

**CHABOT SPACE & SCIENCE CENTER RECEIVES GRANT TO SUPPORT
TECHBRIDGE PROGRAM AT THE CALIFORNIA SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND**

—\$10,000 Grant From Adobe Supports Students in Technology Program—

21 September 2005 -- (Oakland, CA) Students at the California School of the Blind (CSB) in Fremont will continue participating in Chabot Space and Science Center's Techbridge program this school year thanks to a \$10,000 grant from the Adobe Foundation Fund at Community Foundation Silicon Valley. Techbridge at CSB is designed to inspire and support students with disabilities in the fields of technology, science, and engineering. The program will provide students with visual impairments a supportive and challenging community in which they can learn technical skills and expand their career options

“While many of today's fastest growing careers are in technology and science, persons with visual impairments are not participating in these professionally rewarding and high-paying careers,” said Linda Kekelis, Techbridge Director. “Students who are blind have little, if any, experience with taking apart and reassembling computer hardware, building robots, using multimedia software for communication, or using technology for community service. Our experience shows that these projects can easily be adapted for youth that are visually impaired and that these youth derive considerable benefit from them.”

Students in the Techbridge program at CSB will work with tools and use technology in projects such as building circuits, learning about solar technology and other forms of renewable energy, building websites using html programming, and designing and prototyping cars. They will also take field trips to worksites where they will meet role models and learn about career opportunities in technology and engineering. In previous years, CSB students have built kites, dissected squid, and assembled telephones. Field trips to places such as Hiller Aviation Museum and Smith-Kettlewell Eye Research Institute, and visits with role models from companies including Mindjet and Kaiser Permanente, have provided the opportunity for students to learn about viable career options. Techbridge and CSB staff work closely together to adapt and develop curriculum to fit the needs and interests of students that are visually impaired.

Funded by the Gordon & Betty Moore Foundation and other partners, Techbridge is an afterschool program that engages teachers, families, role models, and peer support networks in

encouraging girls in technology. Launched in 2000, Techbridge has reached nearly 1,000 middle and high school students through a combination of hands-on technology projects, leadership development, and academic and career exploration. In 2005-2006, Techbridge will operate at 15 elementary, middle, and high schools in the Oakland Unified School District and surrounding communities and also at the California School for the Blind in Fremont. “We have seen the program’s success in engaging girls in scientific and technical fields and are looking forward to continuing our support to girls and boys at CSB,” notes Etta Heber, Director of Programs at Chabot Space & Science Center. For more information, visit www.techbridgegirls.org.

The **California School for the Blind**, as a State Special School of the California Department of Education, is a statewide resource offering expertise in the low prevalence disabilities of visual impairment and deafblindness through innovative model programs, assessment, consultation and technical assistance, professional development, research and publications, advocacy, and outreach.

Chabot Space and Science Center is a 501c3 nonprofit interactive science center focusing on astronomy and the inter-relationships of all the sciences. Its observatory, planetarium, exhibits, and natural park setting are a place where a diverse population of students, teachers, and the public can imagine, understand, and learn to shape their future through science. The Center is located at 10000 Skyline Blvd. in Oakland’s Joaquin Miller Park.

For more information, call (510) 336-7300, or visit www.chabotspace.org

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