

Testimony of Zaid Al-Timimi
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**Before the Committee on Libraries, Parks, Recreation, and
Planning**
Council of the District of Columbia
PERFORMANCE OVERSIGHT HEARING

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Mr. Chairman and Members of Committee, thank you for providing me the opportunity to present testimony. I ask that my testimony be made part of the official record of this hearing.

Thirty years ago, Michael Durso, the legendary educator and principal of Wilson High School created a computer lab to teach kids about the future.

Twenty-five years ago your predecessors provided funding for kids to work with computers by authorizing the honorable Mayor's "For Every Youth a Job" program.

Twenty years ago, the University of the District of Columbia established, for a few brief years, one of the best computer research labs in the area.

Seven years ago, my mom, Dr. Sahera Al-Timimi inspired me to create the "Personal Web", a Web where you can curator all of you personal data from the privacy of your mobile device.

Five years ago, my friend, the Honorable Walter Fauntroy requested that I use my technical skills to better serve the community as he and his friend, Dr. Martin Luther King, once served.

Four months ago, the Chief of the Adaptive Services Division, Ms. Venetia Demson, and the Adaptive Services Librarian, Mr. James Patrick Timony, launched a project during DC Week 2011 to create electronic and audio books ("e-books") for kids who are blind, have low-vision, or learning difficulties such as dyslexia (that is, kids who are print-disabled). Members of the project include Bookshare, the leading provider of content for the print-disabled, and I.

The brilliance of the Adaptive Services Division was to harness the strengths of non-profits and software entrepreneurs and bring them to the library to create mobile apps that will better utilize the spare time of Americans to help create e-books for kids.

By providing the physical space and mentoring software developers in the creation of accessible software, Adaptive Services has become one of the catalyst for the local "App Economy" which is generating revenue for the city.

Last week, the Washingtonian Dr. Michael Mandel, a PhD graduate in economics from Harvard University, former chief economist of BusinessWeek, the recipient of "Best Economic Journalist of the Year" by the World Leadership Forum, Chief Economic Strategist at the Progressive Policy Institute in Washington DC, and Senior Fellow at the Mack Center for Technological Innovation at the Wharton School authored the report: "Where The Jobs Are: The App Economy".

This report describes how 466, 000 US jobs have been created since the 2007 launch of the iPhone. Dr. Mandel also lists third place Washington, DC as having 6.4% of its economy derived through the "App Economy" and first place California with 23.8%.

The role of the library has already changed. Today, the Council Members have an opportunity to empower the Library as it continues to empower DC residents.

I thank the Committee again for the opportunity to testify today.