**MakersFactory sets up shop at Cabrillo College [Santa Cruz Sentinel, Calif.]**

Jan. 09—APTOS — Santa Cruz 3-D learning company MakersFactory may soon have a new home at Cabrillo College, offering classes and training through the campus extension program.

The for-profit company has moved two 3-D printers and relocated its administrative offices to Cabrillo’s Visual, Applied and Performing Arts complex. It shuttered its former Cruzio headquarters on Jan. 1.

Pending a Cabrillo board decision on Monday, MakersFactory’s short-term rental agreement may be extended to at least one year, said Scott Johnson, Cabrillo’s director of community and contract education.

Plans are still in development, but include the dedication of two or three building 1300 classrooms to a MakersFactory workshop, where Cabrillo would gain access to MakersFactory’s cutting-edge 3-D printers, a laser cutter, scanner and vinyl cutter, valued around $130,000. The potential collaboration with the Cabrillo Extension Program would allow project-based classes not only for youth and college students but also educators, on teaching 3-D learning — all part of the growing “Makers Movement,” said Johnson.

“It’s something for engineers, for artists, for business folks,” he said. “It’s very innovative.”

Dave Britton, MakersFactory president, said the partnership would allow more space and further reach. Initially founded as a fabrication lab in 2011, leaders quickly discovered a need for 3-D education in Santa Cruz County.

The company developed a portable plug-and-play server, called a Game Based Learning Cube, which allows teachers to use MinecraftEdu, an educational version of a popular video game. Through the network, students collaborate to build cities, like a virtual LEGO game. Since spring, the cube has been introduced in 12 classrooms throughout the county as well as Santa Cruz Public Libraries, said Britton.

Kristie Olson, curriculum developer and communications for MakersFactory, said the game provides hands-on experience. For example, this spring, Sequoia Elementary students printed a 3-D model of their school, using plans they designed in MinecraftEdu.

“We’ve got the tools and the teachers have the content,” Olson said. “Where they interact is where I think where the magic happens.”

Mary Talpas, MakersFactory Ed Tech product development manager, said a community is needed to support today’s students. MakersFactory already partners with UC Santa Cruz, the Boys and Girls Club, Intel and local school districts to connect technology and curriculum.

A partnership with Cabrillo would allow MakersFactory to extend its reach, she said.

“The public-private partnership,” Talpas said. “This is where you get to bring the real world experience into the classroom.”

MakersFactory

What: 3-D learning company that offers classes, products and services to students and teachers

Classes: 3-D printing, Minecraft, robotics, game design, teacher professional development and more

Product: Game-based learning cube, a portable plug-and-play server that allows teachers to use MinecraftEdu in classrooms

Fabrication services: 3-D prototypes, laser cutting and more

Details: Visit makersfactory.com or call 831-600-1024.

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