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A Summary from the CTC VISTA Project Pre-service Orientation, August, 2005 [see page 5]

Ed Schwartz: Community Organizing and Development

Community organizing and development is a priority area that may permeate the missions of many CTC VISTA Project technology centers, and indeed CTCs in general. This area also has a large amount of references, sources and contacts — so much so that it may seem daunting.

Ed Schwartz, author of *NetActivism: How Citizens Use the Internet* and founder/director of the Institute for Study of Civic Values, broaches the massive amount of information in the context of the Institute's mission of "demonstrating ...how to build community and examine public policy within the framework of principles set forth in the Declaration of



Ed Schwartz addressing the VISTAs at the PSO.

"...how to build community and examine public policy within the framework of principles set forth in the Declaration of Independence and the Preamble to the Constitution."

Independence and the Preamble to the Constitution." Given this framework, Ed has designed the *Neighborhoods Online* website as an accessible doorway for concerned citizens to enter the wide web world of civic information. It is not only an easy-to-navigate gateway to the enormous amount of usually cumbersome civic and government websites, but it is also a resource organized specifically for civic organizing and activism by blocks, neighborhoods, and cities.

Phillyneighborhoods.org is the richest example of its application, filled with resources for community activists and projects that Ed has been involved with for so many years in his own hometown. Using a handy set of top ten websites to profile a community (see sidebar), Ed shows how the information can be reorganized for local organizing purposes, including demonstrating the local extent and effect of budget cuts in federal programs that often seem so distant and unrelated to actual lives.

Phillyneighborhoods.org has information organized for blocks and neighborhoods with the goal of helping to educate and organize interested citizens around issues such as safety in schools and the cost of crime. It has menu options and content areas in housing, crime, education, jobs, recreation, health, and human services. This kind of portal is a unique resource for citizens scanning the enormous amount of unorganized community information that is often untapped through the Internet because it is so hard to find and not organized or formatted for civic engagement and community development purposes.

The Institute's recently-launched Ten Point Civic Value Campaign is aimed at helping neighborhood organizations work with government and schools to strengthen civic values and resources in these areas. By using tools such as *Neighborhoods Online*, citizens can be galvanized to "make government work" and use available data to profile their own communities and support campaigns to improve local schools, businesses and street corners. —Danielle Martin

Community Organizing and Development: 10 Web Sites to Help Profile a Community

1. **NeighborhoodsOnline.Net** — the Institute for the Study of Civic Value's web site that includes links to all the links suggested below.
2. **Census Bureau** - includes demographic data at the census tract, community, city, county, and state level; at the **2000 census gateway**, you can even get information related to a specific address.
3. **The State and Local Government Web Site** - an easy-to-use online portal to every town, county, city, and state government website in the United States. When you get into individual web sites, read the Mayor's State of the City address will give you a fast look at the major issues facing the community.
4. **NewsLink** - indexes newspapers and broadcast stations by city. Want to read the local paper? This website links to all of them.
5. **Local Consolidated HUD Plans** - Local and state governments that receive Community Development Block Grant Funding from HUD must submit specific plans documenting the level of poverty and housing, along with a description of the programs that will be used to address it. These plans represent a virtual guide to hardship in America.

[continued on next page]

Community Organizing and Development in the CTR Archives

Spring-Summer 2005

Community Networking: Movements in the Field and at the Radical Center by Michael Maranda

Houston's Technology for All Wireless Project and the National Municipal Wireless Debate by Will Reed

The Foundation of Community Information Technology: Community-Based Research by Randy Stoecker

Book Review of Research Methods for Community Change: A Project-Based Approach by Melissa C. Jeter

Book Review of Community Practice in the Network Society: Local Action/Global Interaction by Daniel Schackman

New Immigrants and Internet Use: Crossing Borders for Social and Cultural Benefit by Corry Bregendahl and Cornelia Flora

'Bringing IT Home' with the Cleveland Housing Network by DeJuan Perrymond

CDBG-supported Programs at Toledo's Murchison Center by James Moseby

e-Literacy and Connectivity for Development in India, the Akshaya Approach by Joyjeet Pal and G.R. Kiran

eSeva E-services in Southeast India by Sanjay Jaju

Winter 2004-2005

Book Review: *Shaping the Network Society: The New Role of Civil Society in Cyberspace* by Daniel Schackman

The Power of All of Us? — The eBay Lesson for Community Development by Frank Odasz

Public Policy, Online Content, and Research to Expand Community Access to Digital Opportunities by Wendy Lazarus and Laurie Lipper

e-Lecture: Using Technology to Involve Communities in the Election Process by Oscar Madrigal & James Lau

e-Liberate—Tool for Online Deliberation by Doug Schuler
Blogging for Your Community by Trudy Schuett

Summer 2004

Emergence, Convergence, and Empowerment by Daniel Schackman

Community Development and Technology 2004 Conference Track sessions

Winter-Spring 2004

The Boston Earned Income Tax Credit Electronic Filing and Technology Access Project by Joan Arches

Summer 2003

Using GIS Mapping to Build Community by Megan Kinney and Michael Clark

Spring 2003

An Illinois Consortium at the Digital Crossroads by Layton Olsen

Fall-Winter 2002-2003

Mapping and Community Organizing in Philadelphia by Eric Hoffman

Edna Jackson, Technology And Community Building by Randal Pinkett

From The Children's Partnership: Strategies and Resources for Community Technology Practitioners by Laurie Lipper and Wendy Lazarus

Winter-Spring 2002

Community Mapping for Neighborhood Knowledge in Los Angeles by Bill Pitkin and Nick Rattray

Contentbank.org: Content-Building for and by Local Communities by Laurie Lipper and Francisco Mora

Buenos Aires, Montreal, and Seattle: Civic Unrest and Civic Intelligence by Doug Schuler

Community Organizing Web Sites [continued from previous page]

6. Bureau of Labor Statistics - Regional Economic Data — BLS's page that tracks data by region; it provides some indication of the economic condition of the cities and communities within each region.
7. Federal Spending by County - What is the total federal investment in a county, including entitlements like Social Security and Medicare, grant programs like VISTA and the Head Start, research funding, and salaries of the federal employees working in the county? This little known Census Bureau data site provides information for every county in the United States between 1993 and 2003. As the debate over the federal budget unfolds, this website enables you

to make the connections locally. Also check out Ed's site: BushBudget.com.

8. Vote-Smart — still the best web site to get comprehensive information about state and federal representatives throughout the country.
9. Yahoo Groups - the most widely used listserv service by civic groups, covering a wide range of issues.
10. Yes, we know, you already use Google. But it still deserves a place here as the best search engine for anything else you're trying to find in a city or community.

— Ed Schwartz

Enabling Citizen Communications:

Lessons Learned from Hurricane Katrina

by Matthew Walker

This past September, we all watched in horror as tens of thousands of individuals were evacuated from Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama to emergency shelters throughout the country. Even as a flood of aid and assistance poured into these areas, volunteers cited the lack of communications and technology as one of the largest obstacles in their relief efforts. Within days of the disaster, however, community technology centers (CTCs) showed that they were willing and able to provide emergency communications access and assistance to those displaced by the storm. Thanks to CTCs set up in emergency shelters and existing CTC staff and volunteers who made themselves available to survivors in relocation areas, thousands of survivors registered themselves in online directories, searched for news of friends and loved ones, signed up for government assistance and kept themselves informed of developments in the rebuilding efforts.



Tech 4 All CTC at Houston Astrodome (see p. 22)

Essential government services, including those provided by FEMA and the Red Cross, were overwhelmed in the early days and hours of the response. In many cases these services were accessible to Katrina survivors only through online forms, as traditional phone-based communications were constantly busy. Online applications for relief required both access to and the ability to use technology. Many of the displaced lacked this access and knowledge before Katrina hit, and therefore faced significant barriers. Because CTC staff routinely aid individuals with little or no experience using technology, they were well-poised to help evacuees. The experiences of several CTCs also demonstrate that relocated evacuees found it extremely valuable to be able to search for jobs, find a place to live, and prepare a resume – all part of returning a sense of control and normalcy to their lives.

In the Astrodome in Houston, for example, staff and volunteers from Technology for All created a CTC for evacuees that served, at peak operations, over 1,000 survivors per day in their two larger computer labs. They also created an online journal, or blog, documenting their experiences and lessons at <http://texasctcs.blogspot.com/>.

Boat People SOS in Houston provided technology and language support for the displaced Vietnamese-American community. Also in Texas, TechCorps, in collaboration with Houston IT Empowerment Consortium (HITEC) and Bridging the Digital Divide, created two CTCs in Houston's George R. Brown Convention Center that registered at least 3,000 survivors with FEMA with the help of ten full-time staff and approximately 300 volunteers. Elsewhere, the Ohio Community

Computing Network created a CTC at the Ohio Air National Guard base in Columbus to serve relocated evacuees, and Cleveland Digital Vision led an effort to provide a CTC to evacuees at the Cleveland Convention Center. In these and many more efforts, CTCs took leading roles responding to their communities' needs in the face of Katrina's devastation.

CTCs across the U.S. can learn from these early efforts and take steps to help those who resettle in their communities as well as plan for future emergencies. While emergency preparedness is in the national spotlight, CTCs should take the opportunity to better educate and inform their local government agencies and area relief organizations of the valuable roles that CTCs serve in their community. Too many local governments don't know enough about the work of area CTCs or their potential to aid in emergencies. Local officials could also be aware of Katrina evacuees relocated in the community who could benefit from CTC programs, and could assist CTCs with outreach efforts.

To better prepare for future emergencies, CTCs can become active in emergency planning by meeting with emergency services providers in their communities and reviewing local disaster response plans. CTCs can serve a central role in identifying and meeting the needs of local citizens. Also, by creating a response plan and pre-arranging resources, CTCs can better prepare to function following a natural disaster or local emergency. Simple and effective plans might include a drive to register and train volunteers with basic emergency communications (how to get and use email and fill out online forms, for example) and preparations for rapidly alerting and mobilizing those volunteers in a time of need. Additionally, CTCs might want to contact area businesses and foundations to develop plans for coordinated technology and financial assistance.

Community Technology Centers' Network (CTCNet) is taking an active role in the disaster response by sharing information, gathering lessons learned, and pursuing contacts with the Red



Mac Dearman installs a wireless access point. (see p. 21)

Community Organizing & Development

Cross, government agencies, and corporate sponsors in order to provide resources to CTCs that have directly supported relocated survivors. In addition, we have proposed hosting national and regional summits on emergency citizen communications focusing on more effective coordination between CTCs and emergency planners, as well as creating a guide using lessons learned from Katrina to help prepare CTCs to respond to future national emergencies. CTCNet is also working to ensure that ongoing responses to provide support to Katrina survivors are connected to existing CTC efforts. Making this connection will ensure that – rather than fading away when the immediate relief effort is finished – the resources being marshaled to address these problems on an emergency basis will result in stronger sustainable services.

For many reasons, natural disasters tend to disproportionately affect the poor. During the Katrina aftermath, national news coverage exposed flaws in our society that present huge challenges to reconnecting the displaced communities. In the months ahead, many CTCs will carry an extra burden as they take on the added responsibility of assisting displaced populations with vital services. CTCs will also have an opportunity, however, to demonstrate their strength as community providers and serve as effective advocates in policy discussions.

Speaking about the devastation of Hurricane Camille in Biloxi in 1969, former governor of Mississippi, William Winter, said that the number of nonprofit organizations that responded could be counted on one hand. Extraordinary growth in the nonprofit sector since that time now provides a remarkable opportunity for

CTCs and community organizations to build stronger connections and to be a voice for constructive changes in the policies and systems that will shape the rebuilding and recovery of our communities. CTCs will also have an opportunity to demonstrate their strength as community providers and serve as effective advocates in policy discussions.

The services CTCs have been providing for survivors – and those they plan to provide over the longer-term – are directly in line with their missions. CTCs have worked for more than 20 years to ensure that everyone can realize the benefits of technology in a society in which technology skills are necessary for lifelong learning, jobs, health, community and economic development, and meeting neighborhood needs. CTCs offer opportunities for government, businesses, and neighborhoods to create hope for the survivors' future, contribute to rebuilding lives, and continue to do what they do best: use technology to meet human needs. Though there is a wide array of necessary relief efforts being considered throughout the Gulf States, CTCNet intends to continue working to ensure that CTCs will continue to be prominent and successful in these efforts. ♦



Matthew Walker is a CTC VISTA serving as Member Services Associate at CTCNet.

Technology's Role in Disaster Relief

by Danielle Martin

While Matthew Walker focuses his investigative lense on the key role of community technology centers in providing post-hurricane assistance, other techie minded folks have been using technology tools to help the recovery efforts in all sorts of other ways. The immediacy of emergency community radio and ad hoc WIFI networks have provided crucial communication services—witness Nicole Friedman's article on the Chicago's Neighborhood Technology Center's Wireless Community Network Project volunteers going to Louisiana, as well as other professionals referenced in the Associated Press article on "Geek cavalries turn post-Katrina landscape into wireless lab." Here at the Review, we tried to keep an eye on some of the other technology studded highlights in the recovery efforts below.

In the wake of the disaster, multiple websites emerged to help evacuees find their family and friends (e.g., the Katrina People-Finder Project) and obtain relief services—federal assistance benefits, health, and housing (University of Michigan School of Information's KatrinaHousing.net). Meta-sites like Katrina Help Wiki and Recovery 2.0 have grouped online resources for easier searching. Volunteer Today created a series of links to

serve those trying to manage the influx of offers to help. NTEN is partnering with HumaniNet to convene a conference this month in Washington D.C. on the use of information and communications technologies (ICT) in humanitarian relief operations and post-crisis development on an international scale. In turn, the Resource Center of the Corporation for National and Community Service, in cooperation with Project TAHS—Technical Assistance in Homeland Security, compiled a comprehensive set of informational links to resources such as volunteer management, disaster response and recovery, and health, safety, and illness prevention, to support the over 5,700 AmeriCorps and Senior Corps members that joined relief efforts.

Communications policy issues have come to the forefront as volunteers have tried to establish low power and HAM radio communications and wireless access in the Gulf states, challenging current FCC rules and prompting the ongoing need to review how the government regulates radio and telecommunications. The National Journal's Insider Update has run a series of articles on Katrina's impact on telecommunications policy and what needs to be done to rebuild infrastructure and prepare for future disasters.

Technology tools have been key in addressing the policies underlying the federal response to the disaster. OMB Watch's reaction is a good case in point. In early September they issued a statement about federal responsiveness to the emergency and asked readers for comments on the position. From this, they posted an assessment of the Administration's relief/rebuilding efforts and an outline for more general disaster relief, tentatively called the Domestic Security Initiative. They created an online survey to gather readers' viewpoints and issued an action alert calling on the EPA to be forthcoming about the environmental dangers left in Katrina's wake. The alert provides a draft, editable message to EPA Administrator Stephen Johnson. This kind of responsiveness that seeks to tap into and build upon

constituent interests and understandings would be impossible without the technology support it uses.

Any search engine query for "Katrina Help" will yield thousands of hits, many of which are directly tied to technology tools. As American's spoke out in shock in the media and on the Internet, technology played a keen role in empowering many people to help in more ways than just giving financially. The long lasting impact of community media and technology's quick and effective responses will play out in new governmental efforts to be more prepared for disaster, with emerging technologies in the lead. ♦

Danielle Martin is the VISTA Project priority area curriculum coordinator as well as the Assistant Editor of the Review.

A Response to Katrina from Chicago's Center for Neighborhood Technology

by Nicole Friedman

People everywhere were glued to their radios or TV sets or computers—listening to, watching for, and reading about the unfolding devastation following Hurricane Katrina. The unimaginable horrors drove many to question: what can I do to help? Two members of the Center for Neighborhood Technology's (CNT) Wireless Community Network (WCN) project team led one effort out of Chicago.

Paul Smith, WCN Technology Director, and Rogers Wilson III, Network Technician for the North Lawndale WCN, realized that their experience building, deploying, and maintaining CNT's demonstration wireless community networks could be transferred to the Gulf region to connect evacuees and first responders with communication tools—computers, Internet connectivity, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) phones, and technical assistance. After coordinated planning with other community wireless groups and the Wireless Internet Service Providers (WISP) group convened by an FCC-sanctioned affiliate, Paul and Rogers packed up a van, donated by CNT staffers Karen Hobbs and Peter Haas, with wireless cards, repeater nodes, antennas, laptops, tools and more.

The WCN Team arrived in northern Louisiana at Mac Dearman's farm the evening of September 6th. They were met by the Dearman family, who were generously sharing their home, food, and the broadband Internet services they provide. Together with other volunteers from across the country, hardware vendors, and supporters such as the Disaster Relief Network, the group made a dozen wireless links from Mac's 100 foot tower on the farm to area shelters.

Fifty to one hundred-fifty people were staying at each of the shelters now connected with Internet and hardware. With the help of volunteers at the shelters, evacuees were able to look for relatives and friends, register and process the necessary paperwork with the Federal Emergency Management



Paul Smith

Administration (FEMA) to receive relief assistance, and talk on the phone to people for the first time in over a week.

Phone lines were damaged and broadband scarce, so wireless systems provided a low-cost and mobile solution to multiple challenges. The expertise garnered in work

with wireless community networks in low income communities in Illinois—Pilsen and North Lawndale in the City of Chicago, Northeast neighborhood in Elgin, and West Frankfort—served Paul and Rogers well as they assisted with the connection of shelters and the training of people residing there.

Paul's project went on to Bay St. Louis, Mississippi at the end of the first week. He again worked alongside volunteers from the community wireless arena, low-powered radio field, WISPs, and housing associations from all over North America. Paul and the volunteers faced challenging circumstances, i.e., no power, no potable water, to provide Internet and phone service to relief teams and area residents in Bay St. Louis.

The team of volunteers is continuing to grow, as some new volunteers replace others who need to go home for a spell. The great need is for communications resources, training, and support—and the work continues and will continue. Updates are available through Radio Response, the group of IT professionals founded by Mac Dearman, and CNT's Wireless Community Network Project. ♦



Nicole Friedman is Wireless Community Network Project Manager for the Center for Neighborhood Technology.

Winds of Change:

A VISTA's Experiences in the Astrodome

by Nichole Payne

The guilt kept me up all night long. I was taking a break from the packed Astrodome Community Technology (ACT) Center that Technology For All had established on the ground floor. One of the survivors had my last name, and my coloring—a small dark woman with bright teeth and deep dimples. Jovially, she remarked that we could be family, and, inexplicably, it made me cry. The exigency and the proximity was more than I could stand at the moment. So I stepped out to get a hold of myself, silently wishing I had taken up smoking just to take the rawness off of my emotions. Oh, but God wasn't done with me yet. A young girl that I had seen around the Astrodome before recognized me. I fumbled with an imaginary wrinkle in my shirt so I would not have to be kind to her. I hoped that she would see that I was desperately busy with my pretend wrinkle and could not be bothered. No such luck. She pounced. She ran to me and hugged me like the long lost sister I had become to her. I immediately perceived that she needed a bath. I pulled her off of me and reprimanded her about the impropriety of such actions.

My boss, Will Reed, the CEO of Technology For All (TFA) and a Methodist Pastor, would have been appalled. Will, TFA volunteer coordinator Pam Gardner, and Business Development Officer Jim Forest led the call for community technology centers in the area to do something to facilitate Katrina survivors' search for loved ones and ease the grief and distress associated with displacement. These individuals shaped a new model for the role for CTCs all over the country. First, CTCs should be responsive: Hurricane Katrina hit August 29th, and the ACT Center was installed and fully operational on the September 2nd.

Secondly, CTCs should be reactive and proactive. Setting up the ACT Center was challenging. Will was surprised that many "institutions involved did not immediately see the need" for an ACT Center. Moreover, such a large facility was "bound by so many preexisting relationships," and it was hard to cut through the red tape. Technical problems needed to be dealt with, too. There were over 26 databases that had to be searched separately. With partners like SIMHouston, SBC, and Yahoo, the new ACT Center was able to make all the databases universally searchable so people could find loved ones.

Most of all, the challenge was in facing the overwhelming human problems. When I asked Will what he saw in the long term for Katrina survivors, he responded that they posed a "huge opportunity and responsibility for CTCs." He wanted to see the people he had helped in and out of CTCs all over the country "gaining the skills, abilities and knowledge they need to earn livable wage jobs." Katrina survivors at the Astrodome, many evacuated from the poorest and most neglected parts of New Orleans, often lacked the most basic skills from the beginning. Jim Forrest recalled a 17-year-old who had never seen a computer and said, "The level of need often exceeded our ability to assist."



Houston Astrodome filled with evacuees on the playing field.

I wondered how Will and Jim dealt with being overwhelmed emotionally. I was struck when Jim got choked up a number of times, while Will kept focused on results with laser-like precision.

As for me, I tossed and turned all night, thinking about how I treated that young girl, pulling her off of me instead of being there for her. I was assigned there the following Tuesday. And there she was in the same spot, as if she was still waiting for me. Everyone was crowded around her and her mother. I was enlisted to speak to the girl's mother who wouldn't move nor would she let her daughter out of her sight long enough to take care of herself hygienically. After being speculated about, generally distrusted, and cursed out, I finally convinced the mother that I was not there to harm her or her child. I persuaded her to let her daughter take a quick rinse off in a nearby ladies room. The girl was so grateful, gracious, and beautiful. Suddenly remembering my previous behavior, I felt ashamed to be in the same room with her.

Very few people can chart the second, the instant "..." they grow. But that day I felt an enormous change. We are cups, constantly and quietly being filled with experiences, events, and consequences that forever change our nature. Technology For All will never be the same after its response to Katrina. And frankly, neither will I. ♦



Nichole Payne is a new CTC VISTA this fall with Technology for All.

A Summary from the CTC VISTA Project Pre-service Orientation, August 2005 [see page 5]

Nettrice Gaskins: Digital Media for Youth

All the presenters had the daunting task of introducing VISTAs into new worlds of knowledge around the VISTA Project priority areas—Nettrice Gaskins has the double task load of covering two distinct areas: digital media instruction and youth development. Many advocates in these arenas find these foci complicatedly interconnected and interdependent. Nettrice approached her task with a dynamic method mirroring her own teaching style. Nettrice is an adjunct faculty and computer arts academic specialist at UMass/Boston and Mass College of Art respectively, as well as a board member of CTCNet and the National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture (NAMAC).

Nettrice started with project-based examples of recently completed animations, created using Frame Thief and Macromedia Flash by youth in her summer classes at Mass College of Art. By watching their vibrant work, the audience learned about the interests of each youth participant and the complexities of designing a curriculum flexible enough to work in different timeframes and situations. Through the work of these youth, VISTAs got a quick view into what outcomes are achievable in a relatively short time with the right amount of planning and effort.

The field of digital media has evolved quickly. So, Nettrice's presentation focused on how the relatively inexpensive and good quality production of digital video, animations, and web content can be used to the advantage of programs aimed at engaging youth. By adding a component of media literacy, digital media programs for youth can broach topics such as copyright and fair use, censorship, and social activism.

We can make an impact on the youth's understanding of message in media by referencing examples that the youth can relate to, such as showing less violent bits of Japanese anime (animated movies) and comparing them to more family-friendly, yet just as visually stunning anime. The impact can be substantial because it based in the language and pop culture references are familiar to the youth.

Any digital media youth program warrants understanding the participants, especially such characteristics as age, social development, and life experiences. The study of youth development, in terms of digital media creation in CTCs, needs to focus on core youth needs and positive outcomes. Nettrice also touched upon the need for instructors to be flexible, based on an early assessment of the group's level of development and remembering that youth are very different learners than adults.

Nettrice's experience developing a curriculum for the DigitalArts Youth (DAY) program acted as a model reference for advising VISTAs in creating new programs for their centers. Once you know the basics, you can design a program based in five stages: survey, plan, acquire donations, train and create resources, and implement and document.

Surveying means taking an assessment of both the youth and the center's current technology. As an experienced program developer, Nettrice has collected and shared many assessment tools useful in determining the current skills of the youth and the educational objectives a program should include as well as technology needs.

Planning for a strong digital media program should follow a pathways model, with levels based on student skills, type of digital media (still, dynamic, and interactive) and encouraging leadership, teamwork and community building. During planning, the curriculum can be built not only upon project goals but also relevant standards such as state or public school standards matrices (check out the NY Foundation for the Arts and the DAY program's resources). Finally, a curriculum should be based on key activities and scenarios using youth-centered techniques such as project-based learning or digital storytelling.

"By adding a component of media literacy, digital media programs for youth can broach topics such as copyright and fair use, censorship, and social activism."

Acquisition involves creating a priority list of technical needs and gathering donations to fill those needs. Training involves instructing not only the program staff but also peer leaders. Nettrice cited one 13-year-old participant in her summer class, Nani, who seemed unlikely to complete the program because of her lack of attention span and tendency to act out. But when she was given positive one-on-one attention, she showed amazing adeptness in Macromedia Flash and became an active leader willing to help those around her.

The final stage of program design is the actual implementation of your plan, including documenting the youths' achievement through electronic portfolios (websites, compact discs, and DVDs). This stage includes both quantitative and qualitative assessment and evaluation.

The overall presentation conveyed the importance of youth-centered programming, while several of the animations reflected youth concerns about violence in media and their own neighborhoods. (To see clips of the youth-based computer animation content, check out Nettrice's portal.) Their work proved that the youth had not only learned the tricks of media creation, but they had also learned to use digital media as a form of self-expression. —Danielle Martin

Digital Media and Youth Development: Resource Sites

Four Stages:

Characteristics of Youth By Age – Characteristics of four age groups in the period of life between childhood and maturity (about age 12-18), based on physical, social, emotional and intellectual development, useful guide developing appropriate curriculum. From the 4-H Cooperative Extension Supports Youth Environmental Stewardship Project.



Nettrice Gaskins

Youth vs. Adult Learners – A comparison of the learning characteristics of adult and youth learners, from Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) Distance Learning Program.

Tech Planning Curriculum – From the New York Foundation for the Arts' Knowledge in Technology program, to supply professional development, peer support, and one-on-one technical assistance for small to mid-sized arts organizations.

The Digital Directory: Art & Technology Resources – Sourcebook of low-cost telecommunications, computer, and new media resources, for artists and arts organizations in New York State.

DV Creators.Net - The website of the training and resource organization for digital video and desktop video production professionals, includes directory, discussion boards, blogs, and list of video opportunities.

By major applications publishers: Adobe Studio Exchange – for all of their digital media products, with plug-ins, extensions, tutorials, and other help files. **Macromedia Interactive Tutorials** – for software such as Flash and Dreamweaver.

Compendia: Open Directory Project – links to online learning and tutorials listed by software companies and types of software, including multimedia and open source programs. **Atomic Learning** – Short, web-based online tutorials on hundreds of software packages; some bits are free or sign up for free trial. **Lynda.com** – A great resource for online and cd/dvd-rom software tutorials, with discounts for educators. **Element K** – Custom content and managed systems for digital media and other online learning.

Computer Arts Technology Workshops – Massachusetts College of Art trainings for staff, faculty, and students, including handouts.

Digital Media for Youth in the CTR Archives

Spring-Summer 2005

Learn & Serve with CTCNet – Youth Visions for Stronger Neighborhoods by Tara Kumar

Winter 2004-2005

An Interactive, Web-based Training for Teenage Mentors by Tara Levy and Bjorn Billhardt

Award-winning Homeless Youth Website at Cyber Y Technology Center in San Diego by Cesar Marciano

Owerri Digital Village – Teaching Young People to Use Technology to Address Concrete Realities by Njideka Harry

Podcasting by Andrew Baoill and Brian Russell

Raw Talent at Playing2Win by Anthony Rhodes

You Go Girl, Japanese Style by Lucy Haagen

Book Review: *The Handbook of New Media: Social Shaping and Consequences of ICTs* by Nettrice Gaskins

Summer 2004

Youth Engagement in Evaluation and Research by Leslie Goodyear and Caroline Bennett

Learning More about Engaging Youth in Research & Evaluation

Winter-Spring 2004

Growing Demand for Rural Broadband and the Growing Digital Network by R. Terry McGhee

Summer 2003

CTCNet Conference Programs & Curriculum Track Sessions

Fall-Winter 2002-2003

CTCs for Positive Youth Development: Findings from PowerUP's First Phase Evaluation by Lisa Schneider and William Vesneski

Summer Camp in Columbia, SC: Community Style by Dedria Albritton

ScienceQuest for Youth: A Growing Program by Jennifer Dorsen

Transforming Rural Alaska through Wireless Technology in the Schools and Community by Martin Cary

Summer-Fall 2001

Click on Over: A Profile of the Boys & Girls Club of Taunton (MA) Technology Center by Karen Zgoda

Winter-Spring 1998

RealVideo: Letting Community Voices and Images Be Heard and Seen by Phil Shapiro

CTCNet's Youth Visions for Stronger Neighborhoods

by Tara Kumar

Over the past two years, CTCNet's Youth Visions for Stronger Neighborhoods program has provided grants to 15 community technology centers (CTCs) to engage youth in community decision-making using multimedia tools. This six-month program asks youth to research their community through media clips, interviews, and community events, and then craft a solution to a problem they view as significant. This year, 80 youth from seven CTCs presented creative solutions to some of the most pressing problems in their communities. The communities responded by hosting meetings at mayors' offices, recognizing the youth at community planning meetings, and organizing new youth councils to ensure youth voices continue to be heard.

The Ark, Troy, NY

The Ark, an after-school youth program in a public housing development in Troy, NY, engaged 15 students in exploring issues ranging from the importance of community arts to racial discrimination among the housing security staff. This latter issue drew the community together in ways that inspired the youth to work to improve relations between housing security and residents.

The youth from the Ark focused on the lack of communication between the housing security and the local youth they were hired to protect. The youth felt the privately-hired housing security staff was threatening and hostile to them, rather than supportive. They addressed the issue by creating a video, which included interviews with resident youth and adults who voiced their concerns. The youth asked to interview the head of the housing security, but he declined several times.

Prior to the community event where the youth planned to present their work, however, the Director of the Troy Housing Authority (THA) came to The Ark and demanded to see the video. The youth explained that they had tried to interview the Security Head to include his views but had been ignored. The Director, seeing that the youth were serious about this issue, invited several security staff to the community event as well. With 75 people attending, the event was a success, leading to improved communication between the security staff and the youth. Six of the youth involved continued working on the video through eight weeks of their summer vacation. The THA Director was finally interviewed, but calls to the Security Head were not returned. Although frustrated by their first real encounters with the power and bureaucracy of the Housing Authority, the youth continued throughout the summer. They expanded their original video by exploring issues of safety, racial profiling, and the criminality of youth. Future screenings of the revised video will continue to create bridges between the staff and residents.

Members of the THA administration now recognize the youth as valuable members of their community, and the youth, despite the challenges faced, plan to continue their efforts to better their neighborhood.

COSACOSA Art at Large, Philadelphia, PA

COSACOSA art at large, a community-based organization using art to inspire dialogue among diverse groups, brought together youth from Philadelphia's Nicetown-Tioga neighborhood to decide how they could help build a better community. The youth focused on the lack of community engagement in North Philadelphia neighborhoods. COSACOSA youth worked with community leaders and neighborhood elders to rekindle community involvement. The multimedia projects created by the youth—several digital murals, a CD, and a video—highlight young people as a neighborhood resource for community-building and show how they can create intergenerational bridges for community planning. During the project, the youth attended the meetings of local community development corporations (CDCs), and spoke out about their efforts. This inspired leaders from these CDCs to work together for the first time in years on a topic of common interest.



Southern Perry County Youth Arts & Media Center (SPICYAM)

2004 YVSN Grantees

Community TV Network, Chicago, IL
For Love of Children, Washington, DC
Lowell Telecommunications Corporation, Lowell, MA
Media Bridges, Cincinnati, OH
River City Youth Foundation, Austin, TX
Spy Hop Productions, Salt Lake City, UT
Street-Level Youth Media, Chicago, IL
Southern Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation, Bronx, NY

2005 YVSN Grantees

The Ark, Troy, NY
Asian Media Access, Minneapolis, MN
COSACOSA art at large, Philadelphia, PA
Mendocino Family and Youth Services (creators of *Life on the Rez*), Point Arena, CA
Southern Perry County Youth Arts & Media Center (SPICYAM), Shawnee, OH
Spy Hop Productions (renewal grantee), Salt Lake City, UT
Sunflower County Freedom Project, Sunflower, MS

Digital Media for Youth

The youth presented their video at a Nicetown-Tioga Improvement Team meeting. Approximately 60 people attended, including the local CDC, neighborhood residents, local police and fire officials, and representatives from City Council offices. The Team, impressed by the work of the young people, honored them with certificates of merit at the following month's meeting.

The project gained such momentum that the youth were invited to present their video to members the Mayor's Office of Community Services. The city officials responded to the youth, and promised to engage them as essential partners for future community planning.

COSACOSA and its partner organizations have formally adopted a community planning project, which will support the youth and their planning goals throughout the coming year.

Sunflower County Freedom Project, Sunflower, MS

Located in the Mississippi Delta, the Freedom Project uses the history and spirit of the civil rights movement to motivate young people to become leaders in their communities. Nine Freedom Project youth from across Sunflower County used multimedia technology to document their local civil rights history and to inspire fellow youth to continue in the county's rich tradition of activism.



Sunflower County Freedom Project participants: Candance Durn and John Ettaross

"the movement is in you," noting the young people in the county have a responsibility to continue leading change. In another interview, one youth discovered his grandmother had been a leader in the civil rights movement. After completing these interviews, the Freedom Project youth focused their multimedia projects on creating awareness in the community of the local civil rights history. In their video, the youth encourage their peers to look to their past for the inspiration to address the issues, specifically within education, facing them today.

Although the county's residents played a key role in the civil rights movement, the youth discovered there are few markers, sites, or community programs highlighting this history. As a result, the youth concentrated on interviewing community members, particularly elders, about the needs and assets existing in the county. One community leader told the youth,

The youth shared the video and website they created with 48 community members, including school officials, local government reps, parents and business owners. The audience described the project as a valuable contribution towards the improvement of the community.

Building on their Youth Visions work, the Freedom Project youth are organizing a group of students to develop a 2-3 year community service project that will result in lasting community impact. The youth have also been approached by a local history preservation program to produce additional historical video pieces.

Youth Visions 2006

Each of the programs demonstrates the power of using multimedia technology and community research to engage youth in community decision-making. In each example, community members ranging from the Mayor's staff to local elders spoke about their increased recognition of the youth as valuable assets within the community.

At the conclusion of the 2006 grant program, the Youth Visions Curriculum

Guide will be made available to CTCNet members to implement as part of their youth programs. Organizations may join CTCNet online to ensure access to this Guide next year.

CTCNet thanks the Learn and Serve America division of the Corporation for National Service for funding this innovative service-learning program. We also thank the grantee organizations for their input over two years of Youth Visions programming. The curriculum and supporting materials would not have been possible without their thoughtful feedback. ♦



Asian Media Access youth: Anthony Carter, Chou Khang, Padmini Yang, Xeng Lee and Nancy Bui



Tara Kumar is CTCNet Program Associate helping coordinate the Youth Visions program.

MoLLIE—The Mobile Learning Lab for Information Education in Grand Rapids, MI

by Abby Balazs

A year ago, I moved from my cozy, yet somewhat stagnant life in Norman, Oklahoma to the uncharted territory of Grand Rapids, Michigan. I had never considered living in Michigan before the opportunity presented itself and was slightly embarrassed that I could not with much confidence point out Grand Rapids on a map. From the time I got the green light, I had about one week of packing and panic. Why'd I do it? MoLLIE. "MoLLIE" was the first of many acronyms I would be introduced to. It stands for "Mobile Learning Lab for Information Education." I was going to help teach kids how to write, shoot, and edit their very own videos! This special program was developed by the creative minds of those working at the CMC (Community Media Center) in Grand Rapids. However, in order for me to work for MoLLIE, I first had to become a CTC (Community Technology Center) Americorps*VISTA (Volunteer in Service to America).

The world is day-by-day becoming more and more reliant on ever-changing technology. In fact, I hesitate buying anything electronic, knowing it will quickly be replaced by something smaller and more sophisticated. Since high school, up through college, I have been exposed to technology and feel comfortable with most of it. I am lucky in that respect. How about the folks who may not have the time nor the money, or even the fundamental know-how of basic technology? What about this digital divide—the ever-growing gap between those who can and cannot "do" technology?

Yes, there are manuals and help-lines for the less learned adults. And I am privileged to work at one of the world's greatest Community Technology Centers—a center completely dedicated to reaching its surrounding community through technology. The CMC provides individuals with classes along with access to the tools, training and transmission—everything they need to fulfill the CMC mission: Building Community Through Media.



It only makes sense then that teaching such skills should be initiated with youth—and that's where MoLLIE comes in. Our MoLLIE team, usually consisting of two-to-five members, loads up the MoLLIE van with our equipment and heads out

to the classrooms in the elementary, middle and high schools around Kent County. We take the equipment and go in, donned in our MoLLIE bowling shirts, ready to teach kids how to make TV

Over the course of one-to-four weeks, we introduce kids to technology most have never used. We equip them with digital video cameras, tripods, fish poles and boom microphones to shoot a short video they have planned and written themselves

with our support. We explain how to use the equipment and let them take over. They learn how to be the talent—actors in front of the camera, as well as the crew, learning the technical aspects of being behind the camera. When writing and shooting are done, we bring in our iBooks and help them begin the exciting task of editing with iMovie, adding titles, transitions, effects, background music and finally, the credits. Within a few weeks, their movies will air on GRTV and they will get the full effect of the video-making process.



Abby demonstrates video techniques.

Programs like MoLLIE are important for many reasons.

(1) Confidence. One of my favorite things to do is to compliment kids on a job well done. Especially when I can be specific: "I like your composition," or "You've got a knack for editing." You can literally see their confidence soar. And they learn how the skills they're developing can pay off when they are older and lead to careers in the field.

(2) Creative outlet. MoLLIE can make subjects like math and science more fun. The kids get to learn, create, and teach. At Crestwood Middle School, we visit the current 6th grade class twice a year. This spring I worked with two boys who made a video about humidity. I never thought humidity could be something to laugh about. When watching it, it is easy to see that the boys thoroughly enjoyed making their video, even if it was only about wetness in the atmosphere.

(3) MoLLIE is a key tool for helping bridge the digital divide. As the world marches inevitably toward the infinite, blank space of this technological age, understanding technology is becoming less an option and more a necessity. Just as reading and writing are essential skills for one to have the hope of a better life, every child deserves to be at least exposed to this growing dependency on technology. It should not be reserved for only the fortunate ones who can afford it. The mobile support that MoLLIE provides helps reach those who might not otherwise be reached.

(4) Finally, with MoLLIE, youth have and can learn to develop their own voice and informed perspective. Breaking down media into an accessible, step-by-step process also introduces

Digital Media for Youth

kids to the idea of media literacy, something emphasized by GRMC's affiliated Institute for Information Democracy. By making television themselves, youth develop an awareness of how commercial media is created and often contrived. Instead of being silent sponges, their eyes and minds will be more scrutinizing and less passive—they ultimately become more informed watchers—and having the tools to dissect media also enhances their ability to articulate the media they create on their own. This allows them another avenue for self-expression.

My time here in Grand Rapids has certainly supplied me with wonderful memories, one being a quick week spent at Union High School. I rarely work with high school kids; most of our kids are middle school age. My co-worker and I walked into a small office with a group of 8-10 uninterested teenagers. I was intimidated immediately. I was used to talking to younger kids, who were happier and enthusiastic.

We split the kids into two groups. I took what seemed to be more the more challenging group, half of whom were considered to be at risk. I watched them interact. In moments when I could have shut them down and made them listen to what I had to say, I chose not to. I let them talk. Slowly they warmed up to me and I got them to talk about issues that concerned them (i.e., teen pregnancy, drug use). They came up with the story.

Our time with the Union kids was substantially shorter than with other schools. I knew we would have to begin shooting right away—not enough time to write out a script. Maybe not enough time to edit. We began and I was amazed. They were all natural actors, all their dialogue improvised, and they took turns and easily grasped the camera and sound production basics. They weren't frustrated with numerous takes and they understood the speedy pace. They focused and they had fun. In the end, we did run out of time and they were not able to do the editing. I took what they did and cut together the project I am most proud of from this year.

When I went back to Union a few months later to show the kids their project, I learned that two of our star players had dropped out of school. I was saddened to hear the news because I was looking forward to showing them their excellent work. I have to be glad that at least they had the experience and that I was able to tell them at the time how well I thought they had done.

As my year with MoLLIE comes to a close, I have begun thinking about how I could possibly start a project like MoLLIE back in Oklahoma. If I have learned anything this year, it's that teaching kids technology is rewarding, fun, and important. Starting a new project like MoLLIE would be a challenge, just as spontaneously moving to Grand Rapids was—but if there was another thing I've learned this year, it's that challenges are worth it. ♦



Abby Balazs served as a CTC VISTA at the Grand Rapids Community Media Center for the 2004-05 program year.

Technology Assistance for Nonprofits in the CTR Archives

Winter 2004-2005

Innovation in Nonprofit Technology: NPower Arizona by Patrick McWhorter

The TechXchange Coalition: Regional Technology Assistance in Philly by Jenny Pierce & Neville Vakharia

Technology and Grassroots Organizing for the Developmentally Disabled in Atlanta by David Blanchard

Open Source Software Development by Yuwei Lin and Enrico Zini

Winter-Spring 2004

Interactive Web Design for the Technically Uninclined by Lisa Smith

CompuMentor Report Finds Providing TA to Nonprofits Is A Difficult Task for CTCs by George Gundry

Spring 2003

Project Fix-Net: Affordable, Dependable Technical Assistance by Rick Juliusson and Ana Sisnett

Nonprofits Get Paid by UK Government to Support Tech Centers by Terry Grunwald and David Wilcox

Building Community Technology Capacity Through Service Learning by Karla Back *et al*

Fall-Winter 2002-2003

Sweet, Sweet Sustainability by Ken Thompson

Online Fundraising Comes of Age by Michael Stein

The Potential of Open-Source by David Geilhufe

Winter-Spring 2002

CTC Collaborations - Building the Timothy Smith Network in Boston, Part One by Marc Osten

Delivering Tech Assistance with Circuit Riding: Two CompassPoint Projects by John Whitmer

Database and Directory Resources from the Organizers' Collaborative by Rich Cowan

New Book, Series on ASP Resources by Michael Stein

Summer-Fall 2001

The Promise and Potential—Helping Nonprofits Technology Turbocharge! by Marc Osten

The Community Technology Toolbox Grows into a Garage: How to Tune-up your Strategy by Terry Grunwald and David Wilcox

Community Networking on the Night Shift, Part Two: in which a Community Organizer Tries to Be a Techie by Anne McFarland

Recent TA to Nonprofit Resources of Note by Steven Clift and Edward Batista

The Nonprofit Quarterly - Resources in Hardcopy and Online by Kay O'Rourke

A Summary from the CTC VISTA Project Pre-service Orientation, August 2005 [see page 5]

Jillaine Smith: Technology Assistance for Nonprofits

Consider approaching technology assistance more from the perspective of a coach than as a "let-me-fix-your-clearly-dysfunctional-technology-use" expert. So says Jillaine Smith, who, in addition to being a leadership coach, is a specialist in integrating technology support, strategic communications, and organizational development (and a member of the Nonprofit Technology Enterprise Network (NTEN) and the Alliance for Nonprofit Management). Her take on aiding any organization in building its technology capacity is that it's critical to first examine the organization's leadership strategy, the health of its communications structure, and the clarity of and commitment to its overall mission.

Jillaine's presentation referenced some key nonprofit technology assistance providers, or "NTAPs", as the buzz word goes, including NTEN, NPower, CompassPoint, and CompuMentor. In addition to these center-based providers, Jillaine noted other technology assistance models including: individual-based assistance, often organized as Circuit Rider or E-Riders, volunteer, peer-based, and on-line assistance. In a particularly interactive section of her presentation, we came to see the basic components of technology assistance to include:

- Planning
- Training
- Systems implementation
- Support
- Hardware and Software provisioning
- Services hosting
- Info Resources and Tools provisioning
- Volunteer Matching

This all spurred a discussion about the ongoing debate as to whether CTCs should serve as TA providers, a topic examined in the 2003 CompuMentor study and covered by the Review in the Winter/Spring of 2004. Smith pointed out that a third of the centers in CTCNet report they do some sort of TA, including technology planning and/or IT training/staffing.

Jillaine reflected on some of her own experiences as guidance for the new VISTAs. She found that changing the type of training from a very software/tactical specific to a broader and more task- and mission-based focus made training much more meaningful for staff. If you have people think about technology in the framework of things they care about and want to do, the technology training is more likely to have a sustained impact and be a better investment of time.

In the end, Jillaine recommended that those providing TA to nonprofits hone an awareness of the "non-technology" challenges involved with being a nonprofit such as facility limitations, staff turnover, and the knowledge, experience, and attitudes of peers, colleagues, and the organization's leadership. These challenges will directly affect the success of any technology development, no matter how well you develop a technology plan.

—Danielle Martin



Jillaine Smith

What Happened to T4T?

by Diana Hauer

Editor's note: We've tried for some time to learn more about whatever happened to Teaming for Technology. Unlike AOL's very public announcement of the dissolution of PowerUP and the studies that were available about its achievements and problems (see, for instance, "Findings from PowerUP's First Phase Evaluation"), the story about the ending/winding down of the IBM/United Way/Corporation for National and Community Service Teaming for Technology program collaboration has been less clear and public. We're grateful for former VISTA Diana Hauer's willingness to make some exploratory investigations and pleased we were able to obtain a copy of IBM's "Teaming for Technology—Business Plan, a work in Progress, May 2002," which sheds additional light on the initiative and deepens the

mystery about what happened. However that may be, Diana's report and the helpful supplement provided by Harold Smith, Director of CyberSkills/Burlington, provide an informative picture about what's happened and the transitions and new resources that are developing in its place. —pm

In The Beginning

Teaming for Technology began as IBM's response to President Clinton's call for a National Service Summit for America's Future in January 1997. At the Summit later in April in Philadelphia, IBM announced its partnership with United Way and the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to address the concern that many vital community-

based nonprofit organizations were being left behind in the digital revolution. Once they identified the problem, they worked together, "teamed for technology," to create a solution. IBM provided the technology, United Way provided management and oversight, and CNCS provided volunteers.

The announced goal of the Teaming for Technology (T4T) program was to strengthen the technological capacity of nonprofits to: (1) increase their operational efficiency, (2) deliver their services more effectively, and (3) enhance their ability to leverage funds and other resources. To participate, agencies applied to their local T4T, and if they met certain criteria (IBM and United Way grant guidelines) a team of volunteers and technology professionals worked with them for one year, "a year of assistance." The T4T team worked with the agency to evaluate their needs and goals for agency improvement. Once the evaluation was complete, T4T created an individual technology plan for the next three-to-five years. The team then recruited community volunteers to help the agency fulfill the goals outlined in the plan. Agencies with the T4T technology plan often had more credibility with other grant programs because they had real, long-term goals to seek funding for and a sustainable structure in which to pursue them.

A few of the T4T successes:

- A shelter program in Burlington, VT saved \$5,000 per year in staff cost due to technology-based productivity gains.
- An agency serving Central Americans living in LA is saving \$25,000 per year in printing costs by using e-mail to distribute its newsletter.
- An organization serving Hispanic neighborhoods in Fort Worth, TX built on its initial work with T4T and leveraged an additional \$700,000 for technology programming.

Changes

The eight pilot programs launched in 1997 increased 17 sites nationwide as the programs gained in popularity. These programs were not one-size-fits all: Each T4T reflected the flavor and needs of people in its area. Within the national framework, local T4T sites identified their own desired outcomes, activities, and partnerships to serve their communities. Some focused on technology planning, others emphasized computer recycling, and others specialized in software and hardware training. It was no surprise that these disparate approaches to technology programming could not be contained in a single program.

In 2003 the national version of the Teaming for Technology program officially ended. Many T4T sites closed before then, or changed in ways that required them to leave the program. Some couldn't provide strong enough outcome measurement results to justify continued funding, while others branched off and became 501c3's in their own right. Some United Ways dropped the program because it didn't meet their agency's goals, while others branched out and grew into something greater than the original Teaming for Technology program.

Technology Assistance for Nonprofits: Resource Sites and Tools

Nonprofit Technology Enterprise Network (N-TEN) - national membership organization of nonprofit technology assistance providers, including staff, consultants, some CTCs, and stand-alone support organizations, sponsoring TechFinder, email groups, local 501c3 tech clubs, national and regional conferences.

NPower, a national network of TA to NPO providers. Resources include **TechAtlas**, a tool to help assess an organization's technology readiness; includes modules for communications planning and staff training.

TCO & ROI Calculators help determine the Total Cost of [technology] Ownership and the Return On Investment in terms of time saved. **Technology Literacy Benchmarks**, with telecommunications and Internet access components.

CompuMentor and **TechSoup** - well known resources for technology support and information for nonprofits including articles and message boards.

Alliance for Nonprofit Management - Membership organization of nonprofit management assistance groups, some of whom provide technology assistance; resources include database of service providers, career bank and extensive resource bank.

Consultant Commons - an online collaborative and information-sharing space for nonprofit technology assistance providers.

ContentBank.org - a project of The Children's Partnership to promote the development of online content and tools for and by low-income and other under-served communities.

Addressing Nonprofit Technology Needs and Resources: A Community Toolkit - This Benton Foundation resource is part of their communications capacity building program.

The IT Service Capability Maturity Model - provides papers and resources for improving management of hardware and software, operations.

Technology Success in Organizations: A Checklist for Leaders - Check out these lessons learned from the fields of technology assistance and organizational development that indicate how technology is more likely to support your programmatic outcomes when leadership is actively involved.

Seven of the original initiatives are still operating, either with the original United Way partner or with new funding and sponsorship/sites. Several programs still operate T4T programs in their communities, most notably in Chicago, Philadelphia, Colorado, and Minnesota. T4T Chicago is the only T4T that does not charge for its services and maintains a 250% return to the community for every dollar invested into the program. Their web site is frequently updated with technology-related articles and news for non-profit organizations, a useful resource even for those outside of their service area. Philadelphia's T4T offers training, technology assistance, and digital inclusion programs for a nominal membership fee. T4T Colorado offers technology planning assistance, computer training, and free and reduced cost referrals through the TechLaunch grant provided by IBM. Minnesota's T4T has maintained its relationship with IBM (who provides technology and volunteers) and is connected fully with its United Way. North Carolina's T4T is working under the Triangle United Way, operates a computer recycling and volunteer program, and has become the largest MAR (Microsoft Authorized Refurbisher) in the Southeast. Other currently-operating sites that were built upon T4T programs include The Georgia Center for Nonprofits in Atlanta and TechNews at New York City's United Way.

The Future

In addition to the different agencies and programs that Teaming for Technology influenced in its six year run, it left a valuable legacy: Information.

IBM's employee/retiree volunteer program, On Demand Community (ODC), is a global program that makes technology-related solutions available for IBM employees and retirees to use to help community nonprofits and schools. One of the most popular is the Technology Planning solution, which includes eight tools that were developed through IBM's work in T4T. This information can be accessed by IBM employees and used to assist nonprofits all over the world.

Whether T4T continues in its disparate forms or all of its incarnations dissolve in the years to come, it did, and is still doing, a lot of good. Teaming for Technology's work proved that non-profit organizations can successfully adapt and flourish in the digital world. That's a heartening thought for everyone in the nonprofit tech community.

All past and present IBM employees can access Technology Planning solutions through their intranet, so non-profits should give special consideration to recruiting IBM people as volunteers. ODC can provide up to \$3,500 in technology or \$1,000 in direct money annually to a nonprofit or school if the IBM volunteer donates 40 hours within five months.

Special thanks to Heidi Kraemer of IBM and Jenika Faes of the Chicago Teaming for Technology for contributing to this report. ♦

Diana Hauer is a former VISTA with the RECA Foundation in Kennewick, WA, and now lives, works, reads, writes, and exercises in Portland, OR.

T4T—the Transition in Burlington, VT

by Harold Smith

At the end of 2003, IBM reached a decision not to continue partnering with United Way of America or AmeriCorps*VISTA to continue the existing Teaming for Technology program. As a result, in late October 2003 a group of Teaming for Technology partners met in Palisades, NY to redesign the project so that it would better align with IBM's new On Demand Community initiative. Representation on the team included members of the IBM Corporate Community Relations department, IBM Program Managers, United Way representatives from Atlanta, New York, Southern Pennsylvania, and CyberSkills/Vermont of Burlington, VT. Meredith Emmett of Third Space Studio moderated the discussions.

The new framework provides local resources for cash and equipment to nonprofits, On Demand Community volunteers, other nonprofit projects and initiatives, and other relationships in local communities. One strength of the new framework is to provide the Corporate Community Relations (CCR) Managers with greater flexibility to develop relationships and to align the resources of IBM with the unique strengths and needs of their local community.

CyberSkills/Vermont, through its CyberSkills for Vermont Nonprofits (CVNP) program, has assumed a key role in providing support for nonprofit organizations in Vermont. Through a close affiliation with Marie Houghton, CCR manager in Essex Junction, CVNP continues to be involved in the IBM T4T restructuring for the benefit of the nonprofit organizations we serve. Continued support for CVNP comes to CyberSkills/Vermont through the local United Way. CVNP members participate in the IBM annual equipment donation. Staff members continue to work in programs supported by the local IBM CCR office, mostly in the training of childcare providers use of the KidsSmart Early Learning software package. As additional developments occur CyberSkills/Vermont will gladly assist CTCNet members and other appropriate organizations in developing relationships with IBM initiatives at your local level. ♦

Harold L. Smith is the Director of CyberSkills/Vermont, in Burlington.

Build an Information and Communications Infrastructure in 21 Days

by Saul Baizman

The title of this article may sound overly optimistic to some and downright incredible to others. Its main purpose is to help people explore a little-known (and even less-used) technology that may possibly serve as the lynchpin to your organization's communications infrastructure. This report is based on my experience providing technical support and building technological capacity for the CTC VISTA Project.

The Bad Old Days

From the start of my service as an AmeriCorps VISTA in the fall of 2003, I was frustrated by the dearth of communications systems. Forget systems for a moment – obtaining mere contact information presented challenges. Project headquarters distributed a hardcopy of the Member roster at our orientation and provided two mailing lists (one which included all VISTAs and another for Boston-area VISTAs). Finally, a static web page on the CTC VISTA website sparingly listed the location and work site for each VISTA. One byproduct of this configuration was a deluge of email from Members whose organizations provided them new email addresses: "Hi! I have a new email address at my organization. Please update your records." Since the web-based roster didn't include a VISTA's work or home phone number, I couldn't even call another VISTA to complain.

Out of this exasperation the CTC VISTA directory was born, and what began as a pet project now represents one of my primary responsibilities.

Delicious, Dynamic Directories

Let's look at the technology we used to move Project communications into the 21st century – and some of the capacities it provides.

LDAP (light-weight directory access protocol) is an aptly named Internet standard that does precisely what it says: provide a specialized facility to disseminate contact information. Simply put, an LDAP server on your network houses an organization-wide address book. For years colleges and universities have utilized LDAP (and its arcane predecessor) to create white pages for their institutions. While enterprise-level entities most often deploy LDAP on their networks, I want to convince you that even a mid-sized non-profit can reap the benefits of LDAP-enabled services.

LDAP-enabled services? What the heck are they, and why on earth would one want them? Well, LDAP doesn't just supply a nifty address book (and one that happens to integrate nicely with email programs). Every record (or entry) in an LDAP directory can optionally have a password associated with it, thereby creating a database of readily available usernames and passwords. If you work at an organization which requires you to sign in to your computer, check your email, and access

the internal network with distinct usernames and passwords, LDAP can replace all three accounts with a single sign-on: your directory entry.

Back to the Past...

Back to Fall of 2003. Web-based roster. Annoying emails. Even more annoyed author. Over the course of that year I developed and refined a friendly, web-based interface to the CTC VISTA directory, designed by Project Director Paul Hansen. By Fall of 2004, a VISTA (past or present) could log in and edit her own entry, adding personal information like a home phone number, cell phone, even IM screen name. Headshots could be added, too. And when a VISTA received a new email address, she simply logged in and edited her entry; changes to the directory

Notes on LDAP Integration

An obscure software developer created a **proof-of-concept modification to Movable Type** which enabled support for LDAP. The plug-in required some configuration, but by and large it worked. Sort of. We didn't just need the gateway to the VISTA directory. I overcame several other shortcomings with simple work-arounds. For instance, the comment script required visitors to log in, yet if the visitor weren't a current VISTA, she couldn't leave a comment. Movable Type also had to be modified to prohibit VISTAs from editing their profiles (i.e., name, email address, etc.) or changing their passwords, since all of that information was kept in the directory. Finally, the "logout" functionality broke, and quitting the web browser became the only certain way to exit a Movable Type session.

The integration work was hardly a walk in the park: some of the source code to both the LDAP plug-in and Movable Type itself had to be altered to get the system to work in the desired manner. The configuration does require custom web-based gateway software to synchronize account information (a web page, in this case). Below is a chart of the services currently available on the CTC VISTA Project website and their LDAP ratings, based on ease of installing LDAP support and the extent to which LDAP replaces the native authentication mechanism.

We haven't needed to implement LDAP support on every service, but it is important to highlight that trying to lay an LDAP foundation may limit one's software choices. Additionally, because LDAP is so new and used by so few, support is often grafted onto a lot of programs in the same embarrassing manner that handicap accessible ramps are added to buildings long after construction has ceased in order to make them "compliant."

Functionality	Package	LDAP rating
weblogs	Movable Type 2.6	B-
mailing lists	Mailman 2.1.2	N/A
wiki	pmWiki 2.0b20	N/A
bulletin board	phpBB 2.0.17	C
photo gallery	gallery 1.5_5	B

While Movable Type's LDAP support is shaky, most weblog packages don't even include support, either built-in or contributed by a kind-hearted software developer. Those seeking a weblog package with better integration need look no further than **WordPress**. To keep mailing lists in sync with a directory, **Sympa** comes to mind. And while we don't use it at the Project, **Mailman** does have a special module, the **MemberAdaptor**, but I've heard it's a kludge. Finally, the **LDAP** modifications for **phpBB** were particularly horrendous since they required adding several files and tediously editing several more. Plus, one netizen saw some shortcomings in the mod and posted his own fixes.

The final obstacle to setting up a directory may prove the most difficult: getting your hands on an LDAP server. Most hosting companies make web and FTP services routinely available to their users, but nary a one dares touch LDAP. If, on the other hand, you have access to a server and feel comfortable compiling and installing software on it, **OpenLDAP** is a platform-independent, open source program that can be downloaded and installed free of charge (even on Windows). Get up and running in an afternoon with the **Quick Start Guide**. To set up organization-wide white pages, see the **ONLamp.com** set-up article. For administrative tasks I highly recommended the web-based tool **phpLDAPadmin**.

Lastly, it would be irresponsible of me not to mention that other single, monolithic software packages can be downloaded from the Internet that provide most of the same services as those used on the CTC VISTA website (and more). The primary benefit of our approach is the ability to add any number of services in the future and still use the existing database of usernames and passwords. No other technology is as tightly integrated with email readers and servers, either.

If you have any questions about getting your organization up and running with LDAP, please feel free to contact me. —SB

The screenshot shows the CTC VISTA Project website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links like 'CTC VISTA Project', 'VISTA Resources', 'Organization / Supervisor Resources', 'Project Directory', and 'Contact Us'. Below this, the main heading is 'The Complete CTC VISTA Roster (includes alumni)'. A note states: 'You must be logged in to the directory to view entry details. The list may be sorted by clicking the column headings.' Below this is a table with columns: First name, Last name, Links, Address, Organization, City, and State. The table lists several individuals, including Abby Balars, Adam Cohen, Aaron Hale, Aliya Appari, Ali Shoukri, Alycia Alexander, Amanda Lask, Anne Latta, Amy Mukunda, and Amy Roegner.

were instantaneous and published immediately. Lastly, access controls permit us to fine-tune levels of privacy and customize what information is available to whom.

That year, we also wanted VISTAs to be able to do something different to satisfy their Project documentation requirement. Previously VISTAs had been expected to maintain a website or submit written reports, but the websites produced were updated infrequently, possessed little to no interactivity, and poorly represented the excellent work of the volunteers, though there were some remarkable exceptions. Paul and I wanted VISTAs to be able to focus their time and energy on content and not design or web mechanics. Weblog (blog) software, like **Movable Type**, quickly rose to the top of possibilities. Since comments to weblogs are emailed to the address in the Movable Type profile, a gateway had to be created to synchronize email addresses with the CTC VISTA directory. With this completed—along with some additional fixes—the CTC VISTA blogs were established, and our new information and communications system began to blossom.

As the sidebar of additional technology implementation matters shows, the project took many months and was spread over time, integrated with numerous other projects. With focused attention and additional resources, it can go much more quickly. Lest you think building a communications infrastructure in 21 days is impossible, peruse this slideshow from my alma mater, Brandeis University, for a real-life example. ♦



Saul Baizman is a third year VISTA employed in multifarious capacities at CTC VISTA Project headquarters.

Information and Communication Technology: A Vital Part of the Peace Corps Mission

by Amber Fox

From the Dominican Republic to South Africa, the Peace Corps is assisting the developing world's move into the 21st century. More than 1,800 Peace Corps volunteers are working to close the digital divide by incorporating information and communication technology (ICT) into their assignments. Over 180 volunteers focus exclusively on ICT. Most prevalent among their activities is the teaching of basic computer literacy skills in schools and communities—to local government officials, teachers, non-governmental organization staff, youth groups, women, and others.

Peace Corps volunteers have also found that ICT is a foundational way to promote general education, business development, environmental and health education. In Niger, two Peace Corps volunteers recently reported on how they are using technology to promote community health and HIV/AIDS awareness in rural African villages.

Mia Chabot

Most of the villagers in my community listen to their radios throughout the day. The most popular time slots are those in which the local radio station is on the air. This station has limited hours because it is a small community radio powered by a car battery and only has a small antenna range. This doesn't discourage the villagers because the shows and music are very relevant to their culture, friends, and local events.

Community radio is a great way to reach a large audience of people, so I asked and received a half-hour timeslot once a week. I conduct a program in the local language and cover topics such as health lessons, environmental concerns, educational messages and cross-cultural issues. I often work with another volunteer to present material in a variety of forms including lectures, stories, skits, and question and answer discussions, while enhancing the program with samples of modern American music.

Being on the radio has made me instantly famous in the surrounding area. Everybody recognizes me as the white person who talks on the radio and they love to repeat my lessons every time they pass me in the markets or on the streets. The programs have generated interest in what the Peace Corps is doing in Niger and stimulated discussions about health, environmental, and educational issues. In my village, I have also noticed an increase in the number of people—especially women and children—who listen to the radio, not only my program but news and educational messages from other organizations as well.

I also created a video to help educate my host community on the dangers of HIV/AIDS that was used to begin a village meeting on the subject. With the help of other villagers and local doctors using illustrated books and condoms, we discussed how HIV is contracted, what symptoms of the disease are, and how to take

preventive steps. We closed the meeting with a few more informational clips on HIV/AIDS prevention and awareness.

I also organized an eight-day film festival to highlight community health issues, while providing entertainment for the village.

Each day we discussed one topic and included a movie in the evening and village meetings run by guest animators from the local hospital with the use of illustrated books, posters, hands-on experiences and expert advice to emphasize the topics introduced by the movies. After the movies, we showed entertainment videos that were chosen to represent different aspects of the wide-wide world.

I knew the project was a success when I saw the reactions of the villagers after the first day. They would sing the songs of the previous night's lesson and reenact the skits from the local language videos. They also asked me to replay the videos they really liked, including those on AIDS awareness, family planning, and hygiene.

Nearly all the women came to the meetings even if that meant abandoning their chores. Most importantly, they listened to the teachings and applied what they learned. Hopefully, they will continue to talk about the eight days of cinema for a long time and continue to spread their new knowledge to the surrounding villages as well.

Katie Leach-Kemon

I work with the local radio station in my town to educate the community on health issues. For one month I devoted my shows to the topic of HIV/AIDS. One of these shows I designed specifically to target married women. At the time, I was becoming increasingly pessimistic about a married woman's options for protecting herself against HIV.

In Niger, men often travel to coastal countries in search of work after the harvest. Because they travel to places like the Ivory Coast, where the rate of HIV infection is around ten percent of the population, these Nigerian men frequently contract the disease and bring it back to their wives.

Together with my two Nigerian friends Jamilla and Boubacar, I explored the topic of HIV/AIDS. Boubacar, a teacher, had overheard other male teachers discussing how some of their wives had given them the HIV talk. Some of their wives told them, "If you are going to be unfaithful, wear a condom. I don't want you to infect me or our children with HIV."



We developed a culturally-sensitive radio skit about a woman who is worried that her husband is being unfaithful. The woman speaks to her doctor, who explains to her how the virus is transmitted and how she can protect herself. The wife resolves to speak to her husband about the importance of wearing a condom should he choose to be unfaithful. "And if he refuses," she declares, "I will divorce him, because Islam says health comes first." In Niger, where 80 percent of the population is Muslim, this is a very important point.

I was so impressed that Jamilla was speaking on the radio in defense of two highly controversial subjects, women's rights and HIV/AIDS. The best part is that it wasn't me, a strange white woman, but a Nigerien woman who was advocating her own brand of feminism. It was by far one of my most rewarding experiences working as a health volunteer in Niger.

About the Peace Corps

Since 1961, more than 178,000 volunteers have served in the Peace Corps, working in such diverse fields as education, health, HIV/AIDS education and prevention, information technology, business development, the environment, and agriculture. Peace Corps volunteers must be U.S. citizens and at least 18 years of age. Peace Corps service is a 27-month commitment. More information on the Peace Corps is available at www.peacecorps.gov or toll-free, 1-800-424-8580. ♦

Amber Fox is senior at American University in Washington, DC and an intern at the Peace Corps Office of Press Relations since June 2005. Mia Chabot is a Peace Corps volunteer from Linneus, Maine and a graduate of Assumption College in Worcester, Mass. Katie Leach-Kemon is a Peace Corps volunteer from Middleburg, Va. and a graduate of the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Va.

ICT in the Peace Corps

Before ICT was a priority for the Peace Corps, volunteers recognized the need for ICT training and development in their host communities. Many of these volunteers provided training in their host countries as a part of their primary projects. The Peace Corps recognized the impact of ICT programs in developing countries and in 2000, former Peace Corps Director Mark Schneider made ICT a priority for the Peace Corps. Eventually, ICT became a specialized assignment area for skilled volunteers with degrees or work experience in this field.

Schneider challenged America's high-tech corporations to assist the Peace Corps' goal of closing the digital divide. From this came several partnerships, including the AOL Peace Packs program, which provides computers, modems, printers, digital cameras, Internet access and other vital ICT tools for ICT volunteers to use in their host communities.

Peace Corps TECHspert Teams

To better support ICT projects, the Peace Corps established TECHspert teams in all three Peace Corps regions in 2003. TECHspert team members include host country nationals serving as Peace Corps programming and training staff and Peace Corps staff members working in many sectors, who encourage volunteers to integrate ICT into their primary projects. Together with volunteers, they develop new ICT integration strategies, ways to apply ICT in the developing world and in Peace Corps programming and training, virtual collaboration techniques, and ways to use radio and television to support their goals. In October 2003, the three regional TECHspert teams convened for the first time in Romania, South Africa, and the Dominican Republic to organize their strategies, participate in an online virtual workshop to compare strategies, and discuss first-year successes and challenges. TECHsperts share ICT resources, tips and trends with their fellow team members on a regular basis.

ICT Programs by Region

- **Inter-America and the Pacific** — Volunteers in the IAP region design ICT curricula, establish computer labs, computerize record keeping and accounting systems, and teach Web site development skills. For example, volunteers in Belize have trained over 3,000 primary and secondary school teachers across the country to operate computers, prepare lesson plans, use the Internet to do research and access information for their lessons, calculate students' grades, and put together report cards and other school records.
- **Africa** — In Africa, volunteers help establish computer labs and organize computerized record keeping and accounting systems. Volunteers in PC/Cameroon, for example, have taught computer troubleshooting skills and used computers for budgeting, launching feasibility studies, credit and database management, and Web page design.
- **Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia** — In the EMA region, ICT volunteers have established computer centers and are training their host communities in e-commerce development and Internet research. Volunteers, for example, have led Internet training workshops and designed Web sites to promote tourism and marketing.

A recent statistical compilation finds:

- Approximately 1,800 Peace Corps volunteers actively promote the use of ICTs in their work.
 - There are 182 ICT volunteers. 50% work in the Inter-America and the Pacific region.
 - 62,325 host-country counterparts and project participants directly benefited from volunteers' ICT activities in 2004.
 - 1,817 host-country institutions received volunteers' assistance with ICT integration in 2004.
- from the "ICT in the Peace Corps Fact Sheet 2005"

The Journal of Community Informatics—Issue #4

by Michael Gurstein, Editor-in-Chief

- **Free Internet As Agent of Community Transformation** by Jocelyn Williams, Catherine Wallace, PhD, Frank Sligo, New Zealand

Does the Internet empower communities or perpetuate the status quo? Can universal Internet access resolve education, employment, and other social gaps? Report on authors' longitudinal assessment of low-income community access to free Internet in New Zealand, in terms of new Internet users' (1) community belonging, (2) Internet connectedness, and (3) civic engagement. Findings show Internet connectedness may have only a minimal impact on community capacity due to constraints such as family transience, difficult domestic circumstances, inadequate project resourcing, and poor literacy. Internet ubiquity may not be a strategically useful social objective unless contextual limitations are recognised and addressed.

- **Mapping the Virtual in Social Sciences: On the Category of Virtual Community** by Serge Proulx, Guillaume Latzko-Toth, Montreal, Canada

A discussion of the concept of "virtual community" as a part of a broader discussion of the notion of community in the electronic age.

- **Community Networking and Public Benefits** by Arthur Cordell, Paula Romanow, Ottawa, Canada

An examination of the concepts and role of Community Networks and Community Networking in the context of public policy.

- **Evaluating the K-Net Experience** by Adam Fiser, U. of Toronto

This report outlines an approach to evaluation based on the work of K-Net Services, an organization in North Western Ontario that promotes and supports broadband networking in First Nations communities, reported on initially in the premiere issue of JoCI.

- **Digital Inclusion without Social Inclusion: The Consumption of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in the Homeless Subculture in Central Scotland** by Claire Buré, University of Edinburgh

This pilot study examines how homeless people in central Scotland integrate and appropriate mobile phones and the Internet into their everyday lives, and the various meanings these information and communication technologies (ICTs) come to hold. It is found that "digital inclusion" does not necessarily lead to "social inclusion" into mainstream society, since homeless individuals tend to use ICTs in ways which reinforce the patterns and practices of their subculture — there is not a standard way of making use of technologies. Many homeless people thereby remain socially excluded in numerous ways despite their somewhat regular use of ICTs. It emerged from the study's findings that mobile uptake can actually be more "inclusive" than Internet uptake.

- **Looking Critically at ICT4Dev: The Case of Lincos by Mäane Granqvist, Malmö University, Malmö, Sweden**

Based on author's 2003 master's thesis, the work was carried out as an internship at the NGO Funredes in the Dominican Republic, as a part of its Olistica project, an Internet-based research observatory devoted to the assessment of the social impact of ICT in Latin America and the Caribbean. The thesis aimed to contribute to a framework for the assessment of ICT-for-Development projects from a critical, social viewpoint. It consisted partly in an extended



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theoretical discussion on the social dimensions of technology, and partly in a case study of the Lincos project in the Dominican Republic. Upon request of the editor, the focus of the article is directed at the observations of the field study, after a brief introduction to the theoretical presumptions and concepts of the original thesis.

- **A Cost Maturity Model for Community Informatics Projects in the Developing World** by Ferdie Lochner, City of Cape Town, South Africa (A Best Paper Prize Winner at the CIRN 2005 Conference in Cape Town)

A cost-benefit measurement of management of ICT in the City of Cape Town with special focus on the design and business application of a technology cost management competency index.

- **The Modal Nature of ICT: Challenging the Historical Interpretation of the Social Understanding and Appropriation of ICT**, by Marcus Leaning, Trinity College, UK (A Best Paper Prize Winner at the CIRN 2005 Conference in Cape Town)

This paper proposes a sociological model for understanding the social appropriation of information and communications technology (ICT). It argues that the relationship between a media form and the society in which it is deployed is of key import in understanding how a media is used. An account is given of the way in which the power of ICT to affect society has been understood. It is argued that positions within this debate are deeply tied to Western cultural beliefs and values. An alternate model of technology and ICT is proposed. In this model ICT is regarded as "modal" in operation; it may operate differently in different situations.

- **Towards a Code of Cyberethics**, Udo Averweg, Durban, South Africa
- **Report: A series of documents on ICT use in natural disasters**

Tribute: Larry Syms, May 2, 1948 – August 8, 2003

by David Rosen

When Larry Syms, a man who had worked for many years in Boston area health care institutions, and the father of two grown boys, decided to become an AmeriCorps*VISTA volunteer, he hoped that this might be an opportunity for training and access to a new career as a graphic artist in information technology. He also hoped it would be a way of helping others to learn about and share the joy and power in using computers. He knew it wasn't going to swell his bank account, but that wasn't important.

Larry didn't know that his work as a VISTA would be so important to him, that he would be able to help so many people, that he would be admired and loved by adult learners, teachers, and other colleagues at the Adult Literacy Resource Institute and in the CTC VISTA project.

Larry had vision. As he was considering VISTA, I told him we could help him out with transportation, either by providing an MBTA subway pass or paying for him to go to San Diego for the CTCNet/VISTA Project national conference. He didn't hesitate. The broad smile and twinkling eye of someone who had for many years been a world traveler told me he had chosen San Diego—and,



I learned later, a brief trip to Mexico. Larry's earlier years of travel abroad, and his friendships with people from other cultures, living in countries where little English was spoken, had strengthened his cultural sensitivity, opened him to new ideas, and helped him appreciate cultural differences. In quiet ways, Larry always showed curiosity, caring, and respect. Ngaio Schiff, a teacher at the Somerville Center for Adult Learning experience (SCALE), wrote that "Larry had a gentleness of spirit and a peace about him that put others at ease."

The vision of a larger world, cultural sensitivity, and respect, combined with a fascination with the power of computers and a love of graphic arts and music made him the ideal person to work with immigrants in the Boston area who wanted to learn English and to use computers. He also worked successfully with adults who were returning for basic skills brush-up and job skills preparation classes. In one of these settings, at Project Place, Larry found a young man who was gifted in drawing. Larry showed him how to use a simple computer graphics program, and within a short time this fellow had taught himself the skills to get a job as a graphic artist at a Boston company. Larry was especially pleased about this.

Larry helped new Bostonians at the International Institute of Boston, the Community Learning Center in Cambridge, and at SCALE who spoke little or no English and who had no computer

I'm Free

By Larry Syms

Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free.
I'm following the path god laid, you see.
I took His hand when I heard him call.
I turned my back and left it all.

I could not stay another day,
To laugh, to love, to work, or play.
Tasks left undone must stay that way.
I found that peace at the close of the day.

If my parting has left a void,
Then fill it with remembered joys.
A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss,
Oh yes, these things I too will miss.

Be not burdened with times of sorrow.
I wish you the sunshine of tomorrow.
My life's been full, I savored much.
Good friends, good times, a loved one's touch.

Perhaps my times seemed all too brief.
Don't lengthen it now with undue grief.
Lift up your hearts and peace to thee.
God wanted me now; He set me free.

experience, to feel comfortable with technology and to use it as part of their English language learning.

Larry's sudden illness and rapid decline in the summer of 2003 brought great sadness to the students and colleagues who had become his friends. Priscilla Lee, a teacher at the Community Learning Center (CLC), wrote me "The very week that Larry passed away I found a card from him in my CLC mailbox... It was a birthday card and the card was brief, but the last lines in Larry's handwriting read, 'But, love was in my eyes for all secretly! P.S. A hidden Buddhist!'" Priscilla also wrote "there was a lot going on beneath the surface—he had so much love and creative energy and at the same time was very humble about it all. I think he was very much aware in those last months of just how much love he had and how much he shared ('secretly')."

When I last saw Larry, just days before he died, he proudly pulled out of his refrigerator a fish that he had caught the day before in a covert expedition to Cape Cod. Larry succeeded in living fully and loving others to the very end. In that, and in many other things, he was a model for us all. ♦



David Rosen, former Executive Director of the Adult Literacy Resource Institute (ALRI) and VISTA Project Supervisor for Larry Syms, who served as a VISTA at ALRI and all the member programs mentioned above from 2001-2003, until shortly before his death.

The following three pieces compliment Dan Schackman's perspective on "The CTC VISTA Project: Looking Back, Looking Ahead" (page 4) and demonstrate the variety the VISTAs' service. —the Editors

Technology for All VISTA Member Pete Rodriguez

by Douglas Caldwell

Pete has worked extensively with our Learn and Earn Program. Over the past year and a half he has taught 12 classes and distributed over 100 re-deployed computers to underserved youth in the east end of Houston. Also, Pete has developed a new Learn and Earn Program with graduating seniors at Milby, Chavez and Austin High School. He will be starting our third class this summer. Through these two programs he has been able to increase our overall volunteer hours. This program is well received by the community and a welcome addition to the total program TFA offers.

Pete has managed our computer re-distribution program and completely overhauled the system. All reporting is now done online and in real time. He has also involved his student volunteers and our University of Houston Interns in the process. The most unique feature to the re-distribution program is the way Pete transfers knowledge to the recipients. The organization receiving the computers actually works with Pete and the volunteers in preparing their own equipment for their community technology center. In this way they have enough basic knowledge to keep their equipment up and running. To date Pete has re-distributed well over 300 computers and taught over 100 people in this program.

For the past two months Pete has put together an extensive summer youth program. We should be able to reach over 50 unique community youth ranging in age from new 7th graders to graduating seniors. The programs cover a variety of subjects.

Pete has developed all the learning objectives for each course, developed a budget and schedule, and is in the process of recruiting students and volunteers. One of his key program partners is NASA. They have offered to put a second session under Pete's leadership.

Pete is a real friend to the youth of our community. Through the Learn and Earn program Pete gets to know the youth, and then he takes it a step further. Pete spends additional time with these kids and becomes much more than just a teacher, he also becomes their friend and mentor. I believe Americorp VISTA, through people like Pete, is making a real difference in the lives of these and other underserved youth. This extra effort has also been a key component in the development of an extensive summer youth program. Pete has been able to use his relationship with these kids to customize a program that really has the kids excited. ♦



Excerpt from Doug Caldwell's Affiliate Project Report for Project Quarters 17 and 18, August 15, 2004 - February 14, 2005. See more individual Project impact reports in the site report archive.

Life as a VISTA: The VISTA Way

by Jason Crow, former Grand Rapids (MI) Community Media Center VISTA

Yawn. I wake up just past 8AM, ready to head off to work. Another day another dollar, literally. I mean, I make approximately \$3.43/hour, take home. But then, what AmeriCorps*VISTA doesn't already know just how painful payday is, no need to remind anyone.

The coffee's on in the kitchen and I am reusing yesterday's filter. I fill the decanter with fresh ground beans I bartered from the Common Ground, a local coffee house on the East Side of Grand Rapids, a third tier city that struggles to keep its coffee shops profitable. After reading in the TIME magazine from January 2001 (my Mom borrows old magazines from her the dentist office where she works) that coffee has absolutely no nutritional value, I slip back into my fake leather lounge chair and stare out the living room windows at the next door neighbor as he puts his child in his car seat and gently lifts him into his minivan. I sip the dark water slowly, satisfied.

I put on my robe and step outside to grab my neighbor's daily newspaper. I slide the "employment" section out from the thick stack of papers and begin to read. My VISTA term is about to end. I am looking for a job, one that pays. As a novice documentary video maker (with a socially conscious bent), I quickly search the help wanted ads under three sections: video production, communications, and finally (the most useful section for an aspiring videographer) restaurant help needed. Nothing. And I have spent the past two years gathering employable skills, transferable skills. I swear.

As I lay there in my off-white robe reading the help wanted ads, I see my girlfriend's car roll up into my driveway that sits just below my living room windows. I run into my room to grab my VISTA handbag, (including the VISTA handbook), some jeans, a t-shirt, and I am off. As "The Faint" pulses its smooth, electronic beats through the car that smells like early morning vinyl, I



Jason with GRCMC colleague and Dirk Koning.

suddenly feel inspired to roll my window down and bob my head gently back and forth while watching downtown Grand Rapids wake up from behind the sunglasses I just picked up off the car floor. I am boyfriend. I am young. I suppose, I am happy too.

She drops me behind a bakery across the street from my place of employment. I open the lid to the bakery's trash receptacle and chose the cleanest looking bunch of long-johns among the dozens of donuts freshly tossed away. They're still warm. VISTA life is good...long-john good.

With a handful of long-johns, I walk into the Grand Rapids Community Media Center, a community technology center that provides low-cost, no-cost access to video, Internet, and radio equipment. The brightly colored walls and the original 1912 incandescent lamps greet me as I pass by Lillie the cheery receptionist who sits typing today's memos.

Taking a seat at my computer workstation, I see a long list emails yet to be read. Let's see, 3 from some Melissa Daigle, 2 from a Matthew Crichton, 2 from Peter Miller, 2 from Karen Zgoda, 4 from a Liz Barnes. Who are these people? And why do they keep emailing me? I read through them, anyway, just to see what those Boston folks are up to. The stillness of the office before my CTC open its doors to the public is priceless.

Then PLOW! The doors swing open and here comes the public, arms waving, computers crashing, cameras breaking, normal folks clashing with the high technology. My VISTA training suddenly sets in and 4 years of film/video schooling begins to pay off. I am restarting computers, recovering lost footage, locating lost files, rescanning images at the proper resolution, showing people the restroom, directing folks to other office areas, listening to stories about lost jobs, lay-offs, promotions,

families and marriages gone awry, divorces, medications (or lack thereof), camera accidents, computer fritzes, deadlines, mishaps, successes and failures. I am I.T. man. I am counselor. I am professional public relations man. I am non-gender bias. So, I am professional public relations person. I am an AmeriCorps*VISTA volunteer.

Brown bag lunch comes and goes. More lost footage, more audio tracks missing from the final video, more stories of discontent and triumph fill my afternoon at the Grand Rapids Community Media Center. I have yet to clear my inbox of VISTA listserv emails, when I receive a couple more requesting I get to work on my VISTA website. I mark it unread and move it to my to do folder and begin working on updating the CMC's website. I create a .PDF here, write a blurb there, respond to a feedback email, and scan a couple photos to be posted for all to see. Then I start feverishly sorting out and editing stories that will be placed in our quarterly newsletter Catalyst, weeding out those that will end up in our more timely electronic newsletter e-Catalyst. I reschedule appointments, tours, and speaking engagements for my Executive Director, pretending to be well dressed on the phone with other ED's and their Administrative Assistants. I am print editor. I am desktop publisher. I am graphic designer. I am writer. I am a poorly dressed Executive Assistant. I am an AmeriCorps*VISTA volunteer.

Closing time comes. I grab my VISTA sack and hit the streets, leaving 8 emails, three video projects, and some stale chips (and a cup of warm water) for tomorrow. I walk past the new 150 million dollar DeVos Convention Center under construction, noticing the picketing construction worker whose sign on a pole reads, better wages, more benefits, less hours! We snicker at each other because yesterday I walked the beat with him, waving the sign at the disinterested passing cars. I felt some sort of solidarity with him.

I put my headphones on to help the time pass on the hour walk home, stopping by Kinko's to pick up some free coffee. I yank the long-john out of my VISTA sack, take a healthy bite, and watch the world go by as I walk. I am young. I make poverty wages. I am rich. I am an AmeriCorps*VISTA volunteer. u



Jason Crow served as a CTC VISTA at the GRCMC, after which he worked at Falmouth (MA) Community Television on Cape Cod, and continues his gainful employment as Access Coordinator at Cambridge (MA) Community Television in Cambridge. This edited article is from the April 2003 CTC VISTA Project Newsletter from the Project newsletter archives.



Jason with GRCMC colleague and Dirk Koning.

suddenly feel inspired to roll my window down and bob my head gently back and forth while watching downtown Grand Rapids wake up from behind the sunglasses I just picked up off the car floor. I am boyfriend. I am young. I suppose, I am happy too.

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Then PLOW! The doors swing open and here comes the public, arms waving, computers crashing, cameras breaking, normal folks clashing with the high technology. My VISTA training suddenly sets in and 4 years of film/video schooling begins to pay off. I am restarting computers, recovering lost footage, locating lost files, rescanning images at the proper resolution, showing people the restroom, directing folks to other office areas, listening to stories about lost jobs, lay-offs, promotions,

families and marriages gone awry, divorces, medications (or lack thereof), camera accidents, computer fritzes, deadlines, mishaps, successes and failures. I am I.T. man. I am counselor. I am professional public relations man. I am non-gender bias. So, I am professional public relations person. I am an AmeriCorps*VISTA volunteer.

Brown bag lunch comes and goes. More lost footage, more audio tracks missing from the final video, more stories of discontent and triumph fill my afternoon at the Grand Rapids Community Media Center. I have yet to clear my inbox of VISTA listserv emails, when I receive a couple more requesting I get to work on my VISTA website. I mark it unread and move it to my to do folder and begin working on updating the CMC's website. I create a .PDF here, write a blurb there, respond to a feedback email, and scan a couple photos to be posted for all to see. Then I start feverishly sorting out and editing stories that will be placed in our quarterly newsletter Catalyst, weeding out those that will end up in our more timely electronic newsletter e-Catalyst. I reschedule appointments, tours, and speaking engagements for my Executive Director, pretending to be well dressed on the phone with other ED's and their Administrative Assistants. I am print editor. I am desktop publisher. I am graphic designer. I am writer. I am a poorly dressed Executive Assistant. I am an AmeriCorps*VISTA volunteer.

Closing time comes. I grab my VISTA sack and hit the streets, leaving 8 emails, three video projects, and some stale chips (and a cup of warm water) for tomorrow. I walk past the new 150 million dollar DeVos Convention Center under construction, noticing the picketing construction worker whose sign on a pole reads, better wages, more benefits, less hours! We snicker at each other because yesterday I walked the beat with him, waving the sign at the disinterested passing cars. I felt some sort of solidarity with him.

I put my headphones on to help the time pass on the hour walk home, stopping by Kinko's to pick up some free coffee. I yank the long-john out of my VISTA sack, take a healthy bite, and watch the world go by as I walk. I am young. I make poverty wages. I am rich. I am an AmeriCorps*VISTA volunteer. u



Jason Crow served as a CTC VISTA at the GRCMC, after which he worked at Falmouth (MA) Community Television on Cape Cod, and continues his gainful employment as Access Coordinator at Cambridge (MA) Community Television in Cambridge. This edited article is from the April 2003 CTC VISTA Project Newsletter from the Project newsletter archives.

My Work in Rural Washington State

by Amanda Lasik

My work at La Casa Hogar has affected me deeply on a personal level. I now have a much greater understanding of immigration and the real, complex issues that immigrants in the United States face. I will never really understand what it is like to live in a country where I don't speak the language, don't understand the laws, and work at a difficult job just to make ends meet. However, I can say that simply by listening to their amazing stories, I gained a better understanding of the motivation that led these families to the United States.

The students of La Casa Hogar and I have very little in common. They have trouble understanding my independent spirit, why I am working at this organization as a volunteer, or why I am unmarried and have no kids. In turn, I have trouble understanding why they cannot go anywhere without their kids, and why anyone would focus that much energy and effort on cooking. But something about the atmosphere of La Casa Hogar allows people to breakdown barriers created by background, money, and language. I saw within the women of La Casa Hogar a deep love for their families and a desire to make their lives better.

Luz Monroy, Data Management Coordinator, Bookkeeper, and former student said the following, "...in La Casa Hogar, I have found my family, my home...that place that always has open doors, in which we can find refuge and feel safe, where nothing can harm us because among family, there is a bond of love that keeps us together."

My new "family" provided me with new perspective on my life and made me think about what is really important. I think that many Americans could learn a lesson from the Mexican culture about what it really means to be a family. Mexican families in the United States face many barriers—language, income, cultural assimilation vs. maintaining heritage, but beneath all of that is a closeness that keeps families together through thick and thin.

My VISTA year provided me with the opportunity to branch out and meet people I never would've met otherwise. My heart has been touched many times over by the women of La Casa Hogar and the strength of their spirits. ♦

Amanda Lasik served as a CTC VISTA at La Casa Hogar (WA) last year. This essay is from Amanda's July 28, 2005 VISTA weblog. CTC VISTA Project weblogs were instituted by the Project in the Fall of 2004.



Book Review

The AmeriCorps Experiment and the Future of National Service

Will Marshall & Marc Porter Magee,
Editors

Reviewed by Daniel Schackman

The AmeriCorps Experiment and the Future of National Service provides an appraisal of AmeriCorps as it passes the ten-year mark, and includes the diverse viewpoints of leaders across the political spectrum about the potential future of the program, though it's principally informed by the co-editors and their institutional bonds. Will Marshall is president and founder of the Progressive Policy Institute (PPI), the think tank associated with the Democratic Leadership Council, supported by its "Third Way" political philosophy (that, among other things, "seeks to adapt enduring progressive values to the new challenges of [t]he information age.") Marshall is the author of the 1988 DLC book *Citizenship and National Service* that developed many of the ideas for AmeriCorps. Marc Porter Magee is Research Director of the Partnership for Public Service, and was previously director of PPI's Center for

Civic Enterprise and a contributing editor of the DLC journal, *Blueprint*.

The first section, "Assessment," features only one chapter, "Has AmeriCorps Lived Up to Its Promise?" by Magee and Marshall. The chapter presents AmeriCorps' success in its primary purpose of "tackling unmet needs, expanding opportunity, bringing Americans together through service, and strengthening citizenship and civic enterprise." Still needing more attention

AmeriCorps Success Story Compendium

Innovations in Civic Participation, along with America's Service Commissions, has released *Transforming Communities through Service*, a success stories collection of 51 of the most innovative AmeriCorps programs from around the country as selected by state National Service commissions, another publication freely available in its entirety online. While there are no technology programs included, the community-building programs described might stimulate ideas of partnerships with community networks and technology centers and related organizations.

are encouraging more members to pursue higher education with their Education Awards, and increasing interaction between diverse members.

"Part Two: Service at Home and Abroad: An Update" includes a "A Frontline View" by David Eisner, current CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNS). Eisner presents some of the challenges that AmeriCorps has faced in its first ten years — lack of bipartisan support and a fiscal/management crisis, and offers his recommendation for three ideas in particular: (1) that AmeriCorps members can increase their effectiveness exponentially by recruiting and coordinating other volunteers at their sites. (2) Greater grantee matching of Federal funds ("...a key measure of its strength and long-term viability"). (3) Eisner is the first of nearly all of the contributors to this book to cite the great potential of tapping into the baby boomer generation that is beginning to retire, those 77 million strong who came of age in the idealism of the New Frontier and the social movements of the Sixties and Seventies that is beginning to retire, and he recommends adapting current programs and benefits to attract them. "A Global Perspective," by Susan Stroud, Executive Director of Innovations in Civic Participation, compares and contrasts national service in various countries, from alternatives to military service conscription to programs more closely associated with higher education. They provide models for further developing national service programs here in the U.S. Stroud suggests that the international growth of service programs, particularly for youth, might eventually trend toward "a common experience and expectation for the majority of young people worldwide."

"Part Three: Possible Futures for National Service" includes essays by contributors from both sides of the political spectrum. In "Putting Faith in Service," Beliefnet's Steven Waldman recommends that 100,000 religious congregations each host a national service member who would stay with a parishoner's family while working with the congregation to coordinate volunteers for their community service work.

In "National Service on a Community Scale," Bush Administration CNS Chair Stephen Goldsmith represents those concerned about too much Federal government intervention in communities as well as a move toward some form of conscripted service, not to mention a critical eye towards too large a percentage of funds going to big national organizations such as City Year and the Red Cross. He recommends that AmeriCorps focus more on supporting grass-roots community-based efforts.

A very different viewpoint is represented in "The Case for Universal Service" by William A. Galston, Director of the Institute for Philosophy and Public Policy at the University of Maryland (the Institute's scholars constitute the Philosophy & Public Policy Quarterly Editorial Board). Galston makes a passionate call for moving to a universal conscription system, allowing for military or civic service, as a way to instill in American youth a deeper sense of citizenship.

Lastly, Marshall and Magee return in "The Voluntary Path to Universal Service" outlining a proposal for the expansion of

national service, inspired by the post-WWII G.I. Bill, that more directly ties financial aid for higher education to public service, civic or military. The essay outlines "Five Ways to Scale Up National Service: 1. Replace selective service with national service, 2. Expand AmeriCorps, 3. Recruit more citizen soldiers, 4. Replace work study with serve study, 5. Link federal student aid and national service."

It might be taken as a holdover of Clinton era brashness that they take a swipe at the forerunners of AmeriCorps: "National service ought to be more than a small demonstration project on the margins of big government. It must take a great leap forward or risk going the way of the Peace Corps and VISTA, noble endeavors that languished after an initial burst of inspiration and failed to reach critical mass."

It seems unfortunate that the editors, especially in writing this concluding article, did not more fully integrate some of the ideas presented in previous chapters. This gives the impression that the other essays provide more of a perfunctory nod toward presenting political balance. Whether this can become a forceful bi-partisan or multi-partisan opportunity for collaborating on a workable proposal that can be supported by a spectrum of policy makers (like the McCain-Bayh proposal for Universal Service that Marshall and Magee discuss) remains to be seen. ♦

The Resource Center

The Resource Center, formerly the National Service Resource Center (NSRC), is the major technical assistance provider for all AmeriCorps programs and contains a wealth of assets. A wide range of online resources are freely available and relevant to the full spectrum of nonprofits, and do not require a log-in and password. Print resources can be borrowed, lending-library style by National Service members and project managers (materials are shipped to the member's site.) The site is searchable by topic, and has a **Frequently Searched Topics** page, including a link to **Program Management: Technology** resources.

Among the technology program management links are numerous **Digital Divide** resources, including news stories, best practices, and useful links to:

- **Funding and Grant Management**
- **Low-cost Hardware and Software**
- **Partnerships**
- **Online Training and Curricula**
- **Volunteer Management**
- **Measuring Your Impact**
- **Needs Assessment**
- **Research**
- **Listserve**

The Center publishes two eNewsletters with extensive archives. The **Resource Connection**, v4 #3 covers "Technology in National Service Programs"; the **January 2004 eNews** focuses on "Closing the Digital Divide."

Perspective

On the CTC VISTA Project and the Corporation's Resource Center

by Carlos Pedraza

In the heady days of the dot-com bubble at the end of the last century, the enthusiasm that fueled so much speculation in the private sector had its counterparts in the nonprofit sector, where corporations, foundations and government agencies collaborated to address inequities around access to technology in low-income and rural communities.

For example, the United Way and IBM established the Teaming for Technology program, AOL created the PowerUp initiative, and the Corporation for National and Community Service worked with the Community Technology Centers Network (CTCNet) to establish a national AmeriCorps*VISTA project.

Today, halfway into a new decade, only the CTC VISTA Project partnership survives. Projects that worked to bridge the digital divide between technology haves and have-nots have contributed to a largely successful national effort to make technology widely accessible. While access issues have not been completely solved, more people than ever can use computers and the Internet. CTC VISTA has moved beyond the access issue to address the question, access to do what?

While the digital divide is no longer an official priority area for the Corporation for National and Community Service, that doesn't mean the Corporation has abandoned technology programs. In fact, an increasing number of the Corporation's grantees in AmeriCorps, VISTA, Senior Corps, and Learn and Serve America make use of technology as part of their direct service and administrative operations. And the CTC VISTA project, which recently swore in its 200th member, continues to be the most popular program in AmeriCorps' online recruitment system.

Those VISTAs, and the CTCs and related organizations where they are housed, focus now on building the capacity of community agencies in low-income and rural communities. And the Corporation is increasingly focusing its funding to programs that engage in capacity-building.

At the Corporation's Resource Center, operated by ETR Associates, CTC VISTA projects have been important contributors to our Effective Practices Collection. The Effective Practices Collection is the most-used service of The Resource Center's Web site, and the community technology practices housed there aim to help national service programs better integrate technology into their administrative and program operations.

The Technology area of our Effective Practices Collection features 38 practices, many of which were contributed by staff and VISTAs serving at CTCs across the country. You can view those effective practices on The Resource Center website.

Among them are:

- Sharing a model for community technology center (CTC) AmeriCorps*VISTA projects.
- Sharing computer basics with seniors.
- Bringing technology support to schools in low-income communities.
- Making community technology centers accessible and welcoming.

The Effective Practices Collection now includes more than 660 practices covering a broad range of activities supporting service and volunteerism.

Now that the Corporation is emphasizing leveraging National Service members to support volunteer agencies, VISTAs can play an important role in building the capacity of their sponsoring agencies to recruit, train and place additional volunteers. A study by the Urban Institute, and funded by the UPS Foundation, noted that AmeriCorps, including VISTA, can play an important role in building the capacity of community organizations. Those organizations face key challenges in sustainability, effective programming, performance measurement, and demonstrating results.

CTC VISTA members and their sites can help with these capacity building efforts by leveraging their ideas, tools, resources and other efforts through contributions to The Resource Center. These contributions include:

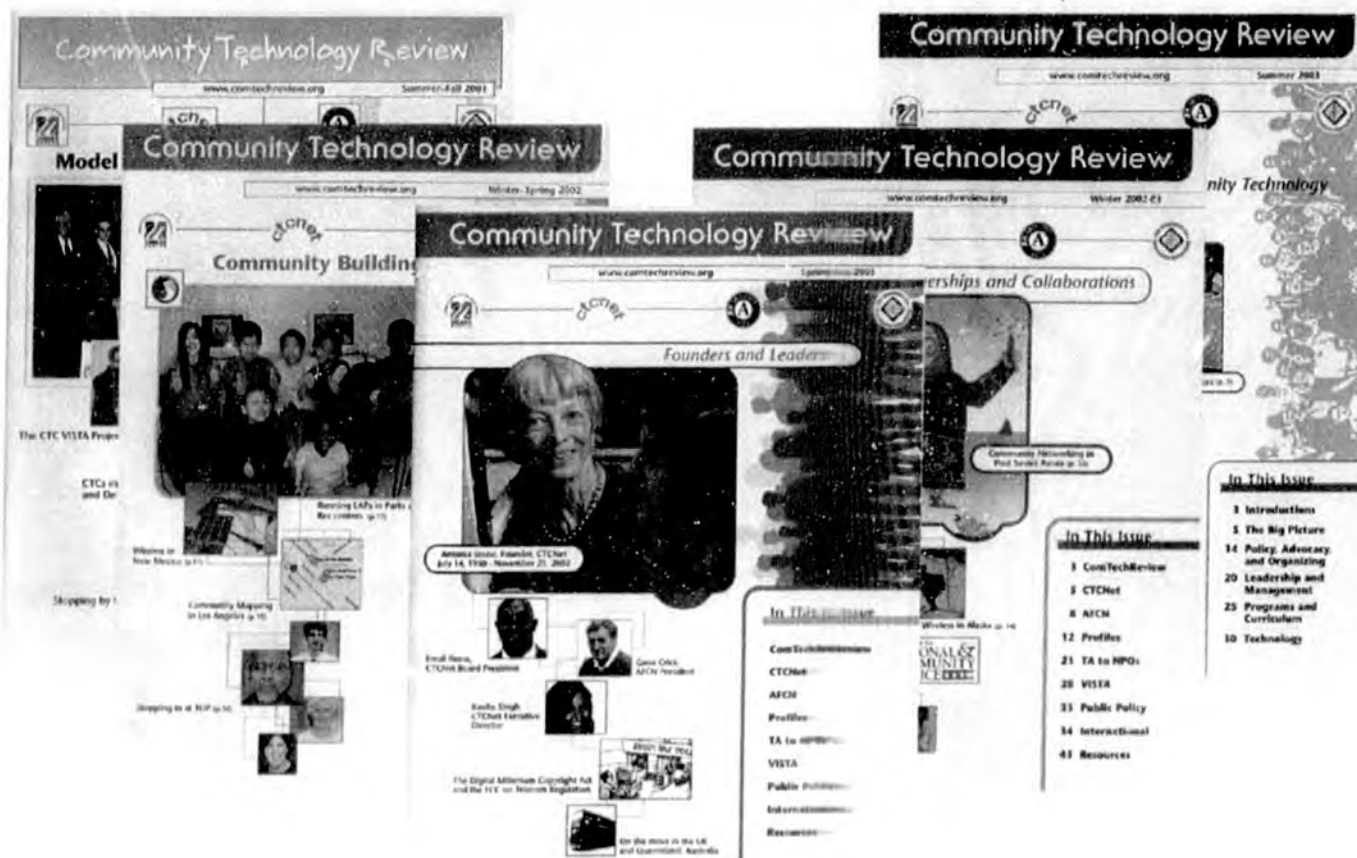
- Submitting effective practices
- Identifying resources such as books, videos, DVDs, audio recordings and other media for The Resource Center library
- Sharing curricula VISTAs have used in training staff and clients at their CTCs
- Using the forthcoming My Improvement Plan to assess the current capacity of their sponsoring organizations
- Participating on listservs

Just as the economy is now emerging from the dot-com bust stronger and more creative, so has the CTC VISTA program. That creativity and talent can play a big part in the increasing importance of national service to the health of communities across the country. ♦



Carlos Pedraza is the Director of National Service Projects, ETR Associates, in Scotts Valley/Santa Cruz, CA.

Community Technology Review — Back Issues Available in the Online Archives and in Hardcopy



Discounted bulk copies available for classroom use,
plus curriculum integration support.



See sidebars in this issue for compilation of articles by area topics in Community Networking (p. 7), Community Organizing and Development (p. 18), Digital Media for Youth (p. 24), and Technology Assistance for Nonprofits (p. 28).

The CTC VISTAs 2005-06



Front row: Taylor Hales, Danielle Martin, Jeff Benton, Ellen-Rae Cachola, Daniel Richardson, Emily Kerkstra, Matt Walker, Nick Lewis, Dave Chakrabarti.

Second Row: Angela Dirscherl, Roxanne Johnson, Cathy Hersh, Becky Shuler, Nikki Payne, Jenny Lee, Sheveeta Shephard, Molly Szymansky, Emily Yoshida, Morgan Sully, Dean Gransar, Robin Brown-Pipkins, Shaneka Smith, Shannon McCue, Aliya Abassi, Alli Shaughnessy, Saul Baizman, Paul Hansen.

Back Row: Rodrigo Pacheco-McEvoy, Blake Hall, Brian Pastori, Peter Miller, Greg Osmun, Ben Sheldon, Mark Betz, John Miller, Ryn Shane-Armstrong, Chris Anderson, Chuck McCullum, Misty Kesler.

Not Pictured: Nathan Biggs, Mike Denegal, Sandy Hike, Nora Lollar, Vahid Nourani, Christy Park, Cara Powers, Sam Russell.

Site placements and additional information are available in the [project directory](#).



The CTC VISTA Project
Boston, MA 02125-3393

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Rural Ecommerce and Telework Strategies

A Self-directed Learner's Internet Guide



**Learning-to-Earn
For Individual and Community Sustainability**

This guide was edited and published at Idaho State University through the customized training office at the College of Technology as part of an overall customized training program in partnership with **Mr. Frank Odasz**, President of Lone Eagle Consulting, for the purpose of rural economic development. It was made possible through funding for its development by the Workforce Training Network of the Idaho State Division of Professional Technical Education.

All material in *Rural Ecommerce and Telework Strategies: A Self-Directed Learner's Internet Guide* not specially identified as being reprinted from another source is copyrighted © April 2002 by **Frank Odasz**. You may not distribute, copy, or otherwise reproduce any of this book for sale or for commercial use without written permission from the Author.

To inquire regarding Internet empowerment training and/or presentations for your school district, community, or organization, or to request copies, special printings, or reprint permission, contact **Frank Odasz**, frank@lone-eagles.com. Other inquiries may be addressed to the College of Technology Customized Training Office at Idaho State University, P.O. Box 8380, Pocatello, Idaho 83209.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Imagine being able to live anywhere, either working for yourself running your own business, or working for someone else, but still able to live anywhere and set your own work schedule. More and more people are doing this. You can too! This guide is dedicated to those individuals who choose to demonstrate the patience and perseverance to acquire the power of becoming a self-directed learner - becoming a "Lone Eagle" - to be able to learn anything, anytime, anywhere. In turn Lone Eagles who have acquired Internet collaboration skills are enabled to teach others online, thereby helping create self-sustaining rural communities allowing others to live and work where they want as well.

Rural Ecommerce and Telework Strategies is a unique guide designed to help individuals, businesses, organizations, and rural communities develop powerful new skills to become self-directed learners first and then use those skills to help others to become self-directed learners. Thus, whole communities can learn to work together to develop those skills that will enhance their social and economic well being.

The ideal community self-empowerment vision is that once the Internet access becomes available, inspired citizens will immediately realize their opportunities by becoming self-directed lifelong learners, proactive entrepreneurs, and innovative skilled collaborators creating new social and economic value for their communities.

The goal is for everyone to be motivated and empowered at the highest levels possible. Community events and "web-raising" programs are needed which can demonstrate in concrete terms how to quick-start the highest levels of community action and benefits with the least overall costs in time, effort, and prerequisite literacy. Where such model communities and community programs don't exist - we need to create them. The resultant storytelling will inspire others to construct their own vision and an action plan for the mobilization of their own community's collective will.

Community Internet awareness events can include community web-content competitions, Internet skill-building and mentoring programs, local web-based content creating initiatives, establishing Ecommerce incubators, and creating community network inclusion programs. This guide provides resources for all of these.

This guide and the online course, **Ecommerce and Telework Strategies**, are works in progress in association with ongoing community initiatives. Suggestions and partnerships are always welcome. Check the online version of the guide and course for regular updates and enhancements.

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Dedicated to those good-hearted individuals who would rather lend their wings to others than hoard their knowledge for competitive advantage and personal gain.

About the Author

Born in Cody, Wyoming, in 1952, **Frank Odasz** has been a carpenter, oil field roughneck, dude ranch manager, college professor and is now a "Lone Eagle," an independent instructional entrepreneur. In 1982 Frank attended the University of Wyoming to learn the benefits computers and telecommunications could bring to citizens. As one of the earliest pioneers with both online learning and community networking, he founded the Big Sky Telegraph network, 1988-1998, one of the first online systems to offer online courses. Frank's biography, resume, and photograph are at <http://lone-eagles.com/articles/frank.htm>

During the time Odasz operated the Big Sky Telegraph, Microtimes Magazine listed him as one of the 100 most influential people in the microcomputer industry. In 1992 Big Sky Telegraph was included in the National Information Infrastructure White House Agenda report as a network model of excellence.

Frank Odasz has served as a senior advisor on community networking to the Morino Institute. He has also been an advisor and served on advisory boards of several networking projects throughout the country. He has created online courses on how to create and teach online courses and how to mentor others online. Over the past twenty years he's been a participant in the evolution of both online learning and community networking. He has traveled over a million miles presenting at conferences and conducting workshops.

Frank's mission statement below is an accurate reflection of his personal philosophy.

"Lone Eagle Consulting strives to maintain the small circle of the very best Internet learning pathways, requiring the least time and effort, to deliver the highest levels of benefit and motivation for people of all cultures and literacy levels."

TABLE OF CONTENTS
<http://lone-eagles.com/eguide.htm>

Section One - Introduction

Best Use of This Multi-Purpose Guide	1
Owning Up to Our Own Potential	1
Unprecedented Self-Empowerment Potential	3
This Guide Presents Four Successive Levels of Self-Empowerment	4
The Organization of This Guide	5
Homesteading the Ecommerce Frontier	6

Section Two - Internet Learning Styles and Readiness Skills

The Internet Style of Learning	9
Four Fundamental Historical Firsts	12
Four Essential Internet Readiness Skills	13

Level One - Searching and Browsing Skills 15

Lesson Goals	16
The Vision	16
Searching and Browsing Basics	17
Checklist Activity: Internet Searching Basics	19
Great Searching Tutorials	21
Great Search Engines to Explore	21
Checklist Activity: Web Browsing and "Cut-and-Paste" Basics	22
Creating Your Own Web Tours	25
One Big Secret for Saving Lots of Time!	25
Quick Web Tours	26
Self-Directed Learning Resources	27
Free Learning and Other Freebies Web Tour	29
Quickstart Web-Browsing Awareness Activities	30

Level Two - Creating Your Own Web Pages 31

Lesson Goals	32
The Vision	33
Creating Your Own Web Pages	33
Checklist	36
Creating a Web Page Using Netscape Communicator	37
Easiest Web Page Authoring Resources	38
Advanced Web Authoring Resources	38
Quickstart Web-Authoring Awareness Activities	39
Gearing Up With Free Web Tools	40

Level Three - Communicating and Working Together	41
Lesson Goals	42
The Vision	43
Email, Listservs, and Collaboration	43
The Ten Top Internet Collaborative Tools	47
Quickstart Internet Collaboration Awareness Activities	50
Building Collaborative Capacity - A Web Tour	51
A Community Internet Self-Empowerment Model	55

Level Four - Learning-to-Earn for Sustainable Communities	57
Lesson Goals	58
The Vision	58
Online Mentoring Key Issues	59
Distance Learning Key Issues	59
Quickstart Community-Building Awareness Activities	62
Mentoring Models and Resources	63
Lone Eagle Consulting's Best Online Learning Resources	65
Internet Training Resources	65

Section Three - Essential Ecommerce and Telework Strategies

(The Lessons for the Online Course: Rural Ecommerce and Telework Strategies)

Course Description and Registration	67
Welcome to <u>Rural Ecommerce and Telework Strategies</u>	72
Course Outline	74
Lesson One - Ecommerce and Telework Readiness Skills	77
Lesson Two - Ecommerce Fast-Track Strategies	87
Lesson Three - Ecommerce Cooperatives and Virtual Incubators	93
Lesson Four - Entrepreneurship Training Opportunities	101
Lesson Five - Community Economic Development Strategies	109
Lesson Six - Ecommerce and Building Collaborative Capacity	117
Lesson Seven - Keeping Current on Competition and New Markets	123
Lesson Eight - Employment Opportunities in a Knowledge-Based Economy	129
Lesson Nine - International Trade Training Resources	139
Lesson Ten - Writing a Business Plan and Funding a Startup	143

Section Four - Ecommerce and Community-Building Resources

Why Should I Care? - Community Networking and Self-Directed Learning	149
How Computers Can Help Build Community	151
Community Networking - Making a Difference	151
Innovation Diffusion - Looking at the Process of Change	158
Community Networking; Leveraging the Public Good Electronically	162
Building Learning Communities Web Tour	167

Community Internet Empowerment Resources for Rural Communities	168
Community Internet Awareness Events & Self-Directed Learning Resources	169
Community Network Planning Guides	171
Community Networking Associations	172
Community Networking Reports and Projects	172
Community Networking Directories	172
Community Networking Models	173
Electronic Democracy Web Tour	173
Federal Government Important Resources	174
Ecommerce Startup Resources Web Tour	175
Ecommerce Sites with Free Trials and Services	176
Youth Entrepreneurship	176
Women's Entrepreneurial Networks	177
Career and Job Marketing Sites	177
Unique Ecommerce Services	178
Community Networking Clearinghouse	179

Section Five - Implementing Empowered Communities

Grantwriting and Community Project Resources	181
Welcome to the Bootstrap Academy!	181
Grantwriting Tips	192
Grantwriting and Funding Sources	195
A Community Grant Template	197
Additional Community Grant Templates & Grantwriting Resources You're Invited to Use	210

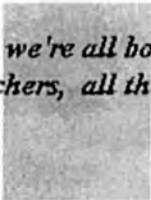
Section Six - Appendices 211

SECTION ONE - INTRODUCTION

Using this guide, you'll learn to access specific information within seconds of having the need. You'll learn to create online learning experiences for others, to collaborate in many new and powerful ways, and to self-publish your own ideas using multimedia web pages.

As we first empower ourselves, and then our families, communities, and cultures, it will become overwhelmingly clear that there exists no upward limit to the number of people one individual can impact positively. By sharing what we each learn, we will all have access to all our joint knowledge. In an ideal world, we would all save each other great amounts of time by broadly sharing the best of what we learn.

The specific goal of this guide is to allow you to leapfrog ahead to the best the Internet has to offer with the least amount of time and effort. This guide presents hands-on exercises ranging from general overviews to in-depth exploration. As new, more powerful web tools evolve, this "online" guide will add them as simply and efficiently as possible.



"In the new age, we're all both learners and teachers, all the time."

Best Use of This Multi-Purpose Guide

For individuals - this guide presents a thorough self-directed learning pathway of Ecommerce overview perspectives, strategies, skills, and resources.

For communities - the ideal use of this guide would be to stimulate widespread interest in your community identifying the realizable benefits the Internet offers. This guide - in addition to important resources, skills, and strategies, also provides a complete community Ecommerce awareness mentoring certification program. The certification program includes a paid mentorship component to provide a local incentive for sharing skills and knowledge. This certification program has the potential for growing a cottage industry in your community mentoring citizens outside the community. Grant templates are provided with a wide variety of community event models ranging from single afternoon events to extended community learning programs, initiatives, and competitions.

Owning Up to Our Own Potential

It would be wonderful if we could install high speed Internet in our homes and communities and know our successful futures were assured. But it is not that easy. Based on declining demographics, many rural communities today are dying.

Three big questions of our day are (given local Internet access at any speed) as follows:

1. As individuals, what commitment do we acknowledge regarding our role in building communities?
2. How important is the challenge of getting everyone involved creating an inspired, self-motivated learning community able to fully benefit from the capabilities the Internet puts at their fingertips?
3. What's the best a rural community might do for itself using the Internet if it were fully informed?

The fact that there are so few outstanding community success stories and models, even from communities who have installed high speed Internet, suggests the benefits may depend more on what people have learned to do with the Internet than the speed of available Internet access. Stories of successful individuals and businesses are far more common. In many rural communities are individuals who have quietly proven this potential for themselves and are now running their own successful Ecommerce businesses. Yet, there are many people and communities who appear to believe that through their own inaction they have disproved the promised potential of the Internet.

Together - we need to identify how to bring together education, economic development, community-building and Ecommerce in ways that make sense. This guide integrates these four essential pillars of sustainable communities. To create sustainable communities - we need to combine caring, commerce, and connectivity with common sense.

The potential for what citizens can do by working together far outweighs the benefits of simply helping individual entrepreneurs. However, in the minds of many citizens the idea of working together to build community capacity remains an abstraction.

The sustainability of our communities and society depends on creating motivated lifelong learners, proactive citizens, innovative entrepreneurs, skilled collaborators (both offline and online) and citizens who are both consumers and producers - both learners and teachers - all the time.

Imagine the multiplier effect: if we all share what we know, then we'll all have access to all our knowledge. Sharing what you know in return for benefiting from what others know helps everyone learn faster. The potential of a knowledge economy is that there can be enough knowledge and prosperity for everyone, worldwide.

Once you learn to be a self-sufficient learner, you'll soon recognize your potential to help people worldwide. While you might consider them potential competitors, you might also consider them potential customers and partners. The better you understand their needs, the better you'll understand the global market.

With the ease using of online collaborative tools such as email, listservs, etc., it will become easier and easier to engage in international trade. Knowing that the doors are opening, you're advised to learn about existing international trade opportunities and to create a personal strategy for keeping current as new doors open. You'll want to become self-sufficient staying current on Ecommerce trends, opportunities, and emerging skills and capabilities.

As hundreds of rural communities gain Internet access, many will eagerly embrace the potential to engage in Ecommerce. They will soon become your competition. Your advantage is to be first-to-market and establish your global niche now.

While many American rural communities have not yet recognized their advantage of being first in the world to have local Internet access, many will soon acknowledge their short-term opportunities and will begin to take action. Once the Internet is connected, whole countries will be dealing directly with the social challenges of creating an inspired and motivated citizenry for competitiveness at all levels. Your best strategy is to inform yourself early on about inevitable changes to strategically position yourself and your community to survive economically.

This guide puts equal emphasis on both social value and economic benefits. Both must be balanced for sustainable rural communities.

Unprecedented Self-Empowerment Potential

This guide is a fast-track learning tool to help you use the Internet to learn on an ongoing basis. Expectations of what you are capable of will increase through direct hands-on learning by following those topics of greatest interest to you. Throughout history, we've struggled with many barriers to learning and sharing information. Today, suddenly, we have unprecedented power and access for learning - which we've yet to recognize fully.

Over the next fifteen years, many of the six billion people on the planet, represented by over 15,000 cultures, will receive the opportunity to access the Internet through new satellite and wireless technologies. What they will find, and whether it's supportive of their families and cultures, may ultimately be, in part, up to you.

As each of us learns to become a Lone Eagle - a **self-directed learner** - we'll be better able to join with other Lone Eagles to build learning communities in very powerful ways. However, there is a real responsibility that comes with this new power you'll find at your fingertips. You alone must decide what you believe about your responsibility to help others.

For any community, culture, or country to reach its full potential, the full potential of each citizen must be realized. This guide is to be used as a resource to help individuals become self-directed learners and then work with others to build learning communities.

This Guide Presents Four Successive Levels of Self-Empowerment

Level One: Searching and Browsing Skills (Becoming a Self-Directed Learner)

The reality of our fast-changing world requires that we all acquire "just-in-time" self-directed learning skills such that we can learn what we need, independently, whenever necessary.

Level Two: Creating Web Pages (Self-Publishing Globally)

If we all share what we learn, we'll all have access to all our joint knowledge.

*"We're always ready to learn,
never to be taught."*

Winston Churchill;
Constructivist

Level Three: Communicating and Working Together (Building Learning Communities)

Community is the sum of what we give to each other, and we now can teach anything to anyone, anywhere, anytime.

Level Four: Learning-to-Earn for Sustainable Communities

(Building Online Communities) Learning-to-earn, public problem-solving, and electronic democracy hold our greatest individual and community benefits!

This entire guide can be found on the web at <http://lone-eagles.com/eguide.htm>

The Organization of This Guide

The key advantages of having the entire guide online are the convenience of being able to easily click through the web tours and to be able to reference any of the guide's resources from other web pages.

Section One: Introduction

This section briefly presents the over-riding vision and suggested best uses for this multipurpose guide. A short essay, "**Homesteading the Ecommerce Frontier**," sets the context for this guide.

Section Two: Essential Internet Readiness Skills

This section contains hands-on skill-building lessons and self-directed activities such as skills checklists, web tools, and web tours for the four most important skills related to self-empowerment, Ecommerce, and community-building.

Section Three: Essential Ecommerce and Telework Strategies

This section contains the full course materials for the online course, "Rural Ecommerce and Telework Strategies." This course includes a certificate of completion and the opportunity to become a paid mentor helping others earn their certificate. Online resumes will be created by all those receiving the certificate.

The purpose of this course is to offer a robust overview perspective of Ecommerce possibilities specifically for rural citizens and communities. The course presents high quality resources to allow for unlimited continued self-study as well as the skills and strategies to become a self-directed Internet learner.

Section Four: Ecommerce and Community-Building Resources

This section contains a collection of articles and web tours for Ecommerce start-up training and community networking resources representing many examples of the very best resources available. Lessons learned from ten years of community Internet projects are included with recommendations for future programs based on this invaluable experience.

Section Five: Implementing Empowered Communities (Grant-Writing and Community Project Resources)

Community grant templates present specific methods for creating Internet awareness programs and action plans to help your community become aware of its own potential for Ecommerce and self-empowerment. Diverse grant-writing tutorials, templates, and funding sources for rural communities are included.

Section Six – Appendices

Many extensive self-directed learning resources are included.

Homesteading the Ecommerce Frontier

Idaho's rural communities are at risk for their continued survival. The immediate need exists to revitalize the pioneering spirit that originally created them. Rural Ecommerce strategies are needed to combat the impacts of a rapidly shifting economy.

During the westward expansion many individuals headed west to find their fortunes. Perhaps as a result of such spirited independence, many western states and communities struggled with the lack of willingness to collaborate and work together. Many of Idaho's communities, however, headed west as communities - intending to build new physical communities - together. This legacy of pioneering community spirit remains today.

Just as community barn-raising helped individual families start quickly, today community web-raising is needed to create the web-based content and community collaborative capacity needed to sustain individual families struggling amid a shifting economy.

Rural communities slow to learn what's now available to them via the Internet risk losing citizens who will be forced to move to the city to find work. They risk replacing their neighbors with those from the city who have learned the Internet Ecommerce and telework skills which will allow them to relocate to rural communities.

Homesteading this new electronic frontier requires more than just bringing faster Internet to communities. Communities need to understand what skills, practices, and levels of commitment are required to best utilize the potential of the Internet at whatever speeds are available. Communities and individual families need to know exactly how to stake out their new Ecommerce homesteads, identify niche global markets, and work collaboratively to become "sustainable learning communities." The fact that currently there are no well-known model communities to inspire others to take concerted action suggests it is not obvious what needs to be done.

Collaborative capacity needs to be understood and celebrated. If one citizen spends ten hours gathering replicable rural Ecommerce success stories from the Internet and is able to share these resources with someone who also spent ten hours gathering similar successes - they both double the benefits of their labors. If most citizens within a community learn to similarly gather and share resources - "Then we'll all have access to all our knowledge."

The collective talents of a community must be shared to save people time and avoid unnecessary duplication of effort. But, this is possible only if everyone knows who has developed which talents and whether they are willing to share their knowledge and skills. Community networking strategies and programs will require learning new and more efficient ways of sharing information both within the community and beyond. A simple first step would be to create a public web page with an alphabetical listing by topic of mentors' expertise and email addresses as demonstrated at <http://www.vrd.org/locator/alphalist.shtml>.

One person with Internet skills can impact the lives of many, many others by providing instructional web tours of the best resources and skill-building experiences. A community skilled in Internet collaboration can turn an idea into action far faster than those without such skills - as suggested by the title of Bill Gates' book, Business at the Speed of Thought.

Many citizens and communities may not believe that the Internet provides them with powerful opportunities. In contrast, those with vision and the collective will to take action are already proving otherwise. Mobilizing the motivation to take control of their lives is the key to unlock their ability to take collaborative action toward purposeful outcomes.

Salmon, Idaho, lost its new telemarketing call center after its broadband infrastructure failed. Yet in Mackay, Idaho, a skilled marketing manager has 52 products posted for sale on the Internet as part of multiple local programs to stimulate local awareness for Internet entrepreneurship. Showcasing a community's skills and Internet readiness for Ecommerce and telework has become an important competitive strategy.

Creating this readiness to become a learning community requires widespread participation, and the role for educators and students has yet to be defined. Currently, many educators and students are non-participants in the cause for helping their community understand how Internet self-empowerment practices can build social and economic value and make the difference between a community which is growing and one which is dying.

The best-of-the-best Ecommerce innovations from other sources and communities need to be routinely shared locally via public web pages to fuel the home fires of local innovation.

Currently in southeast Idaho an "Ecommerce Homesteaders' Cooperative" is championing an innovative pioneering community self-empowerment program to create sustainable rural communities.

The Ecommerce Homesteaders' Cooperative proposal is online at <http://lone-eagles.com/homestead.htm> and articulates the specific events and processes by which communities can quickly become aware of how to take action on their own behalf. Both the social and economic opportunities for Internet collaboration are addressed through awareness presentations and a series of community events to engage local businesses, schools, churches, and community organizations of all descriptions. Western individualism will be celebrated for what individuals with vision can bring to empower their communities.

The Ecommerce Homesteaders Cooperative has created a unique workshop series for community leaders, businesspersons, and aspiring rural entrepreneurs. Through a partnership with Lone Eagle Consulting, <http://lone-eagles.com> a new online rural ecommerce course has been created specifically for rural citizens of all ages.

This unique mastery learning course includes a "Ecommerce and Telework Readiness Certification" which authorizes citizens to become paid mentors teaching this course to

others. Certified peer mentors will host a personal electronic portfolio of resources and skills they have gathered to empower others. This program creates an incentive for local mentoring programs and for sharing local expertise in new and more efficient ways.

We're seeking partners to support a short-term pilot project to include one or more rural communities to validate the tangible outcomes our program can produce, with anticipation of rapidly expanding to meet the needs of all rural Idaho communities. We propose that community leaders take the opportunity to host an initial "Homesteading the Ecommerce Frontier" presentation for their local community to review the content and quality of the presentation, free resources, and possibilities for local action. Community leaders will be able to directly assess the reaction and level of motivation of the attending citizens.

A recommended next step would be hosting a "Circle the Wagons" meeting specifically for community leaders to review the issues and recommended solutions. Those who elect to join the Ecommerce Homesteader's Cooperative for the journey to this new uncharted territory will benefit from proven expertise and extensive resources which will become immediately available to all members of participating communities. A program unique to each community will be created to produce tangible outcomes in the short-term, celebrating with social recognition all those who contribute. Everyone in the community will be invited to participate.

New broadband satellite solutions provide an immediate cost-effective, if perhaps short-term, Internet solution. Using new satellite and wireless solutions, international rural communities will soon be on an equal competitive level with Idaho's communities. Satellite systems can serve to create the aggregate demand necessary to attract long-term fiber optic broadband solutions. Wireless systems can deliver faster, cheaper access than existing copper wire infrastructure.

This is one of those rare opportunities to stand up and do what needs to be done. Take notice: history is being made here and spirited action may prove to be decisive regarding your community's brighter future.

Additional reading:

The New Goldrush; Mining Raw Human Potential Using Free Web Tools

Part One: <http://lone-eagles.com/goldrush.htm>

Part Two: <http://lone-eagles.com/mining.htm>

The War Against Ignorance

<http://lone-eagles.com/hope.htm>

See Section Four of this guide for additional related resources and articles.

SECTION TWO - INTERNET LEARNING STYLES AND READINESS SKILLS

A Step-by-Step Guide to Self-Empowerment

This section is structured around four successive readiness skills for using the Internet. It is a logical, practical approach to self-empowerment and is supported by self-directed learning resources from a wide variety of Internet sources. These skills are related to the four historical firsts and are presented as four levels in the following section lessons. We know we all learn best through direct hands-on exploration, and the numerous examples and suggested web sites listed are designed to give you plenty of opportunities to explore. **Have Fun!**

The Internet Style of Learning

<http://lone-eagles.com/islessay.htm>

By Robert Sibley (sibley@advanced.org) and Frank Odasz

Getting a handle on what the Internet Style of learning (ISL) entails is a more difficult task than it might at first appear. This is because it is such a new and dynamic phenomenon. Internet learners are literally redefining ISL every day as they explore new technologies and new ways to use and combine technological and pedagogical approaches. One way to understand the Internet Style of Learning is to examine the new resources and capabilities that the Internet provides and then to explore how these capabilities are and might be used to change the way we 'do' teaching and learning.

Capabilities

1. Access to Vast Information Resources

The most widely known fact about the Internet is that through it you have access to all kinds of information, from up-to-the-minute weather reports to copies of the Dead Sea Scrolls. If it exists, you can probably find something about it on the Internet, and you may find it fast.

2. Technology-Based Information Processing

That's a mouthful, but think of it as taking word processing and expanding it to all forms of information from numbers to images, to sounds to every conceivable combination of these, and from a single file located on your hard drive or floppy to all the information in every computer that can be connected to the Internet anywhere in the world. With all that information out there, you need powerful tools to help you find and make use of the small fraction that interests you. Luckily, the technology is doing a fine job of keeping pace. Web-based search engines and directories help you

find your needle in that very big haystack. Once you find what you are looking for, your Web browser goes to the electronic address and brings it to your computer and displays it for you. If the information is what you want, you can copy it and paste it into another software application on your computer, like a word processor, spreadsheet or database, and analyze and manipulate it there in many ways. For example, if you have imported columns of data into a spreadsheet, you can compare it with other data and create a chart to visualize it graphically. You can import large amounts of text into a word processor and search through it electronically for a word or phrase, and find and export to another document those few sections that are relevant to your interest. Image, sound, and video processing software provide equally as powerful tools in those media. And the power and ease of use of these technologies increase constantly.

3. Collaboration

Internet email may be the most underrated communication and collaboration tool in history. It is easy to use, extremely powerful, available world wide and usually very inexpensive. Information and documents can be transferred, commented on, edited, analyzed, manipulated, etc., by one or any number of people, any number of times, in truly global collaboration. And email is just the beginning.

4. Internet Publishing

The ease, both in terms of work and of cost, with which information can be published, in a growing number of formats and media over the Internet, especially the WWW, is astonishing. What is less well understood, is the publishers' ability to target his or her audience. A publisher (any one who can create a Web page and access a computer to 'host' it) has the ability to broadcast the address (URL) of his or her site by registering it with all the search engines and promoting it on or off the Net, or he or she can distribute it to a selected audience, perhaps another school or class, or just one other person. In addition, the growing interactive nature of many sites means that the "audience" can also be "participants." Put in an historical perspective, these are awesome publishing powers, and they are the same for text, images, sound, animation, video and any combination of these. And, at the current rate of change, who knows what additional capabilities we will see next week or next month.

5. Realities and Possibilities

It is the process of using and combining these capabilities in powerful and innovative ways that makes Internet style learning so exciting, for all learners. This is still largely uncharted territory. It is what learners do with these capabilities, not software companies or curriculum designers or boards of education that will determine the ultimate success of Internet Style of Learning (ISL) in our schools and lives. While the technology is exciting and a strong motivating force for learners, the fundamental characteristic of Internet style learning is that the technology does the grunt work; it provides the capabilities for learners to cut to the chase and engage in high level, intellectually challenging learning. What follows is a very short list of some of the ways that learners are using these capabilities to transform the very

nature of teaching and learning. But I must stress that we have only scratched the surface of ISL potential.

6. Inquiry-Based, Global Research

Internet search engines allow learners the ability to perform research using global resources. An educator can solicit topics of interest for learners to research and helps learners develop successful search strategies by giving examples and focusing on two or three different search tools.

7. Resource-Sharing and Collaboration

The Internet allows learners many options to access expertise and to collaborate with peers. For example, single classroom or multi-classroom collaborative projects can be text-based (non-web such as email and listservs) OR web-based such as hypernews and web-conferencing. Web pages can be edited or contributed to as text documents and uploaded from almost anywhere. Email, Listservs, Newsgroups, etc., also allow access to experts and expertise in almost any field. In addition, individuals and small groups can combine and leverage the knowledge and skills of each member to create deeper and richer understandings and works. ThinkQuest Entries are prime models of this kind of collaboration.

8. Teacher as Facilitator

Because the Internet can provide learners with unlimited amounts of highly specific information, the role of the teacher shifts from being the primary content provider to that of facilitator of the process by which learners access and build their own knowledge. It quickly becomes apparent that learners will soon collect specific knowledge beyond the expertise of the teacher, which is a truly wonderful outcome.

9. Student: From Consumer to Producer

Youth are lead change agents these days due to their attraction to, and proficiency with, information technology. Since students, particularly those with home Internet access, have far more time for exploring the Internet than teachers do, individualizing their self-directed learning activities makes good sense. As students build their own knowledge, particularly with others in small groups, they can learn how to share it by posting resources on their own content-related web pages and through a growing number of interactive and collaborative software tools and multimedia options.

10. Taking Learning Beyond the Classroom

Distance learning and home-based learning are both alternatives and additions to classroom learning. In Internet style learning the walls of the classroom expand to encompass the world in every imaginable way. Information, experts, collaborators, and teachers are available to you from wherever you are, and vice versa. This encourages students to become self-sufficient and self-directed learners, to recognize and create value from raw information, to develop collaborative, time management, and project management skills (to name just a few) that will prepare them for the great challenges of adult life in the 21st Century.

Four Fundamental Historical Firsts

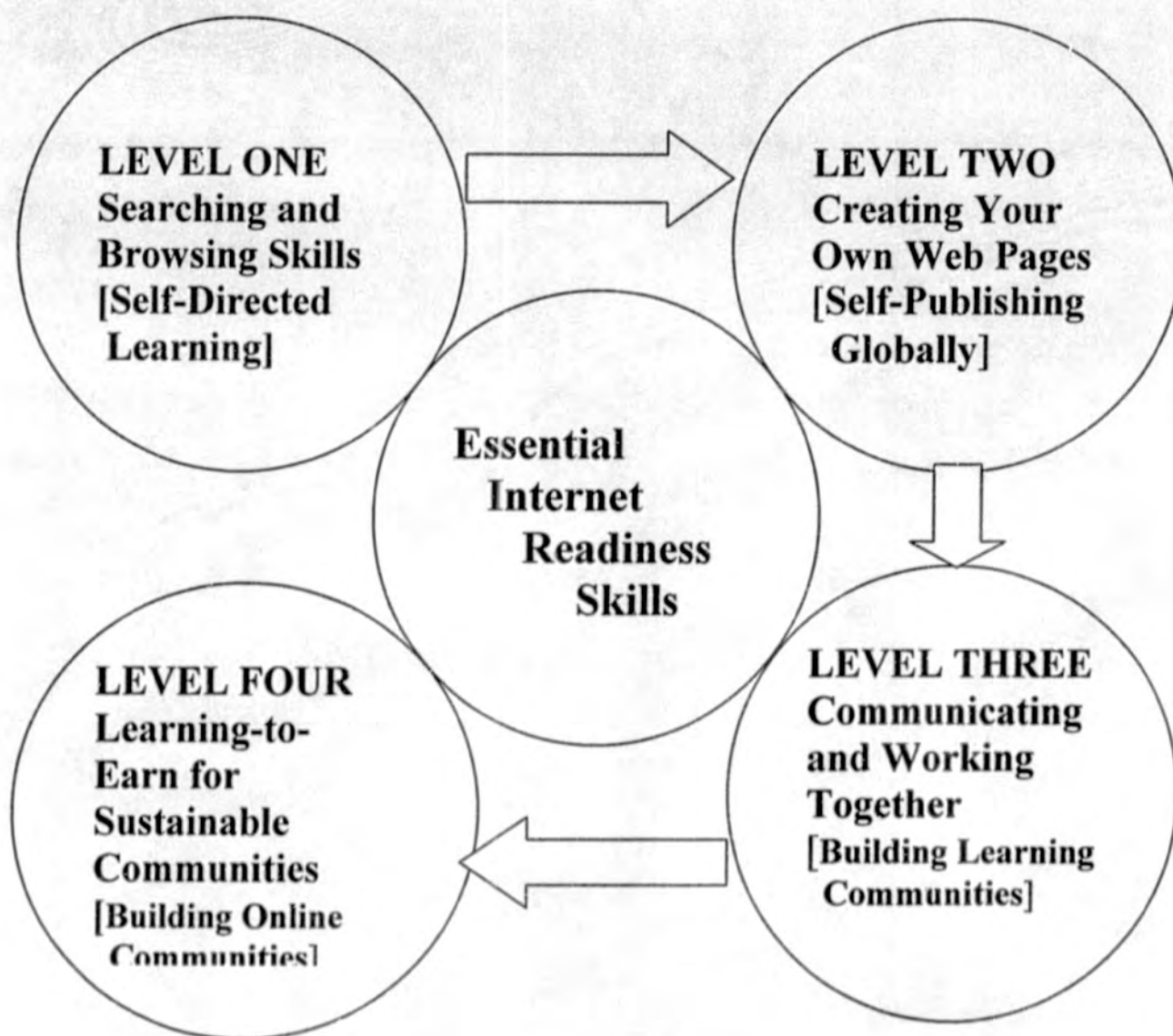
The Internet brings individuals and communities four indisputably important major historical firsts:

1. **Fingertip access to the world's knowledge base;** the ability to find specific information within seconds from worldwide sources. **Searching and browsing skills allow self-empowerment through self-directed, just-in-time, inquiry-based learning.**
2. **Inexpensive global self-publishing (creating web pages) for both individuals and communities;** sharing creative works and resources with an authentic peer audience through the ability to create web pages using multimedia on a shoestring budget on equal par with the world's largest universities, corporations, and governments. **This allows for every story to be told and dramatically facilitates the sharing of information.**
3. **The ability to communicate and work together as individuals without restraint due to distance or time,** either privately one-to-one or publicly involving whole communities, bringing people together around purposeful causes to take organized action. **The Internet increases the quantity and quality of human relationships.**
4. **Learning-to-earn for sustainable communities. The ability to leverage collaborative capacity** to enhance both the social and economic value of a community. Never in human history has the potential for meeting everyone's needs and creating sustainable rural communities ever been greater, but the vision and commitment for purposeful sharing must be present in order to realize the potential.

"We're limited only by our imaginations."

Albert Einstein

Four Essential Internet Readiness Skills



Level One:

Searching and Browsing Skills

(The Power of a Self-Directed Learner)

CONTEXT: It is fast becoming an essential skill to be able to find information upon a topic, reliably, competently, and at a moment's notice. Never before in human history have learners had the fingertip access to the global knowledge that they have today. Powerful software packages on the Internet generally referred to as search engines can search millions of resources for very specific information in seconds and are very easy to learn and use.

Minutes spent learning search engines will save hours, even weeks, of time. Learning effective techniques for use of search engines is one of the most important skills we can learn.

All software today includes thorough help guides, and since software keeps changing and improving, the skill of being able to teach oneself new software on an ongoing basis using these help guides is fundamentally important. One can observe youth being very aware of the usefulness of these help guides while many adults are often unaware of even their existence.

"Knowledge is of two kinds: we know a subject ourselves, or we know where to find information upon it."

--Samuel Johnson 1709-1784

Lesson Goals

Keep the following general goals in mind as you work through hands-on exploration of the activities and resources presented in this lesson. A selection of the web resources referenced in this lesson is printed in the pages following the text of the lesson and elsewhere in this guide.

- **Learn to Find What You Need From Anywhere, Anytime**
- **Learn to Create Web Tours to Benefit Your Community**
- **Learn to Become a Self-Directed Internet Learner**

Suggested Hands-on Learning Opportunities

1. **Email to your class listserv at least three quality searching tip/tricks**, not included in your handbook or this lesson, that you have learned using the help buttons of search engines of your own choice. Include a short web tour with at least six web addresses on a particular topic of interest and share it on the class listserv as a text message or a web address - if you know how to post pages on the web. If you don't know how to post web pages, you'll learn how in the next lesson. Please don't send file attachments to the listserv.
2. **Send your instructor a one-page write-up** verifying you've reviewed all presented resources in this lesson. Verify you've mastered all skills referenced in both the Browsing and Searching Checklists presented in this lesson.

The Vision

Searching skills are essential to Ecommerce - because to keep your knowledge current you must have highly developed self-directed Internet learning skills. You'll need to monitor your competition and be alert to emerging new Ecommerce success models. By learning a few simple tricks you can quickly learn to retrieve highly specific information from the world's knowledge base. Your competition has all this at their fingertips, too. Your competitive edge depends on how well you learn to take advantage of this profound capability.

Searching and Browsing Basics

A. Master Web-Browsing and Cut-and-Paste Essential Skills

Select the "**Checklist Activity: Web-Browsing and Cut-and-Paste Basics**" <http://lone-eagles.com/browse.htm> from the online Internet Guide's table of contents, <http://lone-eagles.com/guide.htm> and verify your mastery of each task on the checklist. This checklist is not browser specific. Please feel free to ask questions of your mentor.

Cut-and-Paste Skills: Make sure you can use cut and paste to move text and web addresses from any web page to any word processor. PC users: Select the Windows help button from the Start Menu, click on "Index" which is the help search engine, and type "cut-and-paste" (without the quotes). Mac users: do the same using the Mac help system.

Note: To use cut-and-paste you'd first open the wordprocessor of your choice, and then you will need to jump between your browser and the wordprocessor using the Windows taskbar or the Macintosh "finder" each time you move a URL or block of text. If you don't know how to jump between two open applications, consult your Windows or Macintosh help menu on "Using or Running Programs." (Ask questions if you need help, it is easy!)

B. Master Searching Skills

Select the "**Checklist Activity: Internet Searching Basics**" <http://lone-eagles.com/search.htm> from the online Internet Guide's table of contents <http://lone-eagles.com/guide.htm> and verify your mastery of each task on the checklist.

Review carefully the activity handout - Tips on Searching the Internet <http://lone-eagles.com/search3.htm> - a portion of which is listed below, on the basics of using AND, OR and NOT with keywords, and then expand your knowledge of searching tricks (syntax) by exploring the help buttons on your choice of search engine. (Altavista is recommended: <http://altavista.digital.com>)

Searching Basics: The more keywords you use, using AND, OR, and NOT, ideally the fewer, more specific resources will be retrieved. Using AND provides fewer resources (Memory Tag: "AND is CANNED.") Using OR provides more resources (Memory Tag: "OR is MORE.")

Putting quotes around a specific phrase will return only websites containing that specific phrase. Ex: "ecommerce curriculum" or "virtual incubators"

Truncation characters such as * or ? will allow for flexibility with words that may have multiple suffixes: EX: email AND tutorial* will find sites with the words

tutorial and tutorials. Edu* will return sites with educators, educational, education, etc.

Search engines are NOT created equal; while often similar, they search different information using different syntax and you're advised to refer to the help tips on the search engine of your choice to learn how to use it most effectively.

C. Explore Extensive Resources on Searching Skills

Go to Search Engine Watch <http://www.searchenginewatch.com> and review the resources with emphasis on :

First Select: Web Searching Tips, then Search Engine Tutorials, then Explore: From the main page select Search Engine Listings and explore.

Noodle around at <http://google.com>, <http://aj.com>, and <http://dogpile.com> - just to see what you can learn from these very popular searching sites.

TIP: Making mistakes is an excellent way to learn computers and Internet. Be Bold! Have Fun!

D. Review Topical Web Tours

Fifteen Topical Web Tours <http://lone-eagles.com/webtours.htm>

E. Create Your Own Web Tours

Learn to Create Your Own Web Tours <http://lone-eagles.com/owntours.htm> Posting free quality web tours advertises your expertise while benefiting others. Build your reputation as an able Internet searcher by saving your community the time and effort to find highest value resources. Your annotations for each resource will prove to be the most important part of your web tours. Be succinct when pointing out the best sections to review for each presented resource.

F. Find Free Online Tutorials, Lessons, and Courses on Nearly Any Topic

To find tutorials on email, search for email AND tutorial* The * is a truncation character which means items will be retrieved which have anything that begins with the core prefix before the * For example: tutorial and tutorials, etc. Substitute any word for email and you'll be surprised on what you'll find. Try substituting the words lesson and/or course for the word tutorial. **Experiment with logical variations.**

To look for genealogy tutorials. Try this - genealogy AND tutorial*
Try again substituting tutorial* with class*, then course*, then lesson* Learning advanced searching allows you to do all of these at once -

Try genealogy AND (lesson* OR tutorial* OR course* OR class*)

Checklist Activity: Internet Searching Basics

You might like to use the searching tutorials given at the end of this activity page, and/or those listed in the enclosed resources. Select from the search tutorials section of <http://www.searchenginewatch.com>.

____ I CAN USE MY BROWSER'S SEARCH BUTTON

Click on the SEARCH or Netsearch button at the top of your browser. Review the entire web page noting multiple search engines are listed in addition to the one which presents a white bar for entering your keywords related to your search topic.

____ I CAN GO TO SPECIFIC SEARCH ENGINES

In the white bar of your browser, (not the bar of any search engine,) enter <http://www.altavista.digital.com> and press Enter or Return. You should see Altavista's search engine appear on the screen. Don't be fooled by advertising banners with white bars attempting to mimic search engines.

____ I CAN SEARCH USING SINGLE KEYWORDS

In the Altavista white bar near the middle of your screen enter a single word on a topic of interest to you, such as "dinosaurs" and either click the "Search" button to the right of, or below the white bar, or just press "Enter/Return" key. Within a few seconds the results of your search will appear, but you may not see them until you scroll down past the top portion of the page.

____ I CAN SEARCH USING MULTIPLE KEYWORDS

Click the BACK button to return to your original search screen. Change your search to "dinosaurs AND birds" and search again. Notice the number of pages retrieved is less. The more key words you use, the more specific resources you'll retrieve. On the other hand, using 'dinosaurs OR birds' will retrieve many MORE pages than using dinosaurs alone. (Memory trick: "OR IS MORE.")

I KNOW WHERE TO FIND TIPS ON EFFECTIVE SEARCH METHODS

Examine the main search engine screen for buttons labeled "HELP" "TIPS" or "Advanced Search" and you'll find short, helpful suggestions on how to conduct more targeted searches. Tutorials on searching are available at <http://www.searchenginewatch.com> (Select Web Searching Tips!)

I UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SEARCH DIRECTORIES AND SEARCH ENGINES

Read about the differences at:
<http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/mystery/mystery1.html>

I CAN TRANSLATE ANY ENGLISH LANGUAGE WEB PAGE INTO FIVE DIFFERENT LANGUAGES

Go to <http://babelfish.altavista.digital.com> and enter a web address for the web page to be translated into the white box. Select the language desired. Click on the help button for more tips. NOTE: Any search performed at <http://altavista.digital.com> will have a translate hotlink at the end of each retrieved resource which will produce the same translation box as above.

For more language translation resources search for "**language translation**" as many new resources are appearing regularly!!! Many translation sites are listed in the Foreign Language Web Tour listed at <http://lone-eagles.com/webtours.htm>.

Great Searching Tutorials

- **Search Engine Watch**
<http://www.searchenginewatch.com>
The best source for learning about searching. Select Web Searching Tips.
- **Understanding and Comparing Web Search Tools**
<http://www.hamline.edu/library/bush/handouts/comparisons.html>
A nice collection of articles and guides for beginners.
- **The Difference Between Search Engines and Search Directories**
<http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/mystery/mystery1.html>
Here's something you need to learn.

Great Search Engines to Explore

- **Ask Jeeves**
www.askjeeves.com
Just type in a question and it does the rest.
- **Dogpile.com**
www.dogpile.com
A strong favorite of educators, searches many search engines at once.
- **Metacrawler**
www.metacrawler.com
Searches many at once, one of the first meta-search engines.
- **Northernlight.com**
www.northernlight.com
Unique organizing features to simplify your searching.
- **Google.com**
www.google.com
This search engine is fast, free of ads, and lists the most popular hits at the top.
- **AltaVista**
<http://www.altavista.digital.com> For TRANSLATION TO/FROM FIVE LANGUAGES click on the translate button found at the end of each retrieved resources or SEE: <http://babelfish.altavista.digital.com> and select the help button for easy instructions!
- **Beaucoup.com**
<http://beaucoup.com>
2,200+ search engines to choose from.

Checklist Activity: Web-Browsing and "Cut-and-Paste" Basics

The following browser basics are common to all browsers. Refer to the "HELP" buttons on your particular browser, or someone (perhaps a student) who is familiar with your browser. You may wish to utilize some of the tutorials on browsing listed in this handbook's hands-on resources.

_____ I CAN CONNECT TO ANY WEB ADDRESS

(Enter a web address to connect to a web site.)

Click on the long white bar nearest the top of the screen. If existing text in this bar becomes highlighted just type the web address for the site you want to visit and press the Enter or Return key. Otherwise, click on the white bar and notice the black vertical line (cursor) and delete the existing address, replacing it with the one you want. Press the return or enter key to connect to that web site. Most browsers have a little picture that spins or has comets flying, indicating you're connecting to a web site. If this movement stops, repeat the above and be careful not to give the computer more commands than it can handle at one time.

Anything you point to which changes the arrow cursor to a little hand with a pointing finger is called a hyperlink. Click to connect to the resource the hyperlink represents.

_____ I CAN GO BACK TO PREVIOUS PAGE

Click on the BACK button at the upper left of the screen to return to last page viewed.

_____ GO BACK TO VIEW WHERE YOU'VE BEEN

Point to the word "GO" at the top of the screen and hold down the left mouse button, (for Macs use the single button,) and drag down to the web location to which you'd like to return.

I CAN SCROLL BOTH VERTICALLY AND HORIZONTALLY

Point to the vertical bar to the right of the web page and click on the little black vertical arrow at the top which points up, and then on the arrow at the bottom of the scroll bar which points down. The horizontal scroll bar at the bottom works the same way. If you click on the web page, you can also use the keyboard arrow keys.

I CAN PRINT ANY WEB PAGE

To print any web page click on the print button at the top of the screen or select the Print option from the "File" pull-down menu.

I CAN GET TO THE ONLINE HELP RESOURCES AND TUTORIALS

Click on the HELP button and experiment with both the Index and Contents options. Type "browsing" in the white bar of the Index option to see how easily it provides you with tips. Scan down the "Contents" listing to appreciate all the options available.

I CAN USE CUT AND PASTE WITH TEXT

Open a new document with any word-processing program and return to the browser. Hold the left or single mouse button down and drag it across text from any web page until the text is highlighted. From the "Edit" pull-down menu at the top of the screen select "COPY" (while the text is still highlighted.) Return to your word-processing document and select from the "Edit" menu the "PASTE" option. Repeat the process until you are comfortable with the steps.

I CAN SAVE ANY IMAGE OR WEB PAGE

Point to any image, or animation, on any web page and:

FOR PC'S: Hold down the RIGHT button, a menu will appear, select "Save Image As," and save this image wherever you like. You can then use the "Insert Image" of your word-processing or graphics programs to use the image with your own files. Be aware of copyright issues. To save a web page select File/Save, only the text will be saved.

FOR MAC'S: Hold down the single mouse button, a menu will appear, select "Save Image As," and save the image. Note you can "Copy this image" which allows you to "PASTE" it in any document. Be aware of copyright issues. To save a web page select File/Save, only the text will be saved.

Master Web Browsing

Learn the basics for using a web browser to access, print, and save web pages, using the Checklist Activity on the next page or by exploring the tutorials below.

- **From the Cyber Playground**
<http://www.edu-cyberpg.com>
they offer a great browsing tutorial at
http://www.edu-cyberpg.com/Read_This_First.html
A great example of easy step-by-step instruction.
- **WebTeacher Tutorials:**
<http://www.webteacher.org/>
A very complete collection of short tutorials.
- **Learn-the-Net tutorials**
<http://www.learnthenet.com>
A complementary second collection of great, short tutorials.
- **Polaris Internet Tutorials**
<http://www.provide.net/~bfield/polaris/index.html>
To be sure you find what you need, here's one last collection.

Creating Your Own Web Tours

It is easy to create your own web tours on any topic using search engines. Here's how. Since most word processors allow you to save any page as a web page, you just need to type in a list of web addresses and save the list "as html" to create a web page!

You'd first go to a good search engine like <http://askjeeves.com> and would enter the words for whatever you're seeking like "Native American." If you include the quotes, it will retrieve only web sites with the exact phrase "Native American." Without the quotes, all pages with the word "Native" and all pages with the word "American," will also be retrieved, which is not what you want. The more specific the phrases you put in quotes, the more specific your results will be! If you add "AND storytelling" you'll get Native American storytelling resources, and if you add "AND coyote" you'll get a listing of coyote stories! Try it!

Let's say you want to create a listing of tutorials on learning search engines. You can enter "search engine AND tutorial*" as your search phrase to get a listing of only search engine tutorials. The * at the end of the word "tutorial" means it will retrieve pages with any letters attached to the word "tutorial," such as "tutorials." Many similar, and easy, ways of making your searches more specific are found by clicking on the HELP buttons present in all search engines. Take a few minutes to learn them by experimenting, and you'll save hours of time! Use this method to find tutorials on anything you want to learn. Be sure to try this!

One Big Secret for Saving Lots of Time!

Once you find a site that matches the topic of your search, one of the first things to check out is the listing of "**other links**". You'll find that the better sites list dozens of similar sites, which will save you lots of time by allowing you to collect these listings rather than wasting time attempting to collect individual links.

Use "**cut-and-paste**" to copy the web addresses of these listings quickly to your own documents or web pages. Sites that collect the best links on a specific topic are often called "**portals**." If you create a list of topic-specific portal sites, you'll save yourself and others great amounts of time finding the best of the best. Many portal sites keep their listings current, so you won't have to! You'll find that the best portal sites are usually the most frequently listed sites in most listings of "other links."

At <http://www.tramline.com> you can fill in the blanks to create your own web tour which will be instantly posted on the web for you!

Develop your self-directed learning skills by exploring the following resources.

Quick Web Tours

Spend just three minutes at each site to appreciate the volume and quality of what's available, and then return to your favorite sites later for more in-depth exploration. Here are 30-minute mini-tours of the best resources on key topics. The most exceptional links will be nearer the top of the listing. You'll find these Web Tours at <http://lone-eagles.com/webtours.htm>

- **Must-See Fun Web Tour**
<http://lone-eagles.com/webtour1.htm>
- **Personal and Family Health Care Web Tour**
<http://lone-eagles.com/webtour2.htm>
- **Parenting and Child Safety Web Tour**
<http://lone-eagles.com/webtour3.htm>
- **Kid's Web Tour**
<http://lone-eagles.com/webtour4.htm>
- **Student Research Tools Web Tour**
<http://lone-eagles.com/webtour5.htm>
- **Preschool and Primary Web Tour**
<http://lone-eagles.com/webtour6.htm>
- **Self-Directed Learning and Adult Literacy Web Tour**
<http://lone-eagles.com/webtour7.htm>
- **General Educational Web Tour**
<http://lone-eagles.com/webtour8.htm>

K-100 Topical Web Tours

- **Math Web Tour**
<http://lone-eagles.com/webtour9.htm>
- **Science Web Tour**
<http://lone-eagles.com/webtour10.htm>
- **English Web Tour**
<http://lone-eagles.com/webtour11.htm>
- **Arts Web Tour**
<http://lone-eagles.com/webtour12.htm>

- **Foreign Language Web Tour**
<http://lone-eagles.com/webtour13.htm>
- **Social Studies Web Tour**
<http://lone-eagles.com/webtour14.htm>
- **Internet History Web Tour**
<http://lone-eagles.com/webtour15.htm>
- **Special Education Web Tour**
<http://lone-eagles.com/virginia.htm>
- **Character Education Web Tour**
<http://lone-eagles.com/chared.htm>
- **K-100 BEST Curriculum Resources**
<http://lone-eagles.com/curric.htm>

Self-Directed Learning Resources

<http://lone-eagles.com/webtour7.htm>

- **Elearners.com**
<http://elearners.com>
Extensive links to hundreds of free tutorials and courses.
Elearners Directory of online courses <http://elearners.com/gna/courses.htm>
- **Thirddage**
<http://www.thirddage.com>
Specifically for seniors, formerly known as Seniornet, offers free online courses. Wonderful resources!
- **Learn2**
<http://learn2.com> Free and commercial learning resources for everyday life as well as business elearning solutions.
- **Cyber Playground's Literacy Resources**
http://www.edu-cyberpg.com/Literacy/Home_Literacy.html
Exceptional quality with a touch of humor. Play to learn.
- **Ehow.com**
<http://www.ehow.com>
Topical directory for how-to information, a classic resource for finding car insurance, real estate, and much more.
- **How Stuff Works**
<http://www.howstuffworks.com>
Another topical directory for how-to information.

- **Free-Ed.Net**
<http://www.free-ed.net/catalog>
Dozens of free courses.
- **Beginner's Technical Tutorials**
<http://www.beginners.co.uk>
A large selection of free online tutorials and 300 fee-based online courses.
- **Help2Go.com**
<http://Help2Go.com>
Free computer advice and tutorials.
- **FreeTutorials.com**
<http://freetutorials.com> Free tutorials in seven major categories.
- **ZDNet.com**
<http://zdnet.com>
Shopping, investments, topical resources with general technical orientation.
Here's their links to How-To and Expert help resources.
<http://www.zdnet.com/zdhelp>
- **Expertcity**
<http://expertcity.com>
A human behind every click, browse experts by topic.
- **Rhode Island Literacy Resources**
http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Sweaver_Center/Literacy_Resources
Click on "Links/Resources" for an exceptional listing of literacy resources.
- **Adult Literacy Resource Institute**
<http://www.alri.org/integratech.html>
Extensive resource listings from David J. Rosen, Director of the Adult Literacy Resource Institute in Greater Boston.
- **Western/Pacific Literacy Network LINC**
<http://literacynet.org/lincs>
This adult literacy resource site provides an interactive structure for communication, educational materials, and sharing of literacy information.
- **Literacy Link**
<http://www.pbs.org/literacy> A major resource from the folks at PBS.
- **The National Adult Literacy Database Inc. (NALD)** from Canada
<http://www.nald.ca> An intriguing database "borrowed" from the north.

- **DIAL: Distance Instruction for Adult Learners**
<http://dialnsa.edu>
The New School's Distance Instruction for Adult Learners (DIAL) program.
- **Federal Office of Vocational and Adult Education**
<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OVAE>
Funding for Community Technology Centers
- **Workers.gov**
<http://www.workers.gov>
Extensives resources for the transition from welfare to work.
- **Listservs of Interest for Adult Education Practitioners**
<http://www.philaliteracy.org/initiatives/listserv.html>

For more on online learning sources see the listing at the end of the Mentoring Resources <http://lone-eagles.com/mentor.htm>.

Free Learning and Other Freebies Web Tour

<http://lone-eagles.com/freebies.htm>

- **Free Educational Resources**
<http://www.all-4-free.com/educational.html>
- **Free-Ed.Net**
<http://Free-Ed.Net/catalog.htm>
Dozens of free courses.
- **Freeskills.com**
<http://Freeskills.com>
A large selection of free online technical training courses
- **FreeTutorials.com**
<http://freetutorials.com>
Free tutorials in seven major categories from applications to web skills.
- **Freeshop.com**
<http://www.freeshop.com>
An amazing offering of free web tools and freebies of all kinds.
- **The Free Site**
<http://thefreesite.com>
Yahoo-style directory of freebies with listserv for updates.
- **Want Free** <http://wantfree.com>
6,200 links to freebies.
- **A listing of 15 additional freebie sites**
http://www.thefreesite.com/Other_Freebie_Sites

Quickstart Web-Browsing Awareness Activities

Regardless of your current skill level with the Internet, you're likely to find the enclosed self-directed hands-on activities helpful.

- ACTIVITY:** Use the **Browsing Basics Checklist** to master web browsing <http://lone-eagles.com/browsing.htm>.
- ACTIVITY:** Explore "Gearing Up With Free Web Tools!" <http://lone-eagles.com/curr tour.htm> and get your own free email account if you don't already have one!
- ACTIVITY:** Explore the enclosed hands-on "Quick Web Tours" <http://lone-eagles.com/webtours.htm> which interest you most, to get a taste of the best of the best!
- ACTIVITY:** Use the following **Searching Basics Checklist** to master Internet searching skills! <http://lone-eagles.com/search.htm>
- ACTIVITY:** Practice translating Web pages into different languages to see how easy it is! Details are in the Searching Basics Checklist! <http://lone-eagles.com/search.htm>
- ACTIVITY:** Review the Teachers' Tools Web Tour <http://lone-eagles.com/teacherstools.htm>
- ACTIVITY:** Review the web-based curriculum created by educators during the online course "Making the Best Use of Internet for K12 Instruction" <http://lone-eagles.com/teachercreated.htm>

Level Two:

Creating Your Own Web Pages

(The Power of Self-Publishing Globally)

CONTEXT: Never before in history has it been possible for any individual, group, or community to self-publish worldwide on par with the world's greatest governments, universities, and corporations. The ease of authoring web pages and the increasing variety of multimedia capabilities create the opportunity for anyone, of any age, to make a worldwide impact through sharing their accumulated knowledge.

By following simple instructions and literally filling in the blanks, many web sites let you create and post your own personal web pages, online courses, online businesses, and much more.

You should be aware that the number of free web-authoring sites is increasing, with innovative new capabilities that make it easier and easier for you to create more and more powerful web sites with less and less time and effort. The activities presented below begin with very easy first experiences, create fun web pages, and offer you opportunities to build your skills, one step at a time.

Lesson Goals

Keep the following general goals in mind as you work through hands-on exploration of the activities and resources presented in this lesson. A selection of the web resources referenced in this lesson is printed in the pages following the text of the lesson and elsewhere in this guide.

- **Learn How to Create Web Pages Using WYSIWG web editors (easiest)**
- **Review a Few of the Best Tutorials for Web Authoring**
- **Review Extensive Web Authoring Resources**

Suggested Hands-on Learning Opportunities

1. **Go to <http://www.bluemountain.com> and design and send a musical animated greeting card** to yourself via email. This demonstrates how easy multimedia self-publishing can be. (Optional if you've done this before.)
2. **Create a resume web page** using Netscape Composer (or other web authoring software on your computer) with text, graphics, and animations you've either created or saved from the web, and hyperlinks to at least six quality resources of your choice. Use an image as background. Note that there is a tutorial in the Help menu for Netscape Communicator/Composer with step-by-step instructions. In your handbook is a shortened version of this tutorial "Creating a Web Page with Netscape Communicator" <http://lone-eagles.com/netscape.htm>.
3. **Email Your Instructor** verifying you can post a web page with text, images, and hyperlinks. Send a web address with a simple first web page with a simple biography and listing of your current computer, Internet, and mentoring skills and experience. Or, send your web page as a file attachment via email - to the instructor, but not to the class listserv. Include an evaluation of how this lesson went for you.

If you are having problems - don't panic. There are likely to be some little things you still need to learn which can be resolved by sitting down with someone locally, or patiently asking questions via email.

The Vision

Creating web pages can be very easy, particularly when using free online services. You will need to develop your hands-on understanding of how easy this can be and the various ways you can create a web page, particularly for Ecommerce. Self-publishing globally is a profoundly new capability and understanding thoroughly the many available features and the potential applications is essential to any Ecommerce effort.

Creating Your Own Web Pages

A. An Easy Way to Create Web Pages

The WYSIWG, (What You See Is What You Get,) method of web authoring is very much the same as using a word processor. What you create on the screen will be how the final web page will look. **Most modern wordprocessors allow you to save any document as a web page (Select File/Save As HTML.)**

If you don't already have web authoring software available, install Netscape Communicator and Netscape Composer on your computer. You might prefer to install Frontpage Express if you prefer to use Internet Explorer. (Optional if you already have a web authoring program.) Most modern word processors allow you to create web pages, too.

Netscape Communicator/Composer is recommended. Selecting the "New" and "Blank Page" options give you a clean slate upon which you can create your own web page using common desktop publishing and wordprocessing features. Selecting "Insert Graphic" and "Insert Link" options allow you to insert graphics, animations, and hyperlinks with great ease. **To view a web page with your browser that you've created on your computer, select "File/Open."**

TIP: Hyperlinks and animations won't function in Composer mode, but must be in Browser mode to work properly. It can be confusing jumping between Composer to edit, and the Browser to view, but with practice, this will become much easier.

Create a web page using Netscape Composer (or other web authoring software on your computer) with text, graphics, and animations you've either created or saved from the web, and hyperlinks to at least six quality resources of your choice. Use an image as background. Note that there is a tutorial in the Help menu for Netscape Communicator/Composer with step-by-step instructions (select "content"). In your handbook is a shortened version of this tutorial "Creating a Web Page with Netscape Communicator" <http://lone-eagles.com/netscape.htm>

Another easy step-by-step tutorial for Netscape composer can be found at http://www.uncwow.org/classes/web_page_authoring/section_2a.php

B. The Most Flexible Method of Creating Web Pages (Optional HTML Coding Method)

HTML (Hyper Text Markup Language) is a method of creating web pages which requires only a wordprocessor. While the actual code of a web page can look scary, it is amazingly easy to learn.

You are welcome to skip this activity for the moment, but be aware you might find the need for light HTML editing in the future.

Using your browser with a web page loaded, select "View" and then "page source" or "document source" to see the HTML code which all browsers interpret to display web pages. Most people who learn the HTML method of creating web pages strongly prefer it because they have total control over the creative design process for web authoring. Those who use WYSIWG web authoring programs typically need to make changes in the HTML code when their program won't allow them to make changes they desire. **It can be very important to understand how to make minor HTML pages, but extensive HTML knowledge is generally not necessary.** See **Required Assignment #2** above for details on your short HTML assignment for this lesson.

To view a web page with your browser that you've created using HTML, select "File/Open" from your browser menu. Your browser can only view files with web page or image filename extensions such as .htm .html .jpg .gif etc.

Create a simple web page using the HTML activity "Creating a Resources Page using HTML" in your handbook using any wordprocessor and any web browser <http://lone-eagles.com/html.htm>. Take a serious look at a few of the great, easy, "HTML Tutorials" listed at <http://lone-eagles.com/webdev.htm>.

C. Without a Doubt, the Easiest Way to Create a Web Page

Use one of the many free services that allow you to simply fill in the blanks with your information and it automatically posts your web page for you. For greatest flexibility, however, you'll want to know how to create your own web pages independently.

Take a thorough look at some of the many great web authoring resource sites at <http://lone-eagles.com/curr tour.htm> and at <http://lone-eagles.com/webdev.htm>. Ecommerce free web sites are listed at <http://lone-eagles.com/entrelinks.htm>.

Review the tutorials for the Eight Multimedia Levels of Web-Based Instruction at <http://lone-eagles.com/media.htm>.

D. Posting Your Web Page(s) on the Internet

Typically, when you pay an Internet provider for an Internet account you receive an email address and space on their web server (which is connected to the Internet around the clock) for posting your own web pages anytime you like. Typically, once you get set up, you can update existing web pages or post new web pages very, very easily! Once you get properly set up, that is!

You will need to call your Internet provider and tell him or her what web authoring program(s) you have and ask how to get your web pages posted. There is information your provider must give you, such as where to send your web pages and the basic URL for your web pages. Have your provider talk you through the exact "set-up" steps or find someone who knows how to do this. With Netscape Composer, once you've entered in this location, you can post any web page you want by simply naming your web page and then clicking on the "Publish" button. Be persistent getting the help you're already paying for! **It is easy, once you're set up**

E. Starting Your Electronic Portfolio Resume

Begin a draft for your resume web page by listing your skills, software you've worked with, and other items. In Lesson 8 you'll tour many job-finding sites that offer free resume posting as well as tutorials on writing a quality resume. Monster.com is perhaps the best single site for a first review. You'll want to review many other resumes to gather ideas for how to make your resume as competitive as possible. Templates are commonly available, which allow you to save them and edit in your own information. Plan on building up your resume as you work through the lessons for this course.

Visit Mt. Edgecumbe HS and review their student electronic portfolios

<http://www.mehs.educ.state.ak.us> Note that the students have provided a tutorial and resources to help you create your own portfolios. (Click on Student Electronic Portfolios.) More at <http://www.electronicportfolios.com>.

F. Exploring Animation Libraries: Time for Fun

You've seen moving animations on web pages, but did you know you could easily save animations for use in your own web pages from copyright-free archives of thousands of animations!! **There are dozens of sites out there with thousands of web page images and clip art!** Other graphics and animations resources are listed at <http://lone-eagles.com/webdev.htm>. **You'll also find sites with web design suggestions,** and here's a new curriculum on web design for teens! <http://www.americaconnects.net/learn/learningdesign.pdf> Your students will love saving and inserting images and animations, as will you! It's easy!

Search for "animation AND directories" and explore the many animation directories! Search for 'clip art' and experiment with other search phrases related to web page images.

G. Conclusion

It is very important by the time you finish this lesson that you feel as comfortable creating simple web pages with text, images, and hyperlinks as you do using a word processor. These skills are fast becoming commonplace. It will be to your advantage to know how to post web pages at your own web site whenever necessary. This is very easy once you've had someone help you get set up, such as your Internet Service Provider.

Checklist

- _____ I know how to create a simple web page with text of any size, font, and color and save it to a dedicated folder on my computer.
- _____ I know how to include images, animations, and background images.
- _____ I know how to add hyperlinks to both external web pages and to the other web pages I've created.
- _____ I know that I should keep all images and associated web pages in the same folder on my computer when I'm first learning about web authoring.
- _____ I have learned how to post my web pages on my own web site, either through my own paid account with a local Internet Service Provider, or through one of the many free web-hosting services, easily and at any time.

Creating A Web Page Using Netscape Communicator

The following activity is written specifically for Netscape Communicator. Be sure to click on the Netscape HELP button and locate the "Composing and Editing Web Pages Tutorial."

1. **Start Netscape Communicator** and from the "File" pull-down menu select "NEW" and from the menu box that appears to the right select "Blank Page." A white blank web page will appear.
2. **ENTERING TEXT:** Enter "This is Your Name's Web Page." Highlight this text by holding down the mouse button and dragging the cursor across it. Change the size of this text by pointing to the black arrow to the right of the number 12 just above your text. Select the highest number available. Your text should appear much larger.
3. **CHANGE TEXT COLOR, FONT, AND STYLE:** Highlight your text again and from the "Format" pull-down menu select "Color." Click on a color you like. Your text should turn to that color once you've clicked off the text to remove the highlighting. From this same menu you can experiment with the Font and Style options for further changes in the appearance of the text.
4. **INSERT A HYPERLINK:** Position your cursor at the end of this line and press return twice to position the cursor below the text. Click on the "LINK" button which looks like a piece of chain located at the upper middle of the screen. Note pointing to a button and waiting 3 seconds will cause a label to appear revealing that button's function.

In the white bar at the top of the grey box that appears, enter "click here for the NBA" or any URL. This text will appear underlined in blue as a hyperlink. Next, click on the second white bar just below the top one and enter the web address this hyperlink should connect to "http://www.nba.com" Click on the "OK" button at the bottom of the screen.

5. **INSERT AN IMAGE:** If you've saved an image or have one you'd like to insert, click on the button that displays "Insert Image" when you point to it. It's white with three colored dots in it. Click on the "Browse" button to the upper right of the white bar and select the image you want. Click on the "OK" button at the bottom. Congrats on your first web page!

Easiest Web Page Authoring Resources

See the full listing at <http://lone-eagles.com/webdev.htm>

- **Listings of hundreds of free web page authoring sites**
<http://personalweb.about.com/internet/personalweb>
- **Homestead.com**
<http://homestead.com>
A great site for easily creating your own home page.
- **Yahoo's Geocities - Free Web Pages for any purpose!**
<http://geocities.yahoo.com/home>
Take the Geotour to see what's offered! You can return to edit your free web page, anytime. Tutorials available. Ad banners will appear on all free web pages.
- **Two Lycos Sites offering Free Web Pages**
<http://www.angelfire.com> <http://www.tripod.com>
- **Free Web-based Collaborative Tools - Mega-listing**
http://www.kmunity.net/Free_Tools/free_tools.html
Casey Hughes has done an outstanding job creating listings of free web site offers and free web tools related to schools, home-based businesses; free virtual offices, software, Ecommerce web sites and much more. While such links come and go, this is the best single listing yet found.

Advanced Web Authoring Resources

- **Bravenet.com**
<http://www.bravenet.com>
Top-rated free web tools for webmasters.
- **Broadcast.com**
<http://broadcast.com>
Excellent resources for web multimedia, from Yahoo.
- **CNET's Web Builder Site**
<http://www.cnet.com>
Lots of great web page building tools.
- **Freeshop.com**
<http://www.freeshop.com>
Select "computers and electronics" for many great free web-building resources! Many other freebies to explore.

Quickstart Web-Authoring Awareness Activities

ACTIVITY: Explore the easiest self-authoring feature on the web: **animated musical greeting cards** you can send via email: <http://www.bluemountain.com>

ACTIVITY: Use the following worksheets to **create web pages using both HTML and non-HTML methods.**

ACTIVITY: Explore the following web development resources for both beginning and advanced web authoring, also at <http://lone-eagles.com/webdev.htm>.

ACTIVITY: Explore the eight levels of web multimedia at <http://lone-eagles.com/media.htm>

ACTIVITY: Explore the curriculum authoring tools at <http://lone-eagles.com/currtrou.htm> and <http://lone-eagles.com/webdev.htm>

ACTIVITY: Explore the 5,000+ student-created web sites created for the International Thinkquest competition: <http://www.thinkquest.org/library>

ACTIVITY: Explore the 8 categories of K-12 student entries in the Cyberfair competition showcasing school and community synergies. <http://www.gsn.org>

ACTIVITY: Explore the Web Design Tutorial sites listed at the end of <http://lone-eagles.com/webdev.htm>

ACTIVITY: Learn to download a free software program and review the incredible free software resources at <http://www.tucows.com>

ACTIVITY: Create your own web page at <http://www.homestead.com> or <http://www.angelfire.com> to see how anyone can get a free trial web page created and posted on the web in minutes! Or choose from 700 similar sites at <http://personalweb.about.com/internet/personalweb>

ACTIVITY: Take five minutes to create your own free trial Ecommerce site at <http://www.homestead.com>

Gearing Up With Free Web Tools

<http://lone-eagles.com/currtour.htm>

First there was free email (www.hotmail.com,)

(All family members can have their own email account which can be accessed through any Internet connection. Dozens of similar sites now offer free email.)

then free animated musical greeting cards (www.bluemountain.com,)

(In only a couple minutes you can create a customized web page greeting card with animations and music. Then you can send the web address of your card via email to anyone you like! A fun way to create a first web page!)

then free (14 day free trial, then under \$5/month) web page hosting

(www.homestead.com) (Fill in the blanks to create your own web page, add your own digital photos, return anytime to make changes, give your own web address to anyone you like. Easy and free.)

then free private group conferencing (<http://groups.yahoo.com>)

(Web conferencing, photo and file sharing, and more, which you control for your own private groups.)

then free trials for online course authoring (www.ecollege.com)

(Anyone can teach anything to anyone, anywhere, anytime with the latest in online course authoring and course management tools.)

then free limited online business creation (www.bigstep.com,)

(Free business web pages. Free services for receiving credit card payments through your web page are available.)

and now we're hearing about PC's that come with Internet included for \$24.95/month (www.peoplepc.com.)

(Be sure you're in an area where local access to the Internet is available through this offer.)

What Next? Since many businesses have been successfully created by offering free services and selling advertising banners based on the number of people visiting their sites, you can expect to see more free sites with increasing levels of usefulness! These businesses will be competing to see who can bring you the most benefit with the least effort and time on your part. Because of the volatility of the Internet startup companies, you may see these services merge and disappear, as other new ones begin. **See the Free Learning and Freebies Web Tour at <http://lone-eagles.com/freebies.htm>.**

How will you and your community stay on top of the continuing wave of new, self-empowering free services? The real question is; **"How will we all learn to use the best free web tools to produce the most tangible benefits, on an ongoing basis? Free web tools are listed at <http://lone-eagles.com/webdev.htm>.**

Level Three:

Communicating and Working Together (The Power of Building Learning Communities Through Internet Collaboration)

CONTEXT: Communities can be defined as those people to which we give our time and talent. Communities are the sum of what we give to each other. There are givers and takers in all communities. Givers are those who give their precious time to build community and supportive relationships as a direct result of their actions. Sharing, with a balance of giving and taking, is a fundamental component of healthy communities.

"Communities of interest" can use the Internet to work closely together regardless of where the members live. The Internet brings new, convenient ways to contribute to others through mentoring, sharing, and teaching, all from the social safety of one's own home. There is no upward limit to how much help you can provide to others.

By posting resources to save others the time finding them, and posting self-directed learning opportunities to guide others to new skills and resources, potentially great numbers of people can benefit, all thanks to you.

There are over ten different collaborative tools on the Internet, with more being invented all the time. We are all challenged with learning how to make the best use of these collaborative tools for building learning communities.

Project-based learning (PBL) is an instructional model that relates directly to the use of collaborative tools for real-world problem-solving. A key trend in K-12 education is collaborative learning with a real-world problem-solving emphasis related to issues facing the local community.

Success in the information age will depend on an individual's character, values, and ability to work with others both face-to-face and when necessary using collaborative Internet tools.

The work model of the future is individuals working as "Lone Eagles" along with others on multiple short-term projects requiring highly developed group-work skills. Knowledge of which collaborative tools are best used for specific purposes is vitally important and can best be learned through direct hands-on experience. We all need to learn how to plan, implement, and evaluate projects that involve others and that depend upon the manipulation of digital information. **We need to learn how best to solve real world problems using the best tools at our fingertips.**