

Another Successful Challenge Grant!



Mac MacDonald, the voice of the Cavaliers, getting the crowd revved up for the raffle drawing.

On May 17th, Computers4Kids wrapped up another successful raffle as part of its annual Challenge Grant Campaign. The raffle raised over \$100,000 to match the generous \$50,000 challenge grant donated to the organization for the third year in a row by an anonymous donor. Thanks to the incredible support of the community, and the hard work of numerous ticket sellers and enthusiasts, funds from the raffle will make a

significant dent in this year's budget, allowing C4K to continue providing and enhancing needed resources for our community's youth.

This year the raffle prize list expanded to six fabulous prizes, including trips to Mexico, Aruba, and a Giants football game, a plasma TV, a lease on a BMW, and an original oil painting. Six very lucky women (no, the raffle wasn't rigged!) walked away with the grand raffle prizes, happy that their support of C4K paid off for themselves in kind. Nancy Bourne,

Brenda Brinkley, Cinda Ewing, Callie Ward, Lynne Crofts, and Derry Miller were the envy of all the Touchdown Party 2006 attendees.

Lots of people, however, left the party winners thanks to the generosity of numerous community businesses that offered their support of Computers4Kids by way of door prizes. From board games to gym memberships, many Touchdown Party attendees big and small lucked out and walked away with

some excellent donated prizes as gifts of thanks for their support of the program.

Computers4Kids would especially like to thank the following people and businesses for their help and support throughout the Challenge Grant Campaign. Without their generosity and enthusiasm, the campaign would never have been such a great success.

[continued on back page](#)

Wish List

Items for the Learning Lab

- CD/DVD burners
- MP3 players
- CD-Rs
- CD-RWs
- USB Optical Mice
- New PCs for new computer lab
- New Macs for new computer lab
- Office Chairs
- USB tablets

Items for the Refurbishing Lab

- 56 K internal modems
- Hard drives (at least 6 gig)
- CPUs (at least 700 MHz)
- SDRAM Memory (64 Mb or larger)

Items for Office Use

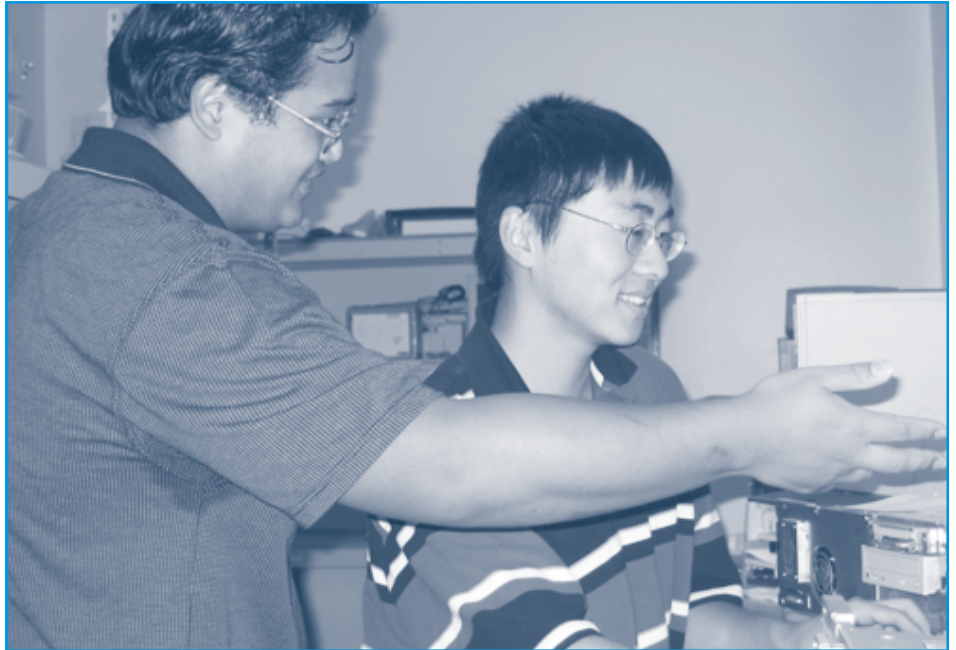
- Copy Machine
- Refrigerator
- Water Cooler



C4K Expands Staff with New VISTA Position

In our ongoing effort to continually improve the programs it offers, Computers4Kids has recently created a new staff position, which has been filled by an AmeriCorps VISTA member. Coming to us through the CTC (Community Technology Centers Network) VISTA project, Ray Varona is no AmeriCorps rookie. Having finished a year-long AmeriCorps placement with Charlottesville's Habitat for Humanity, Ray was pleased enough with his experience to commit to a second year of service.

And we're glad to have him! Ray will be with Computers4Kids for a one-year placement and will be filling a great need of the organization. Having already donned numerous hats, Ray will be coordinating the refurbishing lab, developing a library of short activities for independent learning students, and expanding our workshop offerings. Developing educational workshops will be Ray's priority and it is the area we are most excited about seeing grow. Students and mentors have both requested improved workshops that cover a greater variety of topics and we're pleased to finally be able to address these requests. Students and mentors should expect in the coming months to see a greater number of workshops, workshops that focus in particular on digital media, and mentor-specific workshops. Anyone with suggestions for topics is encouraged to



New AmeriCorps VISTA employee Ray Varona helping a new refurbishing volunteer.

share them with Ray, so that we can be sure to remain focused on the interests of our students and volunteers.

AmeriCorps is a domestic service program that was modeled on the PeaceCorps and VISTA is one particular service program within the corps. Organizations pay a small project fee and in return receive a full-time employee for a year. AmeriCorps provides their members with a modest annual stipend and educational awards in return for their service.

The Community Technology Centers Network established the CTC VISTA project as a way to streamline efforts to get extra hands into community technology centers and to make it easier

for non-profit centers to apply to the program. The CTC VISTA project was created because of their belief that "media, information, and communications technologies can be powerful tools for social change." Perhaps the most valuable aspect of the CTC VISTA program is its focus on organizational capacity building so that piloted programs can continue without added support once the VISTA assignment is complete. As stated in their goals, "CTC VISTAs are committed to building the capacity of both individual organizations and the community media and technology movement as a whole."

A seasoned AmeriCorps veteran, Ray has had a wonderful experience in the

program. "I think the AmeriCorps program is one of the best-kept secrets out there," he says, "Since joining AmeriCorps a year ago I've changed tremendously for the better. While I've had my fair share of struggles," he continues, "I've grown by leaps and bounds as a result, not to mention all the skills I've picked up and developed along the way." Ray will not simply be helping us for the one year he'll be with Computers4Kids; he will be creating the tools and infrastructure necessary so that we will be able to seamlessly integrate his contributions into the whole program and keep them going once his service is complete. Please help us welcome Ray (Mr. Varona to any students out there!) to Computers4Kids. We're looking forward to great things!



Community Spotlight

Computers4Kids frequently enjoys collaborating with other community groups and businesses in order to provide our students with the best possible learning environment. This past year, C4K teamed up with numerous groups of students from the University of Virginia on a variety of projects. These student groups approached C4K after learning about the organization and being impressed by our successes and their projects satisfied requirements for classes involving either education or non-profit administration.

Four different groups of students from the McIntire School of Commerce worked with Computers4Kids in mostly successful efforts to win grant money for the

program. Two students in the School of Architecture met with C4K staff and board members in order to complete a detailed grant proposal, which was then presented to C4K. A group of four School of Medicine students spent their semester volunteering time in the learning lab, and multiple groups of students in the Curry School of Education donated a significant amount of time and energy to creating and implementing educational technology workshops for our students.

Collaborations such as these provide wonderful opportunities for C4K to take advantage of community resources and they provide valuable occasions to introduce ourselves to the community and its future leaders. Look for more community members in the spotlight in the future!



Learning Lab in Transition

"We're sorry to see her go and will never forget the contributions she made to C4K," says Computers4Kids Director Kala Somerville regarding Aisha's departure, "but we're also excited about the opportunity this presents for growth." After five dedicated years first as Learning Lab Assistant and later Learning Lab Director, in June Computers4Kids paid a fond farewell to C4K veteran Aisha Moore. While Ms. Moore—as she's known to many in the C4K community—is sad to have to say goodbye to Computers4Kids and all her

talented students, after five years, it was finally time for her to move on. Aisha plans to continue working with kids and developing her acting career (keep an eye out for her on the big and little screens). C4K will certainly miss her and we wish her all the best of luck.

While Computers4Kids could never replace Aisha, we have filled her position and we are excited to have Kevin Matthews join our team. Kevin comes to us by way of the University of Virginia where he has been a geographic information system specialist and

Piedmont Valley Community College where he was an assistant geography professor. Interested in using his technology skills in an educational environment, Kevin is excited to be helping students improve their computer skills. With the addition of Kevin to the organization and the upgrade of the position to full-time, Computers4Kids is now a real full house. We're looking forward to the months ahead and the improvements and enhancements our new hands will bring. Please join us in welcoming Kevin to Computers4Kids!



Challenge Grant continued from page 1

Ticket Sellers

Team Virginia National Bank –

Barracks Road,
high seller: Tammy Shiflett

Team Virginia National Bank –

Downtown,
high seller: April Harris

Team Virginia National Bank –

29 North,
high seller: Ginger Hansen

Team ACAC –

high seller: Lynette Girouard

Team BMW of Charlottesville –

high seller: Tracey Linkous

Raffle Donors

- Milano Express
- Studio 206
- The Baker's Palette
- 2 French Hens
- Five Guys
- Quizno's Subs
- Cary's Camera
- Padow's Hams and Deli
- Creative Framing
- Snow's Garden Center
- The Downtown Grille
- Gitchell's Studio
- ACAC

- Jefferson Theater
- Shenanigans
- Whimsies
- Charlottesville Ice Park
- BMW of Charlottesville
- The Little Gym
- Mrs. Anne Groh
- Bill and Cassandra Dittmar
- Virginia National Bank
- David Summers
- Teacher's Edition
- Papa John's
- Keswick Hall, an Orient Express Hotel
- Anonymous supporters

