



Their Words; Their Short Stories

For many low-income school children living in impoverished urban communities, **owning a computer has only been a dream**. They are part of the "digital divide", the gap between their more affluent classmates who possess regular access to technology, namely computers and access to the internet, and those who do not.

Since 2003, our non-profit organization, CfAL (Concepts *for* Adaptive Learning), has been helping close this gap by giving computer training and refurbished computers to families living in Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven and Waterbury, Connecticut.

In 2009, 449 parents completed training and received a computer, which they are using to improve their quality of life and help their children improve their education. In total, more than 1,400 parents have participated in CfAL's parent computer program, impacting the lives of more than 4,500 parents and children.

This newsletter is *dedicated to the parents who took the initiative* to complete 9 hours of training, and gave their families renewed hope on their path of life long learning. Below, please read stories/testimonials from a few of these forward thinking parents.

Sharon Browne- "I'm so thankful for the computer I received. My 10 year old daughter was happy because she had a writing assignment to complete for school and she typed it all by herself on the computer. The teacher was so impressed that she did it on the computer instead of by hand. My daughter got an A because of the great work she did that day. She came home with a big smile on her face of how happy she was. The teacher sent me an email about the great work my daughter did. It's a blessing to know I can keep in touch with my child's teacher. It's a good resource because you can pay bills online and don't have to leave the house".

Nayeli Perez- "The program was quick but I learned a lot about computers. My kids like to play games and do their homework on the computer if they can. My 7 year old has improved in his education. The kids' teacher gave me a website that the kids could go to and practice their math and reading skills, and they enjoy it so much. Overall all my kids have improved significantly in school. Once in a while I look for work online too. It's been great having a computer at home".

Krystal Bathea- "It's been very convenient for me to pay bills online and not have to leave the house. It has helped my kids with their school work, I don't have to take them to the library anymore and they can do their work in the convenience of our home".

Idavelisse Cuevas- "I am very happy I took the classes. I have 4 children and 3 of my kids use the computer often for school reports and resources and even games. I like it because I've been able to help my kids learn, and look up things in the computer. Also it has been very helpful for families that can't afford a computer at the time. For me it has been very great because I received a computer and free internet. It has been very convenient. I have told a lot of people about the program. Some people can't believe it's true. I hope they take a chance and see how great the program is for families. The teacher was great; he would take the time to help you. Everything about the program was positive. This program even helped me with my job learning how to make copies and resumes, among other things".

Dorrie Cash- "I have 2 grandchildren and 1 daughter. Getting a computer has helped the whole family improve their level of education. The kids do their school work and projects on the computer. I am very happy with the computer I received, because it has educated myself and the children, the kids' education has improved a lot, they are getting honors and they are in a higher level of reading and math. I have received very good reports from school".

Jessica Knighton- "Having a computer at home has been very helpful for me to search for jobs, apartments and search for my family. My kids been able to do a lot of research for their school work and projects".

More of Their Stories

Angela Mendez- "I would like to thank the program for allowing me the opportunity to participate in the computer classes during the fall of last year. My daughter is so excited about the computer that she plays learning games from different kid websites daily. She also looks up information for essays about famous people. I enjoyed using the class to write resumes and job searches because most jobs only accept job applications online. Not having to worry about my internet service is a major help for me and my daughter. I could not have done it without your help. Please continue with this project".

Felicita Rivera- "Thank you very much for the computer. If this program wasn't offered I wouldn't have learned about computers, and now I learn each day a little more how to use them. I feel very happy, satisfied and glad that I went through the program. At first I hesitated to go, but I'm glad I did attend the classes. I didn't know there were programs like this out there that offered this great opportunity for families. I told other people about this great program".

Madelyn Hernandez- "My son and daughter are very happy with the computer". Since I am a low income mother it's really helped me out to receive the training and get a free computer with 9 hours of training. It helped my kids with their school homework and projects. I even spread the word to other people to join the program".

Caroline Flint- "My kids have benefited from having the computer at home greatly. My daughter's reading and math scores increased and my son's reading level increased too. I have been putting in applications online for jobs, and it's so much easier than going out. The computer classes really helped my entire family".

Paula Perez- "It has been worth it because I didn't have any money to purchase a computer. It helped me with the kid's school homework, projects and other things they need for school. I've been looking for work online lately and other things. I communicate with my brother in the Dominican Republic. It's been wonderful receiving this computer".

Carmen Gomez- "My kids get entertained looking for games to play, and most of all, they look for information for their school work. Since I received the computer they spend more time in the house than in the streets, as you know the streets are not very good right now. I'm very happy for the computer, and I know where my kids are, safe at home". I too get entertained a lot. I look for information I need, among other things. It's very constructive for the whole family. Thank you, for this program that helps families that can't afford a computer or take computer lessons".

Detriess Dawkins- "I have 4 school age children, and since I received my computer it has helped tremendously in my house. Thank you! to everyone involved in offering this great program to all families. "My kids' education has improved so much that 2 of my daughters are on the honor roll. My other child in special education has exceeded all expectations, and he is more involved because of the computer we received".

Gregoria Alcoser- "It has helped us all in our family to learn about computers. Each day we learn more new things. We are able to help are children do school work or get information they need. Thank you"!

Tiant Ellison- "It has helped me tremendously. My daughter's teacher and I have more communication about my child's education. I'm also in school myself and it has helped with my blended and online classes. It has been great".

Georgianna Hearst- "My teenage grandson does a lot of work on the computer for school. It has also helped me a lot. It has occupied me because am retired. It has helped me do some research for bible studies. Thank you"! Georgianna's daughter said " My Mom is able to look up words that she doesn't know the meaning of. My mom likes seeing the news online. The computer has helped my mom greatly. Thank you"

Tawana Gibbs- "I think the program is excellent. It's helped my family learn about computers, and now I can just look up information I need. It's a big way for parents to get information for kids to help them with school work".

Cheryl Miller- "This program has been very successful for my family and me. Having a computer at home has been very helpful in so many ways. My child spends more time on the computer doing her homework. I'm able to pay my bills online and I don't have to go out in the cold to pay my bills. I hope this program will continue to benefit other families. The support team are very supportive and helpful. Thank you"!

Aisa Ocasio- "It has been a great experience for me I have learned more about the computers. I enjoyed how to use the computer now. I recommend mothers with children to take these classes because they are very helpful".

Thank you for reading my story and CfAL for helping make a difference in lives of my family.

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