**Press Release**

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**West Pointers to Bring Robotics Workshop to Public Housing Youth**

*West Point faculty and alumni partner with HACA to build a diverse tech pipeline*

Forty aspiring science and technology scholars from the Housing Authority of the City of Austin (HACA) will have the opportunity to be trained by U.S. Military Academy at West Point (USMA) faculty, cadets and alumni, as well as a chance to meet with representatives from the U.S. Army Research Laboratory of the Army Materiel Command from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Saturday (Jan. 27), at the Henry Flores Education and Training Center, 1201 W. Live Oak St.

“We are honored that the U.S. Military Academy at West Point selected HACA as the site for this exceptional STEM workshop. It will make a huge difference to our kids and helps them see the possibility of a bright future through STEM, hard work and a commitment to public service.” said HACA President and CEO Michael Gerber. “For 216 years West Point has led efforts to prepare young leaders for our nation with an unparalleled commitment to public service. We are honored that their faculty, cadets and alumni are here to work with our young leaders of tomorrow.”

Forty HACA youth and their parents will learn about career opportunities in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) and the skills they will need to work in a STEM field, possibly inspiring them to pursue rewarding opportunities for themselves and their families. Parents will attend a special workshop covering USMA and Army Educational Outreach Programs, HACA Scholarships and STEM career opportunities. Parents will also learn when their children graduate from the workshop they will be awarded a free refurbished laptop pre-loaded with 32GB of interactive educational content.

“West Point faculty and cadets are thrilled to work with HACA and U.S. Army Research Laboratory to inspire students through collaborative, hands on learning,” said Lori Sheetz, director of West Point’s Center for Leadership and Diversity in STEM. “STEM workshops offer an excellent opportunity to engage students in learning and motivate them to consider STEM careers. We are excited to work with West Point grads living in Central Texas to promote educational opportunity, help students bridge the digital divide, and enhance workforce development.”

Austin Pathways oversees and manages an endowment for HACA resident scholarships that originated with seed funding from HACA's nonprofit, revenue generating subsidiaries -- Southwest Housing Compliance Corporation and Austin Affordable Housing Corporation. Annual fundraising through donations and grants allows Austin Pathways to maintain this endowment and continue to provide resident scholarships.

“Education is the foundation for a successful future,” said HACA Board Chairman Carl Richie Jr. “Being a former public housing resident myself, I know how education can open the right doors. We are proud of our youth who are pursuing knowledge in robotics, engineering and science.”

**Austin Pathways** is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that promotes the education and general welfare of low-income Austinites who live in the 18 public housing communities owned and operated by HACA and those who participate in its Housing Choice Voucher program. Austin Pathways supports scholarships, youth academic enrichment, workforce development, and health and wellness initiatives. For more information, visit [austinpathways.org](http://www.austinpathways.org/).

**The Housing Authority of the City of Austin** is a public agency whose mission is to cultivate sustainable affordable housing communities and partnerships that inspire self reliance, growth and optimism. For more information, visit [www.hacanet.org](http://www.hacanet.org), or find us on Twitter [@hacanet](https://twitter.com/Hacanet).

**The U.S. Military Acadmy at West Point** is a four-year co-educational federal undergraduate liberal arts college located 50 miles north of New York City. It was founded in 1802 as America’s first college of engineering and is world-renowned for leader development. Its mission remains constant-to educate, train, and inspire the Corps of Cadets so that each graduate is a commissioned leader of character committed to the values of Duty, Honor, Country and prepared for a career of professional excellence and service to the nation as an officer in the U.S. Army. For more information, go to <http://www.westpoint.edu>.

**The U.S. Army Research Laboratory of the Army Materiel Command** is the Army's corporate, or central, laboratory for materiel technology. Its diverse assortment of unique facilities and its workforce of government engineers and scientists comprise the largest source of world class integrated research and analysis in the Army. For more information, go to: <http://www.arl.army.mil>.

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