



community technology centers' network

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YOUTH MULTIMEDIA GRANTS TACKLE COMMUNITY ISSUES ACROSS AMERICA

(Washington, DC) -- Eight U.S. community-based organizations have been awarded grants through the national Youth Visions for Stronger Neighborhood program, in support of their work to engage youth in civic participation projects through multimedia technology.

Youth Visions for Stronger Neighborhoods is an innovative three-year initiative by the Community Technology Centers' Network (CTCNet), funded through Learn and Serve America, a division of the federal Corporation for National and Community Service. Grants provide innovative nonprofit programs with collaborative, peer-driven curriculum development support and evaluation assistance to empower young adults (ages 14-18) to take action on the concerns affecting their communities.

The eight sites selected for 2005-2006 are:

- Appalshop: Appalachian Media Institute (Whitesburg, KY)
- Beyondmedia Education: Girls! Action! Media (Chicago, IL)
- Chinatown Beacon Center (San Francisco, CA)
- DANEnet, in collaboration with Atwood Community Center (Madison, WI)
- Deproduction: The [denverevolution] Production Group (Denver, CO)
- EducationWorks, Inc: Germantown Beacon Center (Philadelphia, PA)
- The Media Aid Center (Los Angeles, CA)
- Wide Angle Community Media (Baltimore, MD)

"We congratulate this year's Youth Visions grantees for the important work they do everyday to ensure that young people are recognized as vital forces for change in their communities," said Kavita Singh, CTCNet Executive Director. "We are proud to provide this opportunity for community technology centers to help build self-esteem, reinforce academic achievement, and encourage a desire for lifelong learning and public service in young adults."

Youth Visions for Stronger Neighborhoods incorporates a six-month afterschool-focused curriculum model that enhances critical thinking skills and civic literacy in young adults. Youth participants interview their families, peers, and community residents to identify potential issues of concern. In-depth research draws upon real-world and online resources, experts, and tools. The resulting knowledge, opinion, and ideas are then synthesized into challenging multimedia presentations, which strengthen technical, content development, project planning, and time-management abilities. Drawing upon their outreach and marketing talents, youth then organize community forums for their final presentations, engaging community residents and decision-makers in dialog and planning regarding solutions to the addressed needs.

"Youth Visions for Stronger Neighborhoods ensures that the energy, commitment, and creative voices of young people in urban and rural America will be heard in the mayor's office, local councils, and neighborhood associations -- anywhere decisions are made that impact where they live, work, and learn," according to CTCNet's Singh. "Communities also benefit from a renewed confidence in utilizing resources and institutions to address needs, regardless of their size and scope.

Since the project's inception in 2004, 23 organizations in 15 states have been supported through project grants totaling nearly half a million dollars. 2006 marks the final year of Youth Visions for Stronger Neighborhood grants. A total of 74 organizations applied and competed for the final grant cycle. CTCNet will seek continued support in order to make the curriculum and program infrastructure available to any interested community organization next fall.

For more information on Youth Visions for Stronger Neighborhoods, please visit:

<http://www.ctcnet.org/youthvisions>

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