

Computers 4 Kids Donates 98 Computers to Martin County Students



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ConnectKentucky's Computers 4 Kids donates 98 computers to Martin County sixth-graders to encourage technology literacy for the entire family

Warfield, KY: Today, 98 Martin County sixth graders received the news that they will be receiving computers and printers at a press conference held at Warfield Middle School. The computers were donated through ConnectKentucky's Computers 4 Kids program, an innovative program designed to help close the digital divide among Kentucky's youth. This donation was made possible by a grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC).

"The Computers 4 Kids donations is a tremendous opportunity for the students of Martin County," according to Martin County Superintendent Mark Blackburn. "This project will open up a door to the rest of the world by allowing them to use the computers at home. We are extremely grateful for everyone that has contributed to this initiative and look forward to the positive impact it will have on our schools and the community of Martin County."

ConnectKentucky was recently awarded a \$300,000 grant by Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) to distribute over 1,000 computers in the ARC region. With the generous support of the Appalachian Regional Commission and in partnership with Lexmark International, ConnectKentucky will be distributing 98 computers paired with a Lexmark Inkjet Printer.

Computers 4 Kids brings together public and private partners to help Kentucky households join the Information Age. The program is the most comprehensive initiative of its kind undertaken by any state in the nation. It ensures that computers donated by the state and private providers will be saved from landfills and used for the benefit of Kentucky families.

Today, thousands of Kentucky children live in homes without computers. Computers 4 Kids is designed to help those children by providing access to technology where the need is greatest. For many families, owning a computer is the first step to reaching the opportunities available through the Internet.

"Computers 4 Kids continues to transform the lives of Kentucky's families," stated Andrew V. McNeill, Vice President of Program Development for ConnectKentucky. "Through the generous contribution of the Appalachian Regional Commission and the support of our corporate partners, ConnectKentucky is closing Kentucky's digital divide, one household at a time."

Placing computers in the hands of underprivileged students awards them the opportunity to access educational and research materials they need in order to effectively compete in today's global economy. Recent research revealed that broadband adoption grew five times faster in

counties that received computers through Computers 4 Kids and its predecessor, No Child Left Offline, in the last two years.

ConnectKentucky has already initiated and executed a successful pilot project of Computers 4 Kids and its predecessor, No Child Left Offline, and has delivered more than 2000 Internet-ready computers to middle school students and their families in 11 ARC counties. As part of the ARC initiative, ConnectKentucky has already delivered over 600 computers to Powell, Estill, Lee, Elliott and Bell Counties.

In addition to the 98 computers for sixth-grade students, Computers 4 Kids announced its intention to put into place a pilot program to better serve the needs of the entire community. The pilot project intends to place computers within the local library and community center to best serve the needs of the entire community. It is intended that fifteen desktop computers will be awarded to the Roy Collier Community Center to assist with computer and technology activities and up to ten computers will be placed in the local library.

This pilot project represents yet another evolution in ConnectKentucky's aggressive efforts to close the digital divide by providing access to technology in partnership with community centers and libraries – which serve as vital links to the children and families of any community.

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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