



The Right Click

Austin Free-Net News & Information

September 2012

Dear Friend,

Austin Free-Net is growing and expanding our reach. Our continued success depends not only on your donations, but also our relationships with our community-minded partners such as Boys and Girls Club, Goodwill and the City of Austin.



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS

The Boys and Girls Club contracted AFN to teach the parents of the children in their programs how to use computers. They want to ensure that the parents are better able to engage in their child's education through the use of technology.

Did you know that school districts now utilize an online portal to share information about the students? Gone are the days of a hand-written note from the teacher pinned to your 1st grader's shirt – here are the days of direct emails to parents who may or may not have computer access or computer skills.

Boys and Girls Club recognized that there is a great need, so we worked together to create a successful pilot class. That initial trial program has now blossomed into four additional classroom locations!

Goodwill of Austin, is more than just a thrifty place to shop, it also is an agency of workforce training. We were so excited to join with them to provide seven computers in their



STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Tod Stehling



Tod joins Austin Free-Net as our new Director of Sustainability. With more than 20 years of meeting planning, corporate development, fundraising and leadership roles within both the corporate and nonprofit realm, Tod will be reaching out to community-minded corporations to build relationships and continue our mission. Welcome, Tod. We're super glad to have you.



Did You Know?

Your time is valuable to Austin Free-Net clients? We need volunteers to help us mentor, coach and guide our clients. Won't you volunteer, today? [Click here](#) to register or to learn more.

initial job lab to watch their job training program succeed. And, succeed it did.



We've just signed an additional contract for six more job locations with Goodwill for a total of eight computers. Finding a job is a struggle, partnering with one of the nation's top advocates for back-to-work programs is a JOY!

And, our amazing City of Austin...wow. They are our rocks. Not only do they provide us with free office space and climate-controlled computer lab and classrooms, they work with us to house many of our public labs. They provide us with funding to ensure we continue to not only grow, but continue to help



Austinites cross the digital divide in locations they know and trust.

Austin Free-Net now has 168 total computers in 26 sites.

Thanks to all of our partners. If digital literacy is important to you, [click here](#). Together we can eradicate the digital divide.

Sincerely,

Juanita Budd
Executive Director



Juanita Enjoys Our New Reception Area



Thank You



Austin Free-Net isn't a political hotbed of excitement. We don't lean in any direction and we subscribe to but one belief – that digital literacy and access are becoming a necessity for everyone. On August 29, Gerry Smith of the popular online news conglomerate, Huffingtonpost, wrote an article that directly impacts the very heart of Austin Free-Net and our mission. In this article he writes:

"With a steady stream of blog posts, tweets, Facebook posts and YouTube videos, the presidential campaigns have increasingly [embraced the web](#) as a way to speak directly to voters.

...Yet millions of Americans won't be able to participate. They are blocked from experiencing much of the online world because they don't have access to high-speed Internet. About one third of Americans - - or [100 million people](#) -- do not subscribe to broadband. This so-called "digital divide" will likely receive little, if any attention during the political conventions.

But bridging the technology gap fits squarely within the candidates' platforms for reducing unemployment, increasing access to health care and education, and helping the country compete in a globalized economy, experts say. Almost every aspect of today's society -- from looking for jobs to accessing online medicine and classrooms -- now requires a broadband connection, and those without access are quickly being left behind..."

The article continues to delineate how difficult it is to live in the digital age without the knowledge, training, and access to the Internet which two-thirds of our fellow Americans enjoy. Austin, we are a microcosm of the United States. We have wealth, poverty, illiteracy and world-class universities; we have office buildings filled with suited workers and streets roamed by a large population of homeless people. How do we differ? We have Austin Free-Net.

Our 26 computer labs and classrooms are FREE to any adult in Austin. Our digital literacy classes cultivate individual knowledge

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levels. Each computer user is treated with respect; each is given the computer education and access he or she needs to attain personal goals. From how to turn the computer on and how to perfect a resume to how to fill out an online job application and open a free email account, we teach our clients the skills they need to enhance their lives – including how to watch their favorite politico's latest YouTube video or responding to a Tweet in our lab. We are proud to help Austin narrow the digital divide **one click at a time**.

If you, or your company, would like to help Austin Free-Net continue our work, [click here](#).

Austin Free-Net | 2209 Rosewood Ave, Austin, TX 78702 | 512.236.8225 | www.austinfreenet.net

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2209 Rosewood Ave
Austin, Texas 78702
USA

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