



Community Technology Center Review

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At Edgewood Terrace in DC

Community Preservation and Development Corporation's (CPDC) Community Technology Program is designed to provide the advantages of computer technology to low-income housing communities. The program is currently being developed and implemented at Edgewood Terrace I, a Washington, DC low-income housing complex recently acquired by CPDC.

The Community Technology Program has three components: a community computer center, a job and career training programs for residents, and an Intranet to serve the community.

Training Programs

CPDC believes that computer technology is a powerful tool to help revitalize inner-city communities when coupled with effective social services programs. A major component of the Community Technology Program is its close integration with a comprehensive social services and family support program created to support inner-city residents in their efforts to maintain the family structure and become self-sufficient.

One year ago, two organizations--e.villages and future kid--developed and funded the adult, children's, and seniors' classes at Edgewood Terrace. After three months, CPDC took over management and funding for the programs. One component of the program included a high-profile, successful data-entry and data-management course. To date, 12 Edgewood Terrace residents have been moved off of government aid and now work in the Edgewood Technology Service. The opportunity to manage these data courses enabled CPDC to improve upon the job and career training program concept at Edgewood Terrace.

CPDC is currently expanding its Computer Training Program for for teens, adults and seniors to not only include introductory computer classes (such as the original evillage program), but also include fully credentialed certification courses in network administration, computer programming and advanced computer applications.

In the career training program, students gain hands-on instruction on industry standard equipment, such as SUN Spark 20s, SGI Workstations, and Novell NetWare and Windows NT networks, in an on-site Advanced Computer Applications Center. All Community Technology Program courses integrate life-skills training with computer training and emulate a business environment to better prepare students for the workplace.

EdgeNet

CPDC has received a grant from HUD to wire all Edgewood Terrace units with high-speed data access, giving residents easy home access to EdgeNet, the community Intranet under development. EdgeNet is designed to provide a community-building tool for Edgewood Terrace residents by providing access to the Internet and other powerful resources such as social work and resident services programs. EdgeNet will have community-specific content (most of which will be generated

by the residents), chat rooms and bulletin boards to provide a flexible forum for residents interests, and local and Internet e-mail services. Through an Edgewood Terrace community service program called the Community Investment Program, residents can perform local community service to earn their own computers.

CPDC believes that computer career training programs are particularly well suited to helping poor inner-city residents make the transition from government aid to the business payroll. Currently, the demand for well trained personnel in all computer fields is extremely high, and the pay is good. Computer training programs are inexpensive and efficient in comparison to traditional alternatives. When coupled with effective life-skill training and support services, these programs can be very effective.

About CPDC

CPDC's mission is to create and preserve financially sound, socially responsible affordable housing for low and moderate income individuals and families through acquisition, development and ownership; and further, to develop community service programs, with the participation of the residents, which strengthen their communities and increase opportunities for growth.

CPDC can be found on the Internet at: <http://www.cpd.org>.

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