

Foresee foundation hands over DigiKidz Media Lab to library

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PHILIPSBURG, St. Maarten— The Foresee Foundation and the DigiKidz St. Maarten team handed over a completed media lab to management of the Philipsburg Jubilee Library on Wednesday to open up new opportunities in educational innovation, ICT and new media. The lab was financed by the Windsong Foundation.

It will be officially opened soon.

A media lab is a computer room where workshops are given in the area of new media. The main target groups are primary school children, secondary school students and teachers. The lab will be partially used in the morning and evenings by elementary school students adults.

Special interest groups, who normally have less opportunity to use Internet applications due to limited access at home or school, will also have the opportunity to use (rent) the facility.

The uses of a media lab are vast, in particular for workshops. Examples of introduction workshops are creating a web log, animation, making a documentary, developing apps, making a digital comic strip, or learning to use Facebook, Twitter, photo editing, searching for information in image databases or playing educational games and quizzes.

In addition to these student workshops, a separate workshop for teachers named 'How to integrate technology in education' is developed. Local professionals will be trained and taking over the workshops from external specialists, teaching to students, hence creating sustainability.

According to Foresee, two years ago plans were presented to St. Maarten schools to encourage the use of modern social and digital media in education. A program, called the Media Lab, was developed with the aim to set up a

physical computer/multi media lab where children and adults can learn and use the latest technology in a responsible pedagogical- didactical way.

Emphasis was placed on the importance of a central location and accessibility of the lab.

The Philipsburg Jubilee library was considered to be the most appropriate location for this media lab. Since the media lab project integrates awareness about the local history, culture and digital literacy skills, it connects very well with the mission of the library.

By integrating the two projects "the Media Lab" and "DigiKidz@St. Maarten", a partnership will be formed that strengthens and supports both projects. For the library of St. Maarten, the project will be presented as "The DigiKidz Media Lab", acknowledging collaboration between several foundations.

The board and staff of the public library acknowledge the importance of information technology. Recently several initiatives and projects related to introducing digital content were implemented. Examples are the digitization of the historical local newspaper collection, the upgrading of the Integrated Library System and the introduction of an e-book service for the general public.

More information about the workshop dates, official opening ect will be released by the library soon.

In Photo; Members of the Foresee Foundation and DigiKidz team with representatives of the Philipsburg Jubilee Library were joined by some students at the handing over of the media lab.