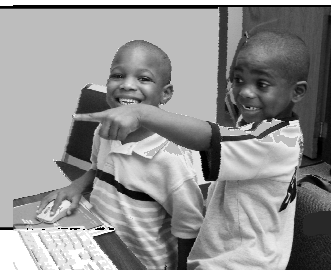




# OhioCCN



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## Special Edition

### OCCN Assists Hurricane Katrina Evacuees in Columbus

THIS SPECIAL EDITION PUBLICATION FEATURES THE COMMUNITY TECHNOLOGY CENTER AT THE BUCKEYE INN AT RICKENBACKER. THE CTC IS A TEMPORARY SHELTER FOR HURRICANE KATRINA SURVIVORS WHO EVACUATED TO COLUMBUS, OHIO.

September 2005

It was not easy to get here. Reaching the ears of busy disaster relief officials to hear our offer to set up a computer lab was a nearly impossible task. Fortunately, Mayor Coleman's Office was already aware of OCCN and understands the important role of community technology. They were happy to contact Commissioner Kilroy's office, who also understands the importance of community technology, and her office was able to contact the Katrina disaster relief officials. It's a short story but it was a long process.

The importance of the technology is evident in its usage by the Survivors. We knew Survivors would need access to technology and we were in contact with the coordinators of the Community Technology Center in the Astrodome shelter and the additional Houston shelters. The first thing the residents of Buckeye Inn at Rickenbacker wanted to do was check on their FEMA applications. To do so online, they needed e-mail addresses. When needed, we helped Survivors create e-mail addresses and taught them how to send and receive e-mail. The Survivors also hunted for apartments online, prepared resumes, and conducted job searches. The kids played computer games (we steered toward educational games... sometimes we were successful and at other times we were not).

We installed a program called Deep Freeze on all the computers. The program resets computers back to their original state when they are turned off, and then turned back on. Deep Freeze lets the twin 11 year old boys download music to their hearts content and we don't need to be as concerned about viruses. We set up a server with a shared drive so Survivors could save documents such as contact lists and resumes.

Most interesting to me is that at this hurricane shelter, amidst our Military, the Red Cross, and the Survivors, we are referred to as the "computer people" and considered "civilians" or the "volunteers". We are the community part of the mission. We have become friends with the Survivors. Some of us have brought our children with us to the CTC and they have played with the children at the shelter. I have also been helping with some Survivor apartment hunting and am now organizing a furniture drive for two of the families. We have all become my friends.

by,  
*Angela Stuber*



*Julia, Ted, and Angela,  
set up software at the  
temporary shelter*

OCCN is a sustainable member-driven organization supporting the efforts of community technology service providers to promote full participation in a digital world. OCCN is committed to ensuring that every Ohioan can make full use of modern computing and networking technology for personal and community empowerment and enrichment.

## Columbus, Cleveland, & Cincinnati Respond for Katrina Evacuees

At a moment's notice, on Friday, September 9 and Saturday, September 10 volunteers rallied quickly in Cleveland and Columbus to establish Community Technology Centers for Katrina Survivors who had made their way to Ohio. Volunteers in Cincinnati were also ready to establish a CTC but the Survivors were spread out geographically, a one stop shop with a CTC was not opened.

**Cleveland Digital Vision** and **Computers Assisting People** have set up a 36-station computer center for Katrina evacuees at the Cleveland Convention Center. The computers include 18 laptops lent by two local companies and 18 recycled PCs supplied by Computers Assisting People. Their partners in this effort include the City of Cleveland, SBC, MWH Corporation and Alphaport (to date). They also expect to be creating additional smaller computer centers -- or other Internet access mechanisms at several apartment buildings where evacuees will be "permanently" housed. For more information go to:  
[www.ohioccn.org/KatrinaCTCsCleveland.htm](http://www.ohioccn.org/KatrinaCTCsCleveland.htm)

## Victims of Katrina



The victims of Katrina have to change schools and homes just like I did. I moved from Louisiana to Ohio, so far I like it. The places Katrina hit need help that's why we should help by donating clothes, food, and shelter. The news showed some really bad damage Katrina did. That's why I'm asking to donate some things.

by, *Timberlyn Carter-Beedford, age 9*

## Extended Love



OCCN VISTA **Candace Parsons** (left) shows **Robin** (right) how to check email and listen to music at the same time on the Internet.

*My name is Robin and I'm from Biloxi, Gulfport Mississippi. I have relocated to Columbus, Ohio at this time because of Hurricane Katrina. Recently, I heard that this was the worst natural disaster in our nation thus far. I witnessed much destruction, but God is in total control in and through it all. It is*

*his love and mercy that guides us through times such as these; perilous times. This is a most excellent time to turn to and turn back to God with our whole hearts. I must tell you, the staff and awesome volunteers with the Ohio community Computing Network have shown not only myself but everyone here at the Buckeye Inn that they have hearts after God's very own. They are gracious, loving, patient and kind. It was a wonderful idea to set up computers here to assist by lending a helping hand to survivors of Hurricane Katrina. This act of kindness has enabled us to register*

*online with FEMA, allowed us to establish e-mail addresses, games for the children, and means by which to keep in touch and reach friends and family members remaining in the South. I hope and pray I'm able to speak for many other survivors when I say we are so grateful to you for your unconditional love. The Lord says, show mercy as I have shown you mercy, OCCN is doing just that. Thank you, all of you, for being here. May God bless and keep you always.*

*Robin D. White*

# The Horrible 6 Days

It all started on Monday. I awoke half-asleep in the dark hearing the radio. I got up to look outside the window and I found out I slept through the whole thing. Now was the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. It was raining a bit and the whole street was flooded. The good thing was that if I was in Chalmette, I would have woken up on the roof. The water was rising and before I knew it, the water started going up to my ankles.

I went to put on my shoes before it started to wet my feet. It first started going to my mom's room and that was where my computer was held at. I grabbed the computer and placed it in a safe place. My mom grabbed the television.

In two days, the water went down in the house. During these 6 days, I was more thirsty than hungry and the water was hot which made me frustrated. Sometime around the third day, my mom decided we should be making fans out of cardboard. It was so hot and the windows were open almost most of the day. I slept mostly in the daytime when it wasn't so hot. On the fourth and fifth day, I started thinking that no one will never come to rescue us. But if I listened to my mom, I would have faith.

On the sixth day, I was thinking that I would be in my house for months until they came. A boat came and I was so excited. I grabbed my stuff and started packing up and then I saw the boat somewhere else coming back our way. They wanted to give us more time to pack up. They picked me up to the boat and after that, we arrived to the bridge. We went on a helicopter, then we went in line to the airport. Next, we went to the airplane, then on a bus



to the shelter, and then on a cab to the Ramada Limited inn in Austin, TX. It didn't take that fast if you thought that. It took 2 days just to get to the shelter. Then a few hours to get to the inn. And this was my horrible 6 days. The 7<sup>th</sup> day wasn't bad.

by Joseph Obatala Moya, age 11



Photo from [www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com) within gallery.katrina.citizens

## Special thanks to our Columbus Katrina Survivors CTC partners for their generous contributions:

Partners	Contributions
Corporation for National Service	Americorp* VISTA Program
ACCEL – Appalachian Center for Collaborative and Engaged Learning	IT and General Support, and volunteers
Mount Carmel Health System	IT Support, Computers and Volunteers
AEP	Computers and Volunteers
Mircro Systems	Computers
State of Ohio Adjutant General's Department	IT and General Support
Ohio Air National Guard	IT and General Support
Microsoft	Software
SBC	DSL Connection
RetroBox	Printer loans
Image One	Printer Cartridges
Yellow Book	Printer Paper
Ohio Learning Network	Mouse Pads and Volunteers
Groundwork Group	Volunteers
Walmart	School Supplies

## HOW CAN YOU HELP?

OCCN needs monetary donations to help with expenses not covered by our partners for the Katrina Survivors CTCs. We appreciate any donation you are able to give and helping Katrina CTCs' efforts to help the hurricane's Survivors in Ohio. You can send a check or donate online at our website.

<http://www.ohioccn.org/KatrinaCTCs.htm>

**Unless noted otherwise photos in this publication are courtesy of:**

**121st ARW, Ohio Air National Guard**

## In Praise of Volunteers for Columbus Katrina Survivor CTC



OCCN VISTA **Jason Peterman** (right) and **National Guardsman Steve** (left) connecting computers to the DSL.

The volunteers from over a dozen of organizations and businesses are the ones who make Columbus Katrina Survivor CTC a warm home for the parents and kids who just lost everything.

Considering the volunteers coming from such different walks of life, I'm amazed to see how they have such different styles in giving support. Some prioritize in making sure the computers running properly, and any possible resources are ready and available for the survivors; while others want to get to know the survivors personally and prioritize in interacting with them.

Though so different, the volunteers have so much in common—everyday, they all come earlier than their scheduled hours; the very second they step into the CTC, they all give the kids the warmest smile; and what's more, they all take the initiatives to identify needs and go all the way to help.

They help the adult Survivors with FEMA applications, e-mail, apartment hunting, and information about Columbus area. They help the kids with computers games, arts & crafts, or just play with them. They set up the lab and keep it running smoothly. Finally, they prepare the computers for the families to take home.

279—a simple number tells it all. 279 is the total number of hours volunteers logged at the CTC in only 10 days from September 11 to September 20. In a time of crisis, they have made it a priority in their lives to find time in their hectic schedules to put others first. I am truly honored to get to know them.

by Sunny Chen

My daddy is **Gary Lambert**. He helped opened up a tech lab at the Rickenbacker Air Force Base in Columbus for the evacuees. He brought in computers and printers My daddy worked a lot of hours and sometimes I didn't get to see him much. He likes to help and my and mom and I do too. We got donations so the kids could have school supplies. I can't imagine not having any toys or books so I donated some of my toys and clothes to help the kids.

On the weekends we got to go meet some of the kids that had to leave their house. It was pretty sad. We had a lot of fun with them. Even though they lived some where else they are so much like me. I am 8 and in 3rd grade. The boys I met are in 6th grade. I want to grow up to be an author and illustrator and so does John Moya. He likes computers and so do I. We both like cats.



**Gary Lambert**, ACCEL Ex. Dir. and OCCN Board VP putting in just the first of many hours at the Columbus Katrina Survivors CTC.

Thanks everyone for your donations to help the hurricane victims out. You see they are so much like us. Only I have a home, my toys, my mom and dad have jobs, I have a school, but they don't have these things right now. We both know one thing for sure—we're glad to be here at the Rickenbacker Air Force Base. John was given a coloring book and puzzles and a car. The Red Cross even gave ME a Barbie to play with while daddy worked. My daddy stays up at the base and even sleeps there so he can help out. I love my dad. I am so proud of him.



Oh, by the way I have a sister named Katrina. [sissy]. So now we call her hurricane sissy. My daddy works with the Ohio computer community place with Angela. Let's give them a big hug.

by Mia Lambert

Volunteers are the heart of any community technology center and the Buckeye Inn is no different. I've been lucky to help at the CTC for the Katrina Survivors. On Saturday Sept. 10, I went to the Buckeye Inn not knowing what to expect. That first weekend was spent setting up, and waiting. The next time I went there were finally some Survivors to assist. I got to hang out with kids, some of the most well-mannered I have ever met, and play games. I helped adults with email and resumes. I was also fortunate enough to meet local IT professionals who took time out of their busy schedules to volunteer.

Some people think service is about giving up time or money. But those who serve know that what a volunteer gets is always so much greater than what he or she gives. The skills and experiences I have gained in the past few weeks are tremendous, but the chance to meet all the amazing people coming through the door blows any amount of learning away. I'm very thankful that I had this opportunity to serve, even in this small capacity.

by Candace Parsons

Dear Angela,

You and your group are incredible! What a pleasure to be able to meet you and see you in action. One of the Red Cross volunteers at the CTC last week was so impressed with the center and the concept. Having access to computers is a necessity after a disaster. So much can be done with that type of instant and even global communication!

Sherry Stagg  
Information Resources Project Manager  
Mount Carmel Health