



Mirror photo/DAN PEARCE

COMPUTER SAVVY: Kevin Stuffels demonstrates his computer skills to Tom Empey, of Future Shop, left, Ron Rock, of the Boys and Girls Club of East Scarborough, Phil Sorgen, of Microsoft, and Pam Jolliffe, president and CEO of Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada, after the Microsoft Canada and Future Shop announced a major expansion of the CanTech program Monday.

Technology boost for East Scarborough club

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Children and youth at the Boys and Girls Club of East Scarborough now have access to the latest technology and cutting-edge software.

Thanks to a \$2 million grant from Microsoft Canada, the Boys and Girls Club of Canada is able to expand its national technology learning program CanTech. The grant, which includes a cash donation and software, was announced at the East Scarborough Club on Monday.

The grant benefits all clubs across Canada over three years while 12

locations are getting new labs thanks to hardware and support provided by Future Shop. The first of the new labs opened at the East Scarborough Club Monday.

"This new lab will enable us to be able to offer a lot more cutting-edge technology," said Ron Rock, executive director.

"It will certainly increase the number of children and youth coming to the club to access the program."

Kevin Stuffels is itching to try the new equipment and software.

The 22-year-old first came to the club as a five-year-old and now he

teaches youth how to use computers.

"I'm actually loving it," he said of the new lab. "I term myself a computer nerd so when I see upgrades to computers it excites me."

NEW COMPUTER LAB

He heard the club was getting the new lab in November and got excited as Monday drew closer.

He was anxious to try out the new software. Being able to access technology at the club is important to him as he plans to pursue a career in video game design.

"I don't have full access to technology at home, but at the club I can go online and access programs," he said.

The club is at Galloway and Kingston roads, which is one of 13 priority neighbourhoods in the city, and so any influx of resources is welcome and needed.

"There are not enough resources available to meet the current need," Rock said.

"These resources are essential if our children are going to grow up with the same opportunities as those in well resourced areas. The

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Companies support local computer lab

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support from Microsoft will help level the playing field for the youth of this community."

Rock said the technology will benefit users of all ages, whether they are interested in a career in video game design and animation or just looking

to become technologically literate so they can finish school.

Pam Jolliffe, president and CEO of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada, said 200,000 children and youth at locations across the country will benefit from the support for CanTech.

The program began in 2001 with the opening of some computer labs.

"(It started) to help young people expand their academic and career opportunities by making sure they have access to technology," she said.

Phil Sorgen, president of Microsoft Canada, said they welcome partnerships where people are able to be educated about technology.

"We look forward to not just what we're doing here in Scarborough, but what we'll be doing at clubs across Canada," he said.