



Computers 4 Kids benefits local Boys & Girls Club

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Hands shot up throughout the crowd Friday when the young members of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Northwest Tennessee-Union City were asked how many of them do not have computers at home.

Those same hands were raised when the children were asked how many of them use the computers currently available at the club to assist in homework assignments.

There will soon be many new computers to go around at the local Boys & Girls Club thanks to Connected Tennessee's Computers 4 Kids program, with the assistance of AT&T and state Rep. Judy Barker.

Many club members and several local officials were on hand to celebrate Friday afternoon when Connected Tennessee's Computers 4 Kids program announced the donation of 26 brand new Dell computers for the club.

Computers 4 Kids (C4K) is an innovative project designed to positively impact the future of disadvantaged children in Tennessee by distributing computers to children and families facing economic challenges, in the foster care system or who struggle with behavioral disorders and other issues. C4K is also enriching the educational landscape of Tennessee's communities by placing computer labs in non-profit organizations that work to enhance the lives of children and families in their area.

In brief remarks during the presentation, Mrs. Barker shared her thoughts about the importance of bridging the digital divide in Obion County.

"Computers 4 Kids continues to transform lives across Tennessee," she said. "Computer skills are vital in today's global economy. These computers are tools that will help all Obion County families, regardless of income, meet their educational and professional needs. I want to thank AT&T and Computers 4 Kids for this generous donation."

Mrs. Barker encouraged the children to set goals and to pursue higher educational opportunities.

"Education is the key. You can do anything you want to do," she said.

Also on hand for the presentation were Ron Green, chief professional officer of Boys & Girls Clubs of Northwest Tennessee; Deanna Ward, West Tennessee project manager for Connected Tennessee; Tracy Boucher, Union City club director; Clay Woods, board

president for Boys & Girls Clubs of Northwest Tennessee; and Trey Rabon, regional external affairs director of external and legislative affairs for AT&T.

The computer donation was made possible by a grant from the AT&T Foundation, a group whose mission to place technology in the hands of Tennessee's youth closely matches that of Connected Tennessee's.

"We are proud to support the Computers 4 Kids program and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Northwest Tennessee-Union City and to join with local and state officials to make technology accessible to more young people in our state," said Gregg Morton, president of AT&T Tennessee. "Across America and across Tennessee, AT&T is investing in both technology infrastructure and educational support to improve workforce readiness and to help ensure the future competitiveness of our nation."

The mission of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Northwest Tennessee is to inspire and enable all young people, especially those who need us the most, to reach their full potential as productive, responsible and caring citizens.

Connected Tennessee's Computers 4 Kids program has already distributed more than 1,300 computers statewide. Through C4K, Connected Tennessee will award at least 3,000 computers over a three-year period to children, families and organizations in need across Tennessee.

As a public-private partnership, Connected Tennessee partners with technology-minded businesses, government entities and universities to accelerate technology in the state. For more information about what Connected Tennessee is doing to accelerate technology in Tennessee's communities, visit the website www.connectedtennessee.org.