Video: Gates, Zuckerberg Urge Kids to Code

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NEW YORK (AP) — Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg, and Twitter creator Jack Dorsey are among the tech luminaries appearing in a new video [1] promoting the teaching and learning of computer coding in schools.

Titled "What most schools don't teach," the video released online Tuesday begins with Zuckerberg, Gates and other tech icons recalling the time they got their start in coding. For some, that was in sixth grade. For others, such as Ruchi Sanghvi, Facebook's first female engineer, that happened in college. Freshman year, first semester, intro to computer science, to be exact.

Dorsey, who also founded and runs the mobile payments startup Square, said in an interview that he didn't grow up being a programmer.

"I wanted to work on ideas. In order to see them grow, I had to learn how to code," Dorsey told The Associated Press. "I think there is a lack of desire, there is a lack of push to teach people how to program and how to code. It's not all that dissimilar to learning a foreign language. It's just a way to instruct a machine on what to do. It empowers people to start a business, to start a project, to really speak to a daily issue that they are having or other people are having."

Running less than six minutes, the video promotes Code.org, a nonprofit foundation [2] created last year to help computer programming education grow.

"The first time I actually had something come up and say 'hello world,' and I made a computer do that, that was just astonishing," Gabe Newell, president of video game studio Valve, recalls in the video.

But it's not just tech leaders promoting programming in the video. Chris Bosh, of the Miami Heat basketball team, says about coding: "I know it can be intimidating, a lot of things are intimidating, but, you know, what isn't?"

Code.org was founded by tech entrepreneur Hadi Partovi, an early investor in Facebook, Dropbox and the vacation rental site Airbnb. The nonprofit wants to address an oft-cited problem among technology companies — not enough computer science graduates to fill a growing number of programming jobs. The group laments that many schools don't even offer classes in programming.

"Our policy is literally to hire as many talented engineers as we can find," Zuckerberg says in the video. "The whole limit of the system is just the there just aren't enough people who are trained and have these skills today."

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AP Technology Writer Michael Liedtke in San Francisco contributed to this story.

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Online:

The video: http://bit.ly/ZGiDeP [1]

The nonprofit: http://www.code.org [2]

Source URL (retrieved on *03/14/2014 - 5:09am*):
http://www.wirelessdesignmag.com/news/2013/02/video-gates-zuckerberg-urge-kids-code

Links:
[1] http://bit.ly/ZGiDeP
[2] http://www.code.org