What is Picademy?

I had read about Raspberry Pi some time ago, and as a former Ed Tech Collaborator, we had two Raspberry Pi laptops in our playground equipment. The Raspberry Pi laptops we used to show others had just a breadboard, power supply, and built in monitor. It was interesting and you could access the internet and that was about all we showed others. The biggest selling point was that you could build a computer for under $100. That sounded great! However, little did I know at the time, that there was so much more you could do with a few Raspberry Pi components, a keyboard and a used monitor/tablet. This past April I went back to school librarianship and started planning how to build my makerspace and library projects. Raspberry Pi seemed like it might be a good addition to what I already had available for my students.
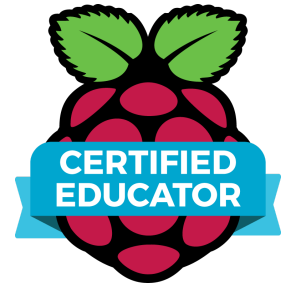
This last Spring I received an email inviting me to apply to attend a Raspberry Picademy in Seattle in August. I looked at the 2 day academy agenda and realized there was a whole curriculum and a multitude of things I could do with Raspberry Pi with my students. I applied, was accepted and got ready to learn as much as I could.

The first week in August we met at the LIving Computers Museum + Labs in the Industrial District of Seattle. The museum in itself is a gem and worth visiting. They also have labs that we used for our two day session. The sessions ran from 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. each day and we were provided with all of the tools necessary to create a computer with a monitor, breadboard, additional chip know as a HAT, and a variety of perferrials to make our coding fun. We first put together our breadboard and the monitor. The we added lights and learned how to write code to get the green, yellow and red lights to light up. Next we added a camera and learned how to take photos and code to add filters to our selfies. Next came the 10 minute group challenge using a motor. Our group came up with a model of a self decorating and undecorating holiday tree. Other groups came up with amazing and different projects. All of this is that the materials used were either inexpensive or recycled.

Another benefit of attending the academy worth mentioning is that I met teachers and librarians from all over the U.S., Puerto Rico, and Canada who shared enthusiasm and the desire to learn new skills. I now have contacts to share ideas with and also some classroom exchanges. I can't recommend this opportunity and found it to be one of the best trainings I have attended.

How to learn more and become certified:

Picademy Event Site: https://www.raspberrypi.org/training/picademy/events/

Raspberry Pi Online Courses: http://bit.ly/RaspBPiCourses