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Library's Teen Lab Celebrates One Year with Top Performances and Party in the CLOUD

MEMPHIS, TN – State-of-the-art teen learning lab CLOUD901 is turning one, and Memphis Public Libraries are celebrating in a major way. On **Saturday, Sept. 17, 2016, noon – 2 p.m.**, Memphis youth will show the city what they have learned or created during the **CLOUD901 One-year Anniversary Teen Showcase** held at the **Benjamin L. Hooks Central Library** (3030 Poplar Avenue).

Free and open to the public, a list of performances are planned to highlight tomorrow's singers, songwriters, visual artists, entertainers, computer experts and more. A year in the making, this exciting day will enable citizens of all ages to witness the amazing talents and 21st century skills that Memphis youth have to offer.

"Every day that the doors of CLOUD901 open, we aim to make a difference in the lives of teens by targeting their potential, uncovering hidden talents, and developing marketable skills using cutting-edge technology. Teens inside the CLOUD have grown exponentially over the past year due to increased access to essential tools, a relaxed learning space, and a remarkable staff that nurtures their growth in a safe, supportive, and stress-free environment," said CLOUD901 Manager Jessica Chaney. "Customers are cordially invited to see tomorrow's success stories today, as we present exhibits from each space inside the lab – music production, video production, gaming and coding, art, and the Makerspace."

From wall to wall, CLOUD901 is 8,300 square feet of learning space filled with 3-D printers, laptops, iPads, audio and video equipment, MacBook Pros and Aiors, X-Boxes and PlayStations, keyboards and more – all for free and all available for teens to check out and explore.

More than a year ago, the Memphis Library Foundation teamed with a group of partners to fund the \$2 million space that covers two floors and serves as the largest of its kind nationwide. Diane Jalfon, executive director of the Foundation, says the lab is an ongoing investment in the lives of Memphis youth – worth every penny. "CLOUD901 has definitely made a positive impact on its users. You can see it in their faces, the ways they interact with the staff and peers, and we hear it from their parents as well. Teens who have attended programs inside CLOUD901 over the past year have become more confident, engaged, and equipped with technical skills, critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, and even soft skills that the work world demands," Jalfon said.

Director of Libraries Keenon McCloy calls the learning lab a bright spot in the city. "CLOUD901 presents a list of extraordinary opportunities for teens in Memphis, and we take pride in investing in their futures," she said. "There is no other place where teens can go free of charge to take advantage of such a wide range of hi-tech offerings, and we want CLOUD901 to be their venue of choice. Ultimately, the goal is for teens to use their creative energies and for us to retain Memphis talent in Memphis."

For more information about the CLOUD901 One-year Anniversary Teen Showcase or to learn more about the lab, call (901) 415-2760.

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