

Game On! Velocity Prep **Program Description**

As part of the Digital Media for Youth initiative, the Digital Media Council at Skillpoint Alliance will deliver one *Game On! Velocity Prep* summer learning program at Connally High School in June 2011. *Game On! Velocity Prep* 2011 will be integrated with the practicum capstone for the new Video Game Development career pathway to be piloted in the 2011-2012 school year, and will provide the model for project-based learning to be used in that practicum.

Created in 2001 by Skillpoint Alliance's Technology & Education Executive Council, *Velocity Prep* is a life-changing four-week summer project-based learning intensive that engages 15 to 20 high school students in 160 hours of professional work as a consulting company. A Skillpoint industry or community partner serves as the client, employing the student-run company to tackle an issue of real world importance.

Working with the client, other experts, and a school liaison, the *Velocity Prep* student-run consulting company researches, plans, develops, and presents specific project deliverables to address the client's problem. *Velocity Prep* reflects a real business environment, enabling **students** to:

- be responsible for specific deliverables
- define project goals and timelines
- work effectively and efficiently in teams
- gain exposure to professional workplaces
- learn from local experts about real issues
- discover emerging career opportunities
- present final work products to their client
- receive a stipend with possible bonuses

The **school liaison** works with Skillpoint staff to handle the logistics necessary for effective delivery of the project, including:

- Recruit and match students to the project
- Assist in coordinating and scheduling student engagement with industry leaders, including transportation
- Ensure school facilities and necessary equipment are available
- Be available to assist with any last-minute logistical issues
- Maintain student and logistical documentation for the project's summary report

Skillpoint is responsible for the overall management and delivery of *Velocity Prep*, including:

- secure funding, including in-kind support
- coordinate client participation
- help identify and shape the project
- support liaison in program delivery
- oversee financial administration and reporting processes

Most of the costs for delivering *Velocity Prep* are dedicated to stipends for high school and college students. Students earn a stipend to ensure they do not have to choose between participating in *Velocity Prep* and obtaining typically low-skills summer jobs. The goal is to make this experience available to all students, especially those who are financially disadvantaged.