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Marin teen starts nonprofit to buy computers for students

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After Natty Gove and his father did a couple of hours of volunteer work in the garden at Sausalito Marin City School District this year, the teenager wanted to do more.

“We were talking to the gardening teacher and she told us all about the community and the kids at the school,” said Gove, 15, of Tiburon.

He contacted LaResha Huffman, the district superintendent, and Nixon Diaz, the informational technology coordinator. They told him at least 30 of the district’s 271 students had no personal computer to use at home.

Gove, a sophomore at Redwood High School, sprang into action. By February, he had created the Tech4Youth Foundation with a goal of raising \$11,000 for the 30 computers.

So far, the foundation has received \$4,000 in contributions, Gove said.

“I thought that would be a great way to help out the community,” he said.

“Especially at a time where we are relying so much more on technology.”

All students have Chromebooks for use at school, Huffman said. In addition, the TK-8 district has about 20 loaner laptops that students may check out for use at home.

Gove’s donation will allow more students to have internet access at home for homework and research, Huffman said.

Students at several other Bay Area school districts all have computers at school and at home — an arrangement some refer to as a “2:1 district,” Huffman said.

“While we are not a 2:1 district, having an additional 30 Chromebooks for students will be a great resource for more students to check out laptops,” Huffman said. “We are truly excited for this opportunity.”

On advice from Diaz, Gove said he is planning to purchase Chromebook laptops.

“Nixon told me those would be the most compatible with the school’s system,” Gove said of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Academy in Sausalito.

Gove has created a website at Tech4YouthFoundation.org, which offers information on how to donate. The foundation became a certified 501(c)(3) nonprofit in February, Gove said.

Gove said he has been seeking contributions by going door-to-door to his neighbors and also by emailing area businesses.

He said he is trying to spend about an hour or so daily seeking donations, in between school and other activities like his participation in the Marin County Search and Rescue Team. He said he could use some help to meet the foundation’s fundraising goal by the end of the fiscal year on June 30.

“Youth involvement in local service is more important than ever,” Gove said. “We believe our work could inspire others to make an impact in their communities and bring attention to the necessity of digital access in our world today.”