

Fundación Cepsa and Carabela Youth Association work to bridge the digital divide

- **The project “Digital support in the times of COVID-19,” winner of the 2020 Social Value Awards, brings new technologies closer to the most vulnerable people**
- **The initiative focuses on socially excluded families, who are offered information, training and digital counseling.**

Fundación Cepsa and the Carabela Youth Association (Spanish acronym: AJC) are working to bridge the digital divide among the most vulnerable members of society with the “Digital support in the times of COVID-19” project, assisting teens, young adults and their families and offering an information, training and counseling service focused on new technologies.

This project, one of the six winners of the Fundación Cepsa 2020 Social Value Awards in Huelva, has made it possible to reinforce a broader program to fight the cycle of child poverty, with plans for the insertion of socially excluded families implemented by the AJC. Specifically, it provides a solution to a need that has been exacerbated in the times of COVID-19: the digital divide, converted into an educational divide. At the same time, it addresses the difficulties in accessing essential community resources digitally, considering the lack of computer equipment and internet access in the most vulnerable households.

During the follow-up phase for the award-winning projects, the head of Fundación Cepsa in Huelva, Teresa Millán, visited the association’s facilities to learn first-hand about the support work carried out with this group. The meeting was attended by the president of the organization, María Mora, and the project manager, Angela Martínez, accompanied by some of the beneficiaries.

During the meeting, Teresa Millán stressed the importance of the assistance provided by the AJC to the most disadvantaged people in Huelva. “Bridging the digital divide is an urgent matter that will help people to overcome limitations to proper social integration, to accessing key services for welfare, and to carrying out the normal activities of any citizen,” she added. She also highlighted the “important work of the Carabela Youth Association and its efforts to raise awareness of the need to support the most disadvantaged groups, to whom special attention must be paid.”

For her part, AJC President María Mora praised the award from Fundación Cepsa, stressing that “it is a source of great pride and an incentive for our association to have been recognized with the Fundación Cepsa award,” which has made it possible to “fulfill our dream of providing training on new technologies to the most disadvantaged individuals and reaching more people.” Also, she expressed the hope that “the public administrations will continue to support this project, since people without resources deserve the same opportunities as everyone else, which is a necessary condition for their full integration.”

The “Digital support in the times of COVID-19” project

The "Digital support in the times of COVID-19" project is focused on providing resources and personalized support to families with dependent children. It aims to make it easier for them to fill out digital documents and applications, and to complete other procedures for public administrations, among other entities, by providing information and training to parents. Also, it works to train children, teens and young adults on digital platforms to access school content and other necessary resources in both in-person and online classes. This is all in coordination and collaboration with the social services, educational centers and other social entities of District 5 of the capital of Huelva.

Social Value Awards

The Social Value Awards started in Huelva in 2005. They were well received, resulting in the other Cepsa centers joining the initiative in subsequent years, which was the case with Tenerife, the Autonomous Community of Madrid, Campo de Gibraltar, Portugal, Colombia and Brazil.

These awards are one of the stand-out initiatives of Fundación Cepsa. The purpose of these annual accolades is to support the most disadvantaged individuals, groups and sectors, promote solidarity values and foster educational and cultural development. To this end, the entity relies on the involvement of Cepsa's professionals, who sponsor the projects or actions presented by the NGOs, thus becoming a "solidarity godfather or godmother" of the project.

The period for submitting entries to the 2021 competition will open in September.

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Fundación Cepsa

huelva@fundacioncepsa.com

Tel.: (34) 959 37 95 48 / 659 679 341

www.fundacioncepsa.com