



Connected Tennessee Wins 2009 TechStar Award

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*The Northeast Tennessee Technology Council Recognizes Connected Tennessee's
Computers 4 Kids Program With "Community Service" Award*

Kingsport, TN – Connected Tennessee's Computers 4 Kids (C4K) program took the spotlight at yesterday's 7th Annual TechStar Awards luncheon in Kingsport, winning the "Community Service" award for commitment of time and resources to improve the community through technology. Nine winners were announced at the awards luncheon which recognizes businesses, organizations, government and non-profit agencies for their use or development of technology.

"The quality of our TechStar recipients demonstrates that our region remains on the cutting edge of technological advances which benefit every segment of our economy," said April Eads, NETTC Board President.

The Computers 4 Kids program is 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 that 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 order to bridge the digital divide between those who have access to computer technology and those who do not, Connected Tennessee has placed more than 2,000 computers over the past 18 months into the hands of disadvantaged populations. The computers allow underserved populations of Tennessee to perform basic computing functions and have access to the abundant educational, informational and governmental resources that are available on the Internet.

"We are starting to see the work of the past two years really come to fruition," noted Connected Tennessee's Executive Director, Michael Ramage. "It is rewarding to know that the Computers 4 Kids program is changing lives across Northeast Tennessee and the entire state. We are honored to receive this award and look forward to continuing our efforts to place technology into the hands of the citizens of our state that need it the most."

The C4K program also received accolades earlier this month at the Congressional Black Caucus's Annual Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. for its work to connect the underserved west Tennessee community of Stanton with the rest of the world. C4K

recently donated 20 computers to the Saint John After-School Program in Stanton, transforming the program into a hub of connectivity for the entire community.

“Connected Tennessee is going to make all of us become next door neighbors,” explained State Representative and pastor of the Saint John Baptist Church, Johnny Shaw. “People can go online, access the kind of information they need for jobs, for opportunities. That’s been the beauty of having Connected Tennessee in this rural area.”

Watch a video about the community of Stanton and the Computers 4 Kids program by clicking [here](#).

Connected Tennessee is leading the way into a new economy for Tennesseans. As Tennessee’s technology-based economic development partnership, Connected Tennessee is a public-private alliance of leaders from private industry, government and education. By leveraging the latest in technology and networking, Connected Tennessee is ensuring Tennessee remains the place of choice to work, live and raise a family. The work of Connected Tennessee is made possible by support from the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development.

To learn more about Connected Tennessee and the Computers 4 Kids program, please visit www.connectedtn.org.

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Related Links:

Article: [Rural Tennessee kids, others get access to Internet through program](#)

Press Release: [State leaders join Computers 4 Kids program in marking major milestone](#)

Watch: [Connecting Tennessee: One Community at a Time](#)

Blog: [Connected Tennessee’s Model for Broadband Expansion Wins Praise from State Leaders](#)

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. Connected Tennessee is made possible by support from the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development. For more information about what Connected Tennessee is doing to accelerate technology in Tennessee’s communities, visit www.connectedtn.org.*

About the Northeast Tennessee Technology Council: *The Northeast Tennessee Technology Council is a regional non-profit organization whose mission is to promote the use of technology and innovation to advance regional economic development. Learn more about the NETTC by going to www.nettc.org.*