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KEYSPOT™

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Media Contact:
Deana Gamble, Director of Marketing & Communications, Mayor's Commission on Literacy
GambleD@freelibrary.org | Office: 215-686-5254 | Cell: 609-214-1862

City of Philadelphia Renews its Commitment to Closing the Digital Divide

KEYSPOT Network continues to bring internet access, training and technology to local neighborhoods

Philadelphia, PA (May 16, 2014) – On Friday, May 16, 2014, at The Mayor's Commission on Literacy's annual Technology and Adult Education Conference, the City of Philadelphia announced its ongoing commitment to equipping all citizens with the work-ready skills required of today's technology-based economy. Mayor Michael Nutter and City Council have made a multi-year commitment to continue the successful work of KEYSPOT, a public-private partnership that began with federal funding in 2011. For two and a half years, KEYSPOT brought broadband Internet access and computer training to nearly 80 public computing centers – or KEYSPOT - in dozens of neighborhoods.

While federal funding support ended in December of 2013, the City's investment focuses on making computing available for adult job seekers. More than 80% of job applications are exclusively online and digital skills have become

Representatives from KEYSPOT participated in a panel presentation about KEYSPOT's role in building a digitally connected, work-ready Philadelphia. From left to right: **Jennifer Kobrin,** Associate Director, Mayor's Commission on Literacy; **Dr. Judith, Rényi**, Executive Director, Mayor's Commission on Literacy; **Lawrence Battle**, Public Computer Center Assistant, Self, Inc.; **Kate Rivera**, Project Director, Urban Affairs Coalition; and **JaRon Burnett,** Lead Instructor of Philadelphia OIC's NOMAD program.

a basic necessity on the job and in daily functioning throughout our economy. For the 41% of our citizens lacking broadband at home, the public access KEYSPOT Network is an essential resource.

GOALS OF KEYSPOT

1. Ensure open access for all Philadelphians;
2. Close the digital divide;
3. Increase adult work-readiness;
4. Increase home/mobile Broadband adoption; and
5. Build capacity of the host-site organizations.

Each KEYSPOT site boasts a computer lab, trained technical support, and free internet access. The computers display links to major resources for job searches, access to free learning opportunities, and Free Library of Philadelphia materials.

KEYSPOT Network sites are located in **19** of the City's Recreation Centers; **four** Free Library of Philadelphia-sponsored sites; and **25** neighborhood-based organizations, such as social service agencies, health clinics, and shelters. **33** KEYSPOT sites are funded by grants from the City of Philadelphia, and additional sites in the Network, receive free promotional outreach, professional development, and no-cost technology support from Cognis IT.

"It is never too late to learn a new skill, increase your employability or even rediscover a love of reading," said **Mayor Michael A. Nutter**. "KEYSPOTs have successfully helped thousands of Philadelphians access the internet, learn to navigate the web, complete their education, search for job opportunities or even discover new careers. I am pleased that by working with City Council, the City of Philadelphia will continue to support these centers that are critical to advancing the preparedness of our City's workforce."

THE MAYOR'S COMMISSION ON **LITERACY** — Because Learning Works —

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Drexel UNIVERSITY

Brigitte Daniel, Executive Vice President, Wilco Electronic Systems, Inc, describes the low-cost Internet service Wilco offers in an effort to foster in-home Broadband adoption citywide. Wilco is one of many KEYSPOT partners committed to building a digitally literate Philadelphia.

KEY SPOT is a collaboration between The Mayor's Commission on Literacy, the city's Office of Innovation and Technology and Department of Parks and Recreation, and Drexel University. Through March 2014, KEY SPOT was visited 434,555 times. KEYSPOT also distributed 5,000 netbooks to Philadelphia Housing Authority residents who completed eight hours of technology training.

Sheila Anthony of South Philadelphia was one these residents. When she first walked into a KEY SPOT she did not know how to turn on a computer. But after eight hours of computer training, Anthony uses her netbook to send emails, browse the Internet, search for jobs and apply for scholarships for her daughter.

"I never learned about computers before because I didn't have access to one, and my work did not entail me to use one," Anthony said. "You have to be on top of what is going on today or you will be left behind."

A recent study revealed that Americans are indeed lagging behind other nations in basic workplace competencies. In math, reading, and problem-solving using technology — all skills considered critical for global competitiveness and economic strength — American adults scored below average compared to dozens of other developed nations.

One in six adults in the U.S. has low literacy skills and nearly one in three lacks adult-level numeracy. According to research, these statistics are even more staggering locally. An estimated 550,000 adults, or nearly one in two, are functioning below the education levels essential to get and keep good jobs.

"Our 27% poverty rate and 8% unemployment are evidence of why it's critical to invest in adult education, including digital literacy. Developing and using skills improves employment prospects, family and neighborhood stability, and boosts economic growth," said **Dr. Judith Rényi**, executive director of The Mayor's Commission on Literacy. "The City of Philadelphia's investment in KEY SPOT will continue to advance employment opportunities for the local workforce."

"I've seen firsthand how access to resources, training and information at KEY SPOT locations has transformed people of all ages," City Council President **Darrell L. Clarke** said. "Not all of Philadelphia's children are fortunate enough to be born into wired, literate environments. Mayor Nutter and City Council understand that connecting people to information by way of KEY SPOT is as wise an investment as our City can make."

"Drexel University, a partner with the project since its inception, remains steadfast in its promise to become the most civically engaged university in the United States," said Drexel President John A. Fry. "Broadband Internet access and digital literacy are the baseline of informed and engaged citizenship in the information age. Drexel is proud to continue its partnership with KEY SPOT and the City of Philadelphia, because of KEY SPOT's impact on the lives of citizens and the strength of the regional economy."

To find a KEY SPOT in your neighborhood, call Philadelphia's 311 information line (215-686-8686) or visit www.phillykeyspots.org.

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The KEY SPOT Network is a program managed by The Mayor's Commission on Literacy, on behalf of the City of Philadelphia in partnership with Drexel University. KEY SPOT represents a citywide coalition of community-based groups committed to bringing Internet access, training and technology to all Philadelphia communities.