



Connected Tennessee and Vision Perry Announce the Creation of New Jobs, New Opportunities in Perry County

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Perry County Launches a “Digital Factory” to put more citizens to work

Linden, TN – Today, Connected Tennessee’s Computers 4 Kids (C4K) program and Perry County leaders gathered to celebrate the progress that Perry County has made since partnering with Connected Tennessee and AT&T one year ago to bring increased technology and opportunity to Perry County. Last June, working with AT&T, Computers 4 Kids proudly donated 20 computers and other hardware to Perry County’s “Vision Perry” Summer Youth Employment Program. Since that time, Perry County has utilized those computers to create a “Digital Factory,” located at Vision Perry headquarters. While the lack of a four-lane highway and the remoteness in the county have in the past been major obstacles to attracting new business to the area, the “Digital Factory” will be conducted entirely using the Internet.

“Over the past year, Perry County and the City of Linden have been able to utilize the computers given to us by Computers 4 Kids and AT&T to launch new opportunities, new jobs, and new hope for the people of this county,” remarked City of Linden Mayor, Jim Azbill. “Through our Digital Factory, we are going to be able to put dozens and eventually hundreds of our citizens to work. We are very thankful for this generous donation and the opportunities it has afforded our county.”

Vision Perry was launched as part of Governor Bredesen’s plan to reduce unemployment in Perry County by using federal dollars from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) to provide summer employment and job training opportunities to low-income residents. Twenty laptops, four printers and two scanners were awarded to the Summer Youth Employment Program in Perry County, thanks to a \$25,000 grant from AT&T. At the time of the donation, Perry County had the state’s highest rate of unemployment and the nation’s second highest rate – 25.4 percent – with 760 unemployed residents. More than 50 Perry County residents went on to participate in the statewide program.

“We are pleased to provide our support for the Computer 4 Kids program and its good work in Perry County,” said Gregg Morton, president of AT&T Tennessee. “At AT&T we believe in working with our local communities to invest in our children; providing them with the technology, skills and training to thrive and prosper in the modern economy.”

Today's event took place at the Vision Perry Headquarters in downtown Linden. City of Linden Mayor Jim Azbill, Perry County Mayor John Carroll and Jennifer Weems, Field Director for Senator Bob Corker, were all on hand to show their support of the program.

Connected Tennessee's Computers 4 Kids (C4K) is an innovative initiative designed to positively impact the future of children in need in Tennessee by awarding computers to kids and families facing economic challenges, in the foster care system or struggling with behavioral disorders and other issues. C4K will be 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. C4K has already distributed more than 2,000 computers statewide.

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About Connected 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 www.connectedtennessee.org.*

About Computers 4 Kids: *Computers 4 Kids 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, are in the foster care system or that struggle with behavioral disorders and other issues. Through C4K, Connected Tennessee will award 3,000 computers over a three year period to children and families in need across Tennessee.*

About Philanthropy at AT&T: *For 25 years, AT&T and the AT&T Foundation have been committed to advancing education, strengthening communities and improving lives. Through its philanthropic initiatives and partnerships, AT&T supports projects that create learning opportunities; promote academic and economic achievement; and address community needs. As the AT&T Foundation celebrates its 25th anniversary in 2009, more than \$160 million was contributed through corporate-, employee- and AT&T Foundation-giving programs in 2008 alone.*