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MEDIA RELEASE

Media Advisory: SFU's free coding workshops offer low-income Downtown Eastside residents the chance to build in-demand skills for B.C. tech industry

April 03, 2017

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SFU Continuing Studies has introduced a five-week free training program to prepare residents of one of Canada's poorest neighbourhoods for future tech jobs through a collaboration with CodeCore and the Ministry of Advanced Education. Launched on March 6, the University's new coding intensive has been made available to low-income, unemployed or underemployed adults living in or near Vancouver's Downtown Eastside (DTES).

The course is currently in its fifth week and the students will be demonstrating their capabilities in Firebase, a platform that allows you to build web-based applications. They will be creating web animations using CSS and JavaScript and uploading them live online creating a class showcase.

WHAT: Students will showcase what they have learned in Firebase

WHEN: April 4, 2017 at 9:00 a.m. till 12:00 p.m.

WHERE: SFU Vancouver campus at Harbour Centre (2960 Lab)

Media Opportunities:

There will be an opportunity to interview students in the class during the break, as well as film and take photos.

FAST FACTS:

- Vancouver's Downtown Eastside has one of the lowest per capita incomes of any urban area in Canada, with 53% of its population considered low income.
Source: <http://vancouver.ca/files/cov/profile-dtes-local-area-2013.pdf>
- Coding is one of today's most in-demand job skills. In 2015, nearly 7 million job openings in the U.S. were for occupations requiring coding skills.
Source: <http://burning-glass.com/research/coding-skills/>
- By 2019, B.C. will need to fill 3,000 jobs for software engineers and web designers and developers.
Source: <http://www.digcompass.ca/labour-market-outlook-2015-2019/3-0british-columbia/>
- B.C.'s tech sector accounts for \$26 billion in revenue, \$15 billion in GDP, 92,700 employees and \$8 billion in wages. Since 2014, tech sector revenues have grown 14.4%, outpacing growth in the entire U.S. market.
Source: <http://www.wearebctech.com/advocacy/publications/publication/industry-reports/2016-kpmg-bc-tech-report-card>
- The program is funded by a grant from the Ministry of Advanced Education to provide short-term training that addresses the demand for coding-related skills in the B.C. technology sector.

- To deliver the program, SFU Continuing Studies has partnered with CodeCore, a Vancouver-based provider of web development services and training.

ABOUT SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY:

As Canada's engaged university, SFU is defined by its dynamic integration of innovative education, cutting-edge research and far-reaching community engagement. SFU was founded more than 50 years ago with a mission to be a different kind of university—to bring an interdisciplinary approach to learning, embrace bold initiatives, and engage with communities near and far. Today, SFU is Canada's leading comprehensive research university and is ranked one of the top universities in the world. With campuses in British Columbia's three largest cities – Vancouver, Burnaby and Surrey – SFU has eight faculties, delivers almost 150 programs to over 35,000 students, and boasts more than 145,000 alumni in 130 countries around the world.

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