Point Paper on 10BitWorks Makerspace

Background:

- 10BitWorks 'Hackerspace' was founded in 2010 by San Antonio residents Christopher Hardee and Dirk Elemendorf as a community do-it-yourself (DIY) working space
- Received IRS 501(c)(3) non-profit designation on 28 November 2014
- Initially housed at 1020 Roosevelt in a 2,000 sq ft former motorcycle repair shop
    - Small size limited capacity and capabilities
    - Changed DBA name from 'Hackerspace' to 'Makerspace' to better communicate mission
- Moved to present location in mid-2017 at 130 W Lachapelle in a 7,000 sq ft former warehouse
    - Strategically located in SOUTHTOWN Lone Star Neighborhood Arts District
    - Improved capacity and capabilities but building is not ideal for a long term solution: electrical and plumbing deficiencies, most of space is not climate controlled, extreme dust environment
- Current location was a logical and cost effective way to grow our ability to serve community

Mission: (WHY IS THIS AN IMPORTANT PROGRAM? DOES IT CHANGE LIVES? SAVE LIVES?)

- We are a San Antonio non-profit, member-supported organization providing a community DIY, maker, hacker, and industrial art space
    - We believe a creative person should have a place that is affordable to create and innovate within a collaborative setting
    - We cater to artists, crafters, students, active military, veterans, retirees and anyone who is inspired to explore their creative potential on their own and or under the supervision of a mentoring member
    - We provide formal and informal training to our community members in how to safely accomplish their DIY projects
    - Over the past 10 years, 10BitWorks Makerspace has grown into the largest do-it-yourself industrial arts space in San Antonio with a wide variety of groups and craftsmen in the shop 10BitWorks is a one-stop shop for innovative endeavors that greatly add to San Antonio's cultural landscape within an evolving arts district
    - 10BitWorks is committed to offering affordable space and assistance in sourcing repurposed material, as well as logistical and technical guidance; it is our goal for makers to not just create but to also experiment and explore
    - No one can do it alone, we place a high value on collaboration and diversity an environment emerges for innovation and individual freedom of expression
    - As the longest running non-profit organization of our type in our area, we are committed to bringing the maker experience to local schools, community groups, and the neighborhoods of San Antonio
    - There are no sidelines at 10BitWorks, everybody is a maker!

Capabilities: (HOW IS THIS PROGRAM GOING TO SUSTAIN ITSELF?)

- Current shop capabilities include woodworking, welding, blacksmithing, 3D printing, laser cutting, plasma cutter, CNC router table, glassblowing, ceramics, metal casting, metal lathe, wood lathe, sewing, embroidery, tee-shirt printing and CNC milling
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- We have offered in-shop community classes in welding, woodworking, ceramics, frame making, encaustic painting and laser cutting
- We have the ability to export our capabilities to public events and have participated in San Antonio Library Maker Faire, BSides San Antonio Conference, San Antonio Mini-Maker Fair and the UTSA Institute of Texan Cultures Folklife Festival
- We can host group education makers events and have hosted Girl Scouts Little Library Box making (2 x 25 students), Overland Partners Architects, UTSA Engineering Student Association and The Freedom Rings Wooden Flag Box Build with wounded warriors and first responders
- We can host group meet ups for San Antonio makers groups; in the past we have hosted Anne Frank Inspire Academy, Lions Field Adult Community Center, San Antonio Woodworker's Guild and San Antonio Luthier's Group
- We can host projects and collaborations, these include a plastics recycling with The DoSeum, public outdoor seating with Overland Partners Intern Project and building homeless shelters with Broken Warriors Angels, a non-profit dedicated to helping homeless veterans
- We offer inexpensive solutions for business start-ups and provide a great cost-effective incubator for local entrepreneurs to learn new skills, collaborate, try out new products and launch their business ideas; current examples include Salty Bear Boards and Chadwell Art
- We can host in-shop events and have been active participants in Second Saturday Art Walk centered around South Flores, Lone Star and West Lachapelle streets; since COVID we have limited this participation to outdoor socially distanced artists booths, music and refreshments

Capacity: (WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THE PROGRAMMING?)

- We currently average around 75 active members; prior to COVID closure in March 2020 we had 100 active members
- Current membership fee is $60 a month for individual members, $100 a month for family membership and $100 a month for corporate memberships
- After re-opening post COVID shutdown, we adhere to city guidelines for preventing the spread of COVID and limit total number of persons in shop to 10; due to our spread out hours, we rarely have full capacity during the week

Present Needs:

- Our current Board consists of five non-paid volunteers whose main focus is the operation and management of our non-profit to keep our shop open, safe and well stocked with tools and equipment that keep our organization relevant to our community
- Our current building lease will expire in Spring of 2022
- We need to increase our member base to 100 or better
- Pay off CNC Router table ($2000)
- Acquire woodworking dust collector ($500)

Future Directions:

- We strive to continue to grow our facility, capabilities and capacity through increased membership, dedicated donors, grants, marketing and community participation
- Create strategic partnerships with other San Antonio non-profits to leverage community resources to accomplish mutual key missions and expand our reach to underserved populations
- Identify community needs where we can fill a vacuum; one example is to offer project-based after school programs in industrial arts, creative arts, design and fabrication
- Create strategic partnerships with area colleges to supplement their shop/studio programs; these would include engineering, manufacturing and fine arts programs
- Eventually acquire or long term lease a suitable industrial facility in the downtown area that would be over 15,000 sq ft with a large outdoor, secure area
- Requires 3-phase power, climate control, clean areas for sensitive equipment, adequate parking, plumbing that supports industrial sinks and the ability to host events in a post-COVID era
- Achieve budget goals to where we can hire a dedicated shop manager and administrative director

Conclusion:

- 10BitWorks Makerspace is San Antonio's largest and longest continually operating non-profit makerspace
- Over 10 years we have served thousands of clients and have made significant impacts on the cultural and economic landscape of San Antonio through training, projects, events and collaborations
- We have successfully navigated organizational growth with a move in 2017 and have shown our resiliency with current COVID pandemic
- We are poised for our next phase of growth by continually improving our leadership, network and services while growing our membership base

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