation and program development for those who may have limited financial resources and/or necessary skills. Gaming of all types at the Library will encourage young customers to interact with a diverse group of peers, share their expertise with others (including adults), and develop new strategies for gaming and learning. And libraries have the distinct advantage to provide access to the entire community in a venue where players and teams can be nurtured and encouraged. TSLAC's support of these efforts makes it possible for us to reach populations in our community that we may otherwise miss due to lack of the necessary equipment and ability to afford the start-up costs. The hub will ensure that the community has an entryway into the arena of eSports and the benefits awarded to its participants," said Ruth Chiego, Library Director.

Once implemented, the hub will provide powerful gaming computers and laptops to be reserved by individuals and teams. The Library also plans to collaborate with local eSports organizations, professionals, and scholastic teams to host exciting events and sessions on various gaming topics. Aspects of the eSports Academy will roll out as early as the Spring of 2021 and will include availability after school, evenings, and weekends.

Library Manager Chad Hetterley said, "eSports is technology-based, so there is a high price tag attached to participation. Portions of the community that cannot afford the equipment, a high speed internet connection, and game costs can find themselves locked out of participation opportunities. Even when schools provide the option to participate, those students without access at home find that they cannot compete with students who have the advantage of practicing at home, and we would like to help change that dynamic."

"eSports has become an outlet for many students that are uninterested or unable to participate in traditional sports, allowing them to reap the benefits of team sports that could easily pass them by," said Technology Librarian, Chris Woodward. "These attributes include increasing confidence, perseverance, decision making, problem-solving, managing stressful situations, and staying calm under pressure."

About The Grapevine Public Library

The Grapevine Public Library has proudly served our community for more than 90 years, providing the best educational and enrichment materials available. Boasting 54,500 square feet, the Grapevine Public Library continues to integrate the latest technologies, robotics, 3D printing, game design and programming, children's, teen, and adult services, cultural and educational presentations, and the Library's genealogy department has the complete sets of Civil War Union and Confederate soldier rosters, a total of 49 volumes. The Grapevine Public Library engages patrons of all ages with more than 125,000 hard copy books available for check-out, 80 digital magazines available through RB Digital, 44,000 e-books, and 20,000 streaming movies through Kanopy. For more information, please visit Library.GrapevineTexas.gov.

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