

Richmond: Event aimed at boosting participation of Latino, black youths in STEM careers

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RICHMOND -- The technology boom has transformed the Bay Area, bringing with it well-paying jobs and a lower unemployment rate. But Latinos and blacks have not benefitted from the largesse and are still vastly underrepresented in the technology field, as well as science, math and engineering.

On April 30, the Richmond Community Foundation is holding an event aimed at bridging the diversity gap and preparing local children and teens for careers in STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Math).

The California Summit for Children and Youth will be held 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Richmond Civic Auditorium, 403 Civic Center Plaza.

The sixth annual summit targets educators, nonprofit organizations and community leaders, and will feature presentations on academic, training, mentoring and employment programs targeting underserved youth. It will also evaluate career opportunities for women, as well as boys and men of color.

Nationally, Latinos and blacks make up about 30 percent of the population, but a mere 2 percent of professionals employed in STEM fields, according to United States Census Bureau figures.

The keynote speaker at the event will be Erik Moore, founder and managing director of Base Ventures, a company that invests in tech startups.

Moore, who comes from Richmond, is also involved with numerous nonprofits working with at-risk young people in the Bay Area and was recently recognized as one of 25 Most Influential African-Americans in Technology by Business Insider.

Other speakers will include Richmond Vice Mayor Jael Myrick; Contra Costa County Community College District Chancellor Helen Benjamin; East Bay Economic Development Alliance Executive Director Darien Louie; and Sunne Wright McPeak, president and CEO of the California Emerging Technology Fund.

Experts in STEM fields "will present workshops that focus on challenges and opportunities in STEM education and STEM-related fields, and demonstrate successful programs in practice."

An "Interactive Resource Village" will feature information and interactive exhibits from organizations including Chabot Space and Science Center, Contra Costa College, Community Resources for Science, Richmond Solar and Nerd Crossing.

General admission tickets are \$95, available along with more details at richmondcf.org/community-impact/summit.

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