



TO: Planning & Operations Committee
FROM: Lynn Zmija & Janet Van De Carr
DATE: September 4, 2014
SUBJECT: Request for Funds from the Michel Trust – Digital Media Lab

Digital media and technology skills are increasingly important in today's world. To support students, educators, job seekers, content creators, and other interested community members, we want to create a digital media lab in the Library where adults and students can learn about and use specialized software and hardware. Activities supported by this lab would include creating media presentations, converting digital content from one format to another, and editing media such as photos, music, and video. The equipment and software we would provide is not typically purchased for home computers due to its cost and specialized purpose. Providing access at the Library would give beginning and advanced users the chance to learn and use an array of professional level software, and provide a unique service to the community.

Having a digital media lab in the Library fits within the Library's mission to provide access to information and supports the strategic direction: *The Library continues to be an early adopter of technology, anticipating trends and changes, by providing ever evolving services and assisting community members in adopting new technologies.*

Staff will provide an orientation to explain how to use the software and equipment and online tutorials will provide additional instruction. We currently have a small room adjacent to the Reader Services Desk that contains equipment for the visually impaired. This room is underutilized and can be reconfigured to serve both purposes.

Many public libraries in our area offer similar services with proven success and strong response from users. We have received several requests from residents to provide this kind of service and believe it would be particularly useful for students, entrepreneurs, home business owners, and job seekers.

We would like the support of the Library Board of Trustees to ask the Trustees of the Bruce A. Michel Trust for \$15,000 to create a media lab for the public. The funds will be used to purchase equipment and software.

The Bruce A. Michel Trust was established to "keep the Park Ridge Public Library up to date with technology". The Library received the \$250,000 Trust in 1998 and began using funds in the early 2000's. The Trust provided startup funds for the Library's eBook program, allowing the Park Ridge Public Library to be the first public library in Illinois to offer its patrons downloadable eBooks. In addition to eBooks and other digital media, the Trust has provided funds for digital resources for both adults and children, continuing to fulfill the purpose of the Trust established by Mr. Michel.