Lone Star College to provide students laptop computers to address digital divide

Houston (July 29, 2020) – Lone Star College has purchased an additional 5,000 laptop computers to assist students taking classes this fall.

“The coronavirus pandemic has exposed the digital divide and the urgency with which we must work toward a solution,” said Stephen C. Head, Ph.D., LSC chancellor. “Lone Star College is committed to finding a solution that makes education accessible to all.”

LSC students will be able to check out the computers, much like a library book. Application for computers starts July 29 and distribution will begin before the start of the fall semester.

“Providing access to these computers and other resources is part of our promise and our effort to close this technology gap,” said Head.
To qualify for a computer, students must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid form (FAFSA) and enroll in a minimum of six credit hours for the fall 2020 semester. Students can keep the computer for future semesters as long as they stay enrolled at LSC.

LSC also provides students free use of Office 365 on compatible personal devices. With Office 365, students have access to the latest version of Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote and more.

“Lone Star College is determined to help our students finish their education,” said Alton Smith, Ed.D., LSC Board of Trustees chair. “This program will help to bridge the gap for those in our community who lack the technology resources needed to be successful.”

Fall registration is currently underway. Visit LoneStar.edu/Laptops for more information on how to check out a computer, access Office 365, apply for FASFA and register for classes.

In addition to purchasing 5,000 computers, an anonymous donor provided more than 50 laptops and web cameras for LSC-Kingwood students. LSC Foundation placed orders and laptops were delivered to students in time for them to complete their spring 2020 semester.

"My eyes lit up and I had the biggest smile when I opened the box,” said Krysten Garza, LSC-Kingwood student. “I am so blessed and thankful that there are people out there spreading love and kindness during this hectic time.”

LSC Foundation was also able to redistribute a $10,000 Wells Fargo grant which was originally awarded for adult literacy classes at LSC-Houston North. When those classes were canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Wells Fargo reallocated funds toward immediate student needs for laptop and Wi-Fi purchases.

"The ability to help our students remain connected to their classroom is incredible," said Nicole Robinson Gauthier, CFRE, LSC Foundation executive director. "In so many cases, the delivery of a computer was the difference between a completion of a class or a withdrawal."

In addition to providing laptop computers, LSC is able to provide emergency financial grants to qualified students. These grants help cover expenses related to disruptions due to the
coronavirus such as food, housing, course materials, technology, health care and child care through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES Act). Fall semester applications for the CARES Act funds are now being accepted at LoneStar.edu/CaresAct.

Lone Star College offers high-quality, low-cost academic transfer and career training education to 99,000 students each semester. LSC is training tomorrow’s workforce today and redefining the community college experience to support student success. Stephen C. Head, Ph.D., serves as chancellor of LSC, the largest institution of higher education in the Houston area with an annual economic impact of nearly $3 billion. LSC consists of seven colleges, eight centers, two university centers, Lone Star Corporate College and LSC-Online. To learn more, visit LoneStar.edu.

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Photo: Garza_Krysten

Cutline: Lone Star College is providing students with laptops and other resources to help them start close and go far. Pictured is Krysten Garza, LSC-Kingwood student who received a new computer through LSC Foundation.