



## ViewSonic Gaming Monitors Bring Learning Advantages to Urban Enrichment Center

### SCHOLARS COLLECTIVE

Convenience | Quality | Purpose



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— Edward Valdez, Scholars Collective Manager

#### INTERVIEWED

- ▶ Edward Valdez, Scholars Collective Manager

#### INDUSTRY

- ▶ Education

#### PROBLEM

- ▶ Scholars Collective needed esports and streaming equipment to fulfill its mission of reducing the digital divide by providing tech-based afterschool enrichment.

#### SOLUTION

- ▶ ViewSonic 27" VX2758-2KP-MHD and ELITE XG271QG 27" 1440p 240Hz gaming monitors

#### COMPANY

Scholars Collective of Long Beach specializes in providing meaningful, STEAM-focused activities for youth scholars aged four to fourteen. Founded by a professor of education with 20 years of experience and staffed with educators and educators-in-training, Scholars Collective provides extracurricular enrichment activities, homework help, and tutoring, using research-based methods to deliver programs designed by expert educators. Dedicated to downtown Long Beach and its surrounding communities, the Scholars Collective offers parents an alternative to childcare in a convenient location for an affordable rate. In addition to drop-in hours and scheduled classes, Scholars Collective offers events such as parents' night out, birthday parties, and community events including homeschooling programs and esports tournaments.

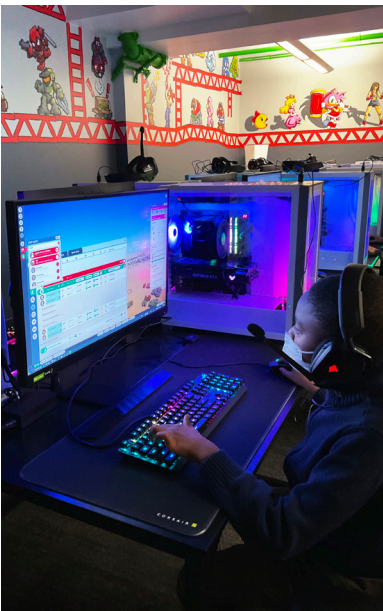
#### PROBLEM

Nearly 30% of K-12 public school students in the U.S. do not have adequate internet access, lack a device adequate for distance learning/homework, or both, according to a recent report from Common Sense Media and Boston Consulting Group. This deficit in access to technology resources is exacerbated by unequal access to educational enrichment outside of the school day. In many

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## RESULTS

- ▶ Students actively enhance their technology, critical thinking, social emotional skills, and more, with access to state-of-the-art workstations and gaming rigs
- ▶ The Tech Lab provides ample gaming space with ten state-of-the-art gaming rigs equipped with ViewSonic Elite XG271QG 27" 1440p 240Hz monitors
- ▶ The Stream Lab, equipped with ViewSonic monitors, provides space and workstations for scholars to learn content creation and broadcasting
- ▶ In the Enrichment Center students use laptops and tablets connected to ViewSonic monitors for homework, research and art projects



affluent communities across the U.S., opportunities for after-school enrichment abound with coordinated late-bus transportation: park district sports leagues and classes, club leagues, art classes and maker spaces, school-sponsored chess, math, book clubs and more. Students in these communities are on one side of the digital divide.

In downtown Long Beach, California, things are different. Parents and guardians whose kids attend area public schools often work multiple jobs, with no time or income to spare for costly commercial tutors or club travel leagues. The local public schools have limited funds for after-school activities. And the downtown environment is adult-oriented, with few places for kids to hang out after school. The divide here is a chasm, and, beyond smartphones, technology is rarely a part of students' lives. This creates a distinct disadvantage in a world that relies on technology to run, where the highest paying and most secure jobs require experience with tech.

## SOLUTION

Scholars Collective was created to fill this critical need. Founded by Dr. Angela Macias, an educator with over 20 years in educational studies, Scholars Collective provides a fun, safe after-school space for exploration, classes, tutoring and access to state-of-the-art technology. An innovative program centered on providing affordable access to tech-focused enrichment, the center is open until 9pm – far later than most after-school programs – serving a local community where parents often work long hours at multiple jobs.

“We do battle with the digital divide daily by providing learning opportunities that use state-of-the-art technology made available through the generous support of manufacturers like ViewSonic,” said Macias. “Most of what we offer is STEAM-focused, and gaming is a focal point of our mission.”

The Collective's learning space consists of a central room dubbed the Enrichment Center, the Stream Lab, and the JayzTwoCents Tech Lab. In the Enrichment Center, students use laptops and tablets for homework, research and art projects. The Stream Lab provides a closed-door space for scholars to learn content creation and broadcasting, as well as to meet for private therapy and tutoring. Six ViewSonic VX2758-2KP-MHD 27" monitors provide expansive, crystal-clear viewing in these two areas. The Tech Lab is outfitted with 10 state-of-the-art gaming rigs equipped with ViewSonic ELITE™ XG271QG 27" 1440p 240Hz monitors. The “big kid room,” as the youngsters call it, is the beating heart of the center, literally pulsing with excitement and vibrant LED lighting.

“Our approach to teaching with tech is to ease students into using more complicated technology, then into using it in a more sophisticated way,” said Macias. “Our scholars are often familiar with smartphones but may not know how to use a mouse or keyboard. In school students may be exposed to tech, but it's often pretty mediocre, and, what's more, usually the only one touching it are the teachers. Students see it, they're around it, but they're not using it themselves.”

The highly-trained team of instructors at Scholars Collective guides students through the use of basic computer skills, fostering learning (in all areas of the center) by asking questions, facilitating discovery, and promoting problem solving while nurturing a growth mindset. Many students are motivated through this process by the prospect of making it to the Tech Lab, where the LED-lit gaming rigs with sleek ViewSonic ELITE gaming monitors beckon.



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▶ **VX2758-2KP\_MHD**  
27" OMNI Gaming Monitor



▶ **ELITE XG271QG**  
27" ELITE Gaming Monitor

Instructor Sona Karun, a science education student at California State University, Long Beach considering a career in education, teaches the introduction to coding class at Scholars Collective, and has seen the benefits of step-wise tech-focused learning first hand.

“It’s incredibly rewarding to see students grow in their skills and creativity as we go through the coding activities, which range from simple coding games to website creation and even Roblox studio coding,” said Karun. “The tech tools we’ve been provided, like the ViewSonic monitors, are critical to enabling us to provide these opportunities.”

With a philosophy centered in constructivism, the Collective’s educators promote choice, curiosity, fun and independence. The Tech Lab is available on a first-come, first-served basis for those who have graduated from the initial learnings.

“In school when students get to use tech it’s usually in a very prescriptive way,” said Macias. “We want them to be independent, to learn tech by choosing and exploring based on their interests, from graphic design, gaming, making videos, coding, or creating their own video games. It’s exciting to see them self-motivated by their inner creativity and autonomy.”

It’s no surprise that given the option, many of the Collective’s participants gravitate toward gaming. What may surprise some is the power of gaming to foster substantial and significant learning.

“There’s no better way to get students excited about technology than to tap into something they already love,” said Macias. “We believe that gaming is an ideal platform for learning because, number one, it meets kids where they are and, number two, it provides a positive medium for the development of social-emotional skills.”

This, she said, is more critical than ever.

“Teachers tell me that the 2021-2022 school year has been the hardest they’ve experienced in terms of behavior,” said Macias. “The transition back from remote learning has been really tough on kids of all ages. Almost all kids are less mature than expected because they missed out on so much classroom time. They’re playing catch up.”

Engagement through video games brings kids together in a unique way, said Macias. When kids game they’re speaking a common language. They need to find ways to work together. They develop a common etiquette around the activity. They practice teamwork. They learn positive communication and patience – for example when engaging with a less experienced player, which leads to learning about how to mentor others. They also learn what not to do.

For example, it’s not okay to tamper with someone else’s account on Roblox, an online gaming and game creation platform actively used by more than half of all children under 16 in the U.S.

“When kids game together, they’re covering a lot of social-emotional skillsets, all of which boils down to character building,” said Macias. “They’re also building critical skills like planning, problem solving, strategic thinking and time management. Gaming requires a tremendous amount of cognitive engagement.”

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To extend the reach of these benefits to more students in the community, Scholars Collective has teamed up with the California State University, Dominguez Hills (CSUDH) Esports team, which is similarly focused on the advantages gaming brings to youth and young adults. The catch, as both Macias and Ruben Caputo, founding (and former) CSUDH Esports general manager know, can be parents wary of “too much screen time.”

“When people think about esports, they think competition and they think about having fun. Parents can be concerned that it’s not a good use of their child’s time,” said Caputo. “But esports offers so much. Every season I had the great joy of seeing so many students build confidence and competencies through their participation in esports.”

At CSUDH, esports is viewed as a strategy not just an outcome – a strategy that creates opportunity through gaming for students to learn problem solving, strategic thinking and collaboration, along with coding, event broadcasting, graphic design, marketing and other activities related to the world of esports. Skills that can uncover passions and open the door to a host of career opportunities.

“The CSUDH esports program provides students with experiences they can readily translate into life skills and career opportunities,” said Caputo. “Scholars Collective is helping students begin this process of being engaged with tech and gaining the social-emotional and cognitive skills at an earlier point in their lives.”

Through the blossoming partnership, students at Scholars Collective enjoy mentorship from award-winning CSUDH Esports Toros, who additionally help run periodic tournaments for the SCU community.

All of which, notes Macias, could not have been possible without the Collective’s sponsors, who provided the technology needed to bring this digital-divide busting dream to life.

“Most of our kids don’t have access to tech like the ViewSonic monitors at home, and it’s easy to see how much they love using it here,” said Scholars Collective Manager Edward Valdez. “The ViewSonic ELITE displays are perfect for coding and graphic design – and especially for providing a smooth gaming experience. The only ones not happy about it are the opponents because our scholars keep winning matches!”