

Computer project honors late teen

By Raviya H. Ismail

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The parents and friends of a Paul Laurence Dunbar High School teen are starting a project in his memory.

The Mindtriggerz Project mission is to refurbish computers and give them to children and families who can't afford their own. Mindtriggerz is a computer logon Jesse Higginbotham created.

Jesse, a 17-year-old Dunbar junior, suffered fatal injuries in a car wreck in April. He was a computer aficionado who was known to help friends fix computers in a pinch and was involved in open source, a movement to make computer code available to the public for free. Jesse's parents, Rebecca Woloch and Jerome Higginbotham, as well as his best friend, Jon Jones, 18, a Dunbar senior, are spearheading the effort to collect computers.

"This is something Jesse and I were very involved in, computers and the open source movement," Jones said. "We're getting to a time that big businesses are controlling everything and its really not fair that people don't have access to things that we could all use."

Shortly after Jesse's death, his parents founded the Jesse Higginbotham Technology Trust Inc. in his memory. The Mindtriggerz Project is one of several initiatives under the trust. Friends and family also recently worked on a memorial garden at Dunbar in honor of Jesse and other teens.

Woloch said the group has collected seven computers and laptops so far. They hope to collect several more and then have Fayette County high school teens work on refurbishing them. The group then hopes to work with organizations in the Cardinal Valley area, the first neighborhood they want to find families to give computers to.

"A lot of people are going to get new equipment for Christmas and they're not going to know what to do with their old stuff," Woloch said. "If it's still working, we'd like it."

Jerome Higginbotham added: "I want to get computers into the hands of deserving kids that can't afford them."

YOU CAN HELP

Jesse Higginbotham Technology Trust

Mindtriggerz, a certified non-profit, is collecting computers to be refurbished by high school students and given to needy families.

To donate: Contact Rebecca Woloch at (859) 254-3148, Jerome Higginbotham at (859) 255-2614 or Jon Jones at (859) 270-7248 or jon@jajtech.com.

Online: www.mindtriggerz.jajtech.com.