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Enriched Learning on a High Fiber Diet!

By Community Columnist, Russell Fraenkel

GOOGLE NETWORK MANIA in Dakota County, Minnesota is a condition solely dependent on a high fiber, enriched learning diet. Early childhood students to prime-time adult learners readily report that since consuming a high-fiber Google diet, their daily learning intake leaves them feeling incredibly challenged, energized, engaged and eager for more.

To quote fifteen year old resident, Stephanie Roebuck of Lakeville, MN, "I used to have to limit my high-fiber intake due to the indigestion and related embarrassment it created not only for me, but for my family, classmates, friends and neighbors. The nutrient claims made by other fiber providers, never, ever materialized. That all changed the day I started my high fiber Google diet. Now, I love how my mind, body and spirit, looks and feels."

Stephanie freely admits that she had initial doubts and fears about gorging herself on a Google-enabled, fiber rich learning diet. With download and upload speeds far exceeding conventional understanding, she worried that her way of learning and her social network could easily unravel. As she put it, "my 24/7 network appetite was insatiable. Up to this point, I tried without success to satisfy my connectivity cravings at school, my home, at my friend's homes, in coffee shops, and even at the local library. What if my new Google fiber diet was more of the same disappointment? I would just die.... Fortunately, it wasn't that at all. It turned out to be a fiber fix that I and all my friends are devouring."

Stephanie's powerful story begins to illustrate the transformational learning opportunities a fiber enriched environment creates. Other Dakota County students and a number of educational leaders were asked this: What difference has a Google Fiber enriched diet made in your life and in the life of the community? Here is what they had to say.

Jay Haugen, Superintendent of West. St. Paul, Mendota Heights, Eagan School District lives with his family in Dakota County. He remembers a few short years ago when more than 20% of the homes in the school district did not have access to broadband technology. Due to the generous Google Fiber investment, virtually all households are personal laboratories for learning. Jay reminds us of this, "over the course of a year, a typical K-12 student spends 13% of her/his time in school, 87% is spent in the community. Our fiber enriched environment now provides schools and families with greater assurance that all students have access to 'anytime, anywhere learning' at their finger tips. Our learning partnership just grew exponentially." He further added this, "the role of teacher in the classic sense is no longer. It's exciting to observe teachers become learning facilitators who are like chef's laying out a smorgasbord feast."

19-year-old Chase Anderson, a recent graduate of an area high school, claims to be very satisfied with his Google Fiber enriched diet. "The community-wide integration is what really makes a

difference", says Anderson, "When everyone is given equal access, the community is able to fully tap the system. For example, not only can I video chat with all of my classmates, but I can watch live class lectures by a master teacher, or record ones if I miss them, all while in the comfort of my dorm room. I can even talk instantly with a tutor if I need help with my homework. It has created a virtual educational support system that I can access whenever and wherever I want." Chase reports he's now a learning rock-star. In closing, he says, "Ramen Noodles may have been a college student's staple in the past, but now, we run exclusively on Google Fiber."

Tom Umhoefer, Director of Community Education with the Burnsville/Eagan/Savage School District believes the Google partnership has fundamentally changed the interactive relationship the district has with students of all ages. The opportunity for instant, real-time input from community members affords the district the opportunity to clearly understand the learning needs and expectations of residents. Tom claims, "not only does it enhance our interaction abilities, it also provides tax-paying residents with immediate access to learning resources close to home and across the world. Talk about relevance. The district loves to be in position to play a significant role in connecting people with high quality learning options. The Google high fiber diet has been great for learning regularity."

Preschool student, 4-year-old Elizabeth Jacobs, has been on a Google High Fiber Enriched Diet for the majority of her life, and loves how it tastes. Her mother, Amy, praises the diet as well, "education and entertainment are not only combined, but instantly accessible. We never have to worry about what is on television, because all of the supplementary programs from Lizzie's school are automatically synced with our TV set. The social advantages are wonderful as well. Lizzi loves being able to interact with Grandma and Grandpa via video chat in just one click." Who would have thought nutritious fiber could be so delicious as well.

Greg Utecht, recently retired technology coordinator with the Lakeville Area School District, believes the I-Net effort that previously connected over 200 municipal buildings in the county to allow high-speed data transfer between entities was a strong selling point to Google. As Greg put it, "it demonstrated the county's leadership, vision and commitment along with all of its municipalities and school districts to maximize resources so area residents benefit each day from highly interconnected fiber networks. Google's Fiber Network pushed our community over the top." Greg further indicated that it has been impressive to be engaged in a community that now is immersed in a public-private venture to ensure that learners of all ages are equipped with 'the gear' they need such as hand-held and lap-top devices to push the fiber network to the max. "In the past, I was never really sure about the claims that a high fiber regimen was like a boost of free adrenaline. Each day I see more and more evidence of student learning in ways we only imagined during the dawn of technology use."

About the columnist: Russell Fraenkel is a project consultant with Dakota Future. Dakota Future is a strategic link between business, education and government in Dakota County. The partnership provides engaging collaborative opportunities for area leaders to actively seek and create innovative ways to ensure Dakota County's competitive position in a global economy.