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Girls Garage Receives \$60,000 Grant to Support Free Programs for Teen Girls

New funds awarded by Craig Newmark Philanthropies will underwrite instructor stipends, building materials, and program costs for educational programming at Girls Garage.

BERKELEY, CA – March 23, 2020 – Girls Garage announced a significant award of funding from Craig Newmark Philanthropies. The \$60,000 grant will support the 2020-2021 cycle of free design and building programs for 9th-12th grade girls. Over one year—three weeks of the Young Women’s Design and Building Institute summer program and three seasons of after-school classes—Girls Garage will serve 100 high school girls who otherwise lack access to STEM and trade skill instruction. Participating girls take on large-scale design/build projects for their community, which have previously included furniture for a women’s shelter, a public parklet, and structures for community gardens.

Craig Newmark, Founder of craigslist and Craig Newmark Philanthropies explained, “My commitment to supporting women in technology means ensuring that girls have access to the spaces, tools, and committed mentors they need and deserve. Girls Garage provides all of these things at no cost to girls who will be our future leaders in STEM fields. It’s so important to champion people doing real things with their hands, for their communities, and that’s why I support Girls Garage.”

Kristy Higaes, the Director of Development at Girls Garage said, “Support from Craig Newmark Philanthropies demonstrates a bold and brave commitment to career pathways for the fearless builder girls of the future. This gift directly impacts the lives of girls who will be our future workforce, leaders, and change-makers in STEM and the trades.”

Many of the participating girls could not have attended Girls Garage for so many years, embarked on such ambitious projects, made an impact in their community, and connected with real women working in their dream industries had the teen programs not been free. This grant will enable Girls Garage to meet its commitment to offer all teen programs for free and to serve girls regardless of their financial circumstances.

This is the first year that long-time Girls Garage attendees are graduating high school and entering into STEM college pathways that are the direct result of their time at Girls Garage. Erica Chu, a participant at Girls Garage for seven years, shared, "Free tuition at Girls Garage has eliminated any barriers that could deprive me of an experience that I believe all girls should have access to. It has allowed me to practice something I am passionate about, in a safe space, without having to worry about fees, as well as allowed some of my closest friends to attend these empowering classes with me. If I wasn't able to be a part of Girls Garage, I would have never found my love for engineering and design, which is what I'm going to do in college and as a career in the future."

The grant recognizes Girls Garage's commitment to increasing the representation of girls entering into and staying in fulfilling careers in technology, science, engineering, and the trades with long-term support from a network of female professionals and mentors. Emily Pilloton, Founder of Girls Garage expressed, "To have the support of Craig Newmark Philanthropies signifies an incredible hope and belief in a movement of fierce, brilliant young girls."

About Girls Garage:

Founded in 2013, Girls Garage is a nonprofit design and building program and dedicated workspace for girls and female-identifying youth ages 9-18. Through after-school and summer programs, Girls Garage provides free and low-cost programs in carpentry, welding, architecture, engineering, and activist art. Integrating technical skills, community leadership, and college/career guidance. Girls Garage equips girls with the tools to build the world they want to see.

More information at girlsgarage.org

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