

Danville Head Start Program Benefits from Computer, Technology Donations



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The Crescent Drive Head Start Program Receives Refurbished Computers Donated through a Partnership of ConnectKentucky's Computers 4 Kids, Opportunity for Work and Learning (OWL), and the Blue Grass Community Action Partnership

Danville, KY—This week, the Crescent Drive Head Start program in Danville received computers as part of a kickoff event for a technology donation partnership.

“Having access to the computers will allow the teachers to have an opportunity to use digital instructional resources to improve kids’ math and science skills,” said Amy Collier, site supervisor for the Crescent Drive Head Start program during the kickoff on Tuesday, May 4.

Over the next few weeks, ConnectKentucky, Opportunity for Work and Learning (OWL), and the Blue Grass Community Action Partnership (BGCAP) will arrange the donation of refurbished computers to Head Start programs in Anderson, Boyle, Jessamine, Woodford, Mercer, and Franklin counties. This week’s event was the kickoff of the official partnership. For the computers donated this week, the refurbishing services took place at Pioneer Vocational Industrial Services in Danville.

“It is wonderful to have all the agencies come together to benefit the technology needs of the kids in the Head Start program,” said JoAnn Travis, director of Head Start for the six-county region. “We wish to thank all those responsible for making the technology resources available.”

Boyle County Judge-Executive Harold McKinney said Tuesday that providing access to technology “was a given in today’s world” and that he was “glad to see Boyle County organizations rally together to provide technology for area kids.”

McKinney even suggested that there may be other opportunities to donate old county computers for the refurbishing program.

Initially, the gently used computers were donated by the Kentucky Secretary of State’s office to ConnectKentucky’s Computers 4 Kids (C4K) program.

“As our office continues to increase our digital capacity, we soon outgrow some of the computer equipment that we have used over the years,” remarked Secretary of State Trey Grayson. “Although they no longer fit our needs, we are delighted to use these computers to brighten the futures of Kentucky’s most precious resources — our children. We have long said that our office does more with less, thanks to technology. We are humbled that our technological reach will extend beyond to the children of Kentucky via the C4K program.”

ConnectKentucky’s C4K program is an innovative project that brings together public and private partners to help disadvantaged children and their families join the information age. This is accomplished by placing computers in the hands of disadvantaged populations so that they have access to abundant technological resources and can perform basic computing functions.

Since its inception, C4K has delivered more than 3,200 Internet-ready computers to disadvantaged individuals, schools, libraries, community centers, and nonprofit after-school programs across the state.

“ConnectKentucky’s Computers 4 Kids program is proud to be a part of this new partnership and to help the Bluegrass Region’s Head Start programs,” said Rene True, executive director of ConnectKentucky. “As the partnership continues to receive donations, we are confident that technology use will expand throughout the region.”

Before going to the Head Start programs, the computers were made like new by personnel at Pioneer Vocational Industrial Services in partnership with Opportunity for Work and Learning. OWL provides job skills to employment-challenged individuals who refurbish computers during a 10-week technology training program. OWL is an organization dedicated to removing employment barriers to individuals in the community by retraining them in a field where they are more likely to find a job.

“This multi-agency partnership demonstrates that when agencies work together, all citizens regardless of age in the Commonwealth will benefit. OWL continues to look for new partnerships to fulfill its mission,” according to David Boggs, OWL president/CEO.

These computers, along with donated printers from Lexmark, have now been and will be donated to children participating in six Head Start programs, with the help of funding through the Blue Grass Community Action Partnership.

“The Blue Grass Community Action Partnership is appreciative of this donation to our six Head Start centers. These computers and printers will assure that the children have access to computer technology to learn basic computer skills. We

would like to thank our partners in this effort, ConnectKentucky's Computers 4 Kids," said Troy Roberts, executive director.

To learn more about the donation, visit www.connectkentucky.org.

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Photo Captions:

CKY035: Children from the Crescent Drive Head Start give a thumbs up during this week's computer donation.

CKY032: Assistant Secretary of State for Kentucky, Allen Eskridge, addresses the children of the Crescent Drive Head Start in Danville this week.

CKY011: Ron Zimmerman, CEO and executive director of Pioneer Vocational Industrial Services, speaks with Boyle County Judge-Executive Harold McKinney during Tuesday's event. The Danville-based Pioneer refurbished the computers donated this week.

About ConnectKentucky: ConnectKentucky is leading the way into a new economy for Kentuckians. As an independent technology-based economic development organization, ConnectKentucky works to ensure that Kentucky remains the place of choice to live, work, and raise a family. ConnectKentucky is an alliance of technology-minded businesses, government entities, and universities working together to accelerate technology in the Commonwealth.

For more information about ConnectKentucky, visit www.connectkentucky.org.

About OWL: Since 1961 Opportunity for Work and Learning has been partnering within the community to educate and equip individuals with barriers to employment to reach their vocational goals. OWL provides job training, job placement, evaluations, and assessment services in all 17 counties of the Bluegrass Area Development District and Jefferson County.

For more information about OWL, visit www.owlinc.net.

About Blue Grass Community Action Partnership: The Blue Grass Community Action Partnership has been providing assistance to low-income individuals/households since 1964 in an effort to remove barriers to self-sufficiency. With the funding received through the ARRA, the Agency has collaborated with Opportunity for Work and Learning (OWL) to provide resources to make a difference in our client's way of life. Eligible clients receive vocational assessments that identify an individual's interest, aptitudes, learning strengths and weaknesses to ensure successful training and job placement outcomes. The computer recycling and refurbishing is just one of the aspects of this program.

Preparing individuals for employment that provides a living wage will ensure that they will become self-sufficient.

For more information about BGCAP, visit www.bluegrasscommunityaction.org.

About Pioneer: Since 1967 Pioneer Vocational/Industrial Services has been providing vocational development and extended employment programs to people who are disabled and/or disadvantaged to assist them in obtaining employment and maximizing independent living skills. Pioneer provides job training, job placement, evaluation, assessments and Supported for Community Living services.

For more information about Pioneer, visit www.pioneerservices.org