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CACTE Partnership Proposal

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Recommended Citation

Beeler, Chelsea; Kennedy, Jaylin; Lawrence, Nate; and Thomas, Andrea, "CACTE Partnership Proposal" (2015). *Senior Year Experience Student Projects*. 1.

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April 9th, 2015

Columbus Adult Career & Technology Education
Columbus, OH 43215
Phone: (614) 580-9163
Email: support@cacte.org

Mr. Todd Tuney
Chief of Communications and External Affairs
Columbus City Schools
270 East State Street
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Mr. Tuney,

Columbus Adult Career & Technology Education (CACTE) organization is an organization that wants to provide locations for adult education courses. These courses are designed to help adults in Columbus, Ohio get more experience and knowledge with technology. This knowledge with technology will be able to help these older adults recover unemployment checks, apply for jobs, and build a resume.

We have partnered with SeniorNet to help with the class structure and the finances to fund this project because there are no grants available for programs that are not GED programs. We are still in search of venues for our learning centers.

We believe that Columbus City Schools is an ideal location for our programs because it will benefit us and Columbus City Schools at the same time. We believe we will showcase the problem, the lack of adult technology courses, our recommendations, and solutions.

We are asking for you and your staff to accept our proposal and consider allowing our program evening hours in Columbus City Schools buildings. Thank you for taking your time and reading our proposal. We are very excited about our next endeavors and we hope that a fantastic district like Columbus City Schools will be able to provide venues for us.

Thank you again for taking time out of your day to read our proposal.

Sincerely,

Chelsea Beeler

Jaylin Kennedy

Nate Lawrence

Andrea Thomas

CACTE Partnership Proposal

Submitted By: Chelsea Beeler, Nate Lawrence,
Jaylin Kennedy, and Andrea Thomas

April 9, 2014

Submitted To: Todd Tuney, Columbus City Schools

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

CACTE is an organization that focuses on adult career technology education in the Columbus and other Ohio areas. Our organization does not offer GED courses but instead offers courses that focus on career building technology courses. These courses will help older adults to achieve the knowledge and capability to submit online resumes and resume building. We offer two types of courses; beginner and advanced. These courses will focus on the technology needed to work in an office style environment. The technology we will focus on providing learning experiences for is not only the traditional computer classes, but also the facsimile, copiers, printers and scanning. In order to fund this project we have partnered with SeniorNet. SeniorNet is an organization that has experience in adult technology education. They have many customers and have been recognized for many awards throughout their twenty nine years of service. Due to the support of SeniorNet, we have financial backing to start offering courses to the older adults in Columbus, Ohio. We are in search for great facilities to house our programs. The facility we are most interested in partnering with is Columbus City Schools. Columbus City Schools would bring a wide variety of benefits to us and we would bring a wide variety of benefits to them. The biggest benefit we would provide to Columbus City Schools is that we would offer an extension to the GED courses they already provide. These GED courses provide an educational base, but with our program, individuals will be more well rounded and better prepared to go off into the job force and even apply for these positions. If we are able to host our programs at Columbus City Schools, we will be able to boost the education of Columbus adult residents so they can help in their children and grandchildren's education.

INTRO:

CACTE, otherwise known as Columbus Adult Career & Technology Education, is an organization that looks to help adults in low income areas develop skills that they can transfer to the workplace. We look to partner with organizations within the community we go into that offer a stable and safe environment for our students. In the past, such organizations have included places like Dayton Public School in Dayton, Ohio. Our curriculum ranges from basic computer skills to advanced PowerPoint and using Word to resume building. We believe that through our program we can help people to gain an upper hand in the job search that will hopefully lead to a better life for them and their families. We believe as a community organization we can help Columbus continue to grow and change for the better.

CACTE has a staff of four that range in multiple areas that help the organization function for the adult students we are educating. The organizational staff is seen below (Appendix B). Andrea is our Class Organization Consultant and Volunteer Coordinator for the Center. She has a grand role that is essential in the working of CACTE. Andrea works with our volunteers and created our class schedule. These class schedules are always in the works and not always the same from session to session. We are always looking for new ways to improve our classes. Chelsea is our Learning Center Liaison. She will be the point of contact for other learning centers in the state and country to learn what is continually going well and going badly. Jaylin is our President of Marketing. He will be in constant contact with our venues and getting feedback from the venues. He will also head up the process of locating new facilities and confirming locations for future years. Nate is our Sponsorship and Partnership Coordinator. He will secure

partnerships and sponsorships and continually locate more in order to ensure constant growth and spreading our purpose.

The whole staff has the same passion in creating a successful center for improving adult career technology. The staff met each other three years ago in a Senior Year Experience course at Otterbein University. In this course the initial idea sparked and it took three additional years of research and hard work to finally be able to present our project to venues. Our whole staff is volunteers, doing this in hopes we will be able to educate older adults and providing better lifestyles for these individuals and their families. We all have started our own careers outside of the learning center, but we all have a personal connection to adult career technology education. Either one of our family members or our family friends have experienced difficulties in obtaining the essential requirements employers require in regards to technology.

DESCRIPTION OF PROBLEM/SOLUTION:

The Columbus, Ohio area has its share of financial problems. In the Franklinton area alone, the poverty rate is at seventy seven percent of the population, the highest we have found in Columbus. In other areas around the city, that number is between thirty and eighty percent. Poverty can be caused by a number of things, one of which is lack of jobs. Many people who do not have a good paying job that can support a household only have a GED or did not finish high school. However, another problem is that some of the population does not know how to use the basics technologies that we take for granted, young and old. Almost all jobs in the United States require that you be able to use some kind of computer or other technology. In other words, if you cannot use technology efficiently, you will not be hired.

Let us look at the beginning of one's job search. You are someone in search of job, what is your first step? You may look in the classifieds of the local paper, but more than likely you would search a job finder website on the internet. After you find a job you are interested in, you would proceed to fill out the application and upload the resume that you have recently typed up and proofread. From there you would send in your application and resume and hope that you receive a call or email from the employer. Think about this though...what if you do not know how to use the internet, let alone a computer? You would be done before you even start. As we have mentioned before, almost any job that has an opening requires you to go online to apply for said job. And unfortunately for those who do not have the proper education in technology, but could be perfect candidates in other ways, have no chance of applying.

Another problem for adults who do not have an understanding of how to use technology is that they are at a disadvantage when it comes to their child's education. Almost every school in the state of Ohio has a website. These websites keep parents informed about the goings on at their child's school, allow them to check their child's grades, and see what their child is learning in his or her class. In the past year, we have also seen the start of E-Lessons in schools. This is a lesson that is developed by a teacher in preparation for a snow day. The student completes this lesson at home so that they do not fall behind. Let's think about the parents and/or grandparents who do not have a technology background. How would they be able to check their students' grades, get in touch with a teacher, or even help their child with their homework? New curriculums in school are even making it so that children have to use computers to do their

classwork. That child is at a disadvantage if the parent does not have the technology in the home to help them.

Through CACTE, adults will be able to bridge the gap between themselves and an education in technology. Through our programs, we can help them to gain an understanding of basic computer skills, resume building, how to use the internet, as well as many other options. Our hope is that with more and more adults in the area gaining this knowledge we will be able to build not just a stronger community but families as well. However, we still need a location to run our program from and that is why we would like you, Columbus City Schools, Gladden House, and St. John's Episcopal Church. You would help us provide, a safe learning environment that is already well established within the community that is also accessible.

METHODS AND RESULTS:

The CACTE organization researched and interviewed many partner possibilities in order to make sure we were able to provide technology education to older adults in the Columbus, Ohio area. Throughout the partnership search CACTE wanted to make sure we found somebody who fit our mission and has experience in the adult technology education world. Our other core need in a partner is the credibility they bring in a startup organization and the awards they have received. In our research we interviewed organizations and organizations interviewed us and we found our best fit in SeniorNet. One organization we found that did not fit what we were looking for was Connect Ohio. Connect Ohio is a wonderful organization that is regional but they unfortunately specialize in GED courses. Another organization we investigated but that did not completely fit what we were looking for was Connecting Rural Ohio Wireless Neighborhood Project and the Ohio Learning Network. The Ohio Learning Network is a website learning course that allows adults to go on and sharpen their knowledge of computer technology. This is a great network for adults and computer technology but it was not an ideal fit. The reason why this was not an ideal fit was that Ohio Learning Network does not give access to those individuals that do not have the funds for a computer. The other reason why we decided not to partner with Connecting Rural Ohio Wireless Neighborhood Project and their flagship course, Ohio Learning Network, is because they do not go over the basics of a computer and other technology. All of these organizations are a great resource for us, however, as we can get feedback from them on what they have experienced in adult education.

Another vital part of our research went into making sure that our solutions were plausible. After coming together to form our organization based on our interest on the lack of technological education for adults in the Columbus area, we began to brainstorm solutions. We decided that we wanted to create classes for those who need them, but we needed more information to back our solution. Through many hours of researching articles and charts, we came across a multitude of useful and valuable information. One useful bit of information we found was the wage gain for on-the-job internet use. On average, people who use the internet on their job are paid 13.5% higher wages than those who do not. We also found an article detailing an experiment on technological job skills increase. This article showed that over 11 years in London technological job skills steadily increased, and even faster for women than for men. Our research also brought us across the history of a similar program instituted at Syracuse University. This program, originally titled All-University Gerontology Center (AUGC), now Computers and the Elderly Program, started in the 1980's and had considerable success. These findings, along

with those found through the rest of our research, gave us the supporting information we needed to ensure us that our plans could be successful.

One of the main reasons CACTE needs to gain more partnerships is for financial assistance. There are no grants out there focused on adult technology education. The education grants for adults are mostly for going back for their GED or going to college later in life. There are no specific grants that we could apply for with such a narrow focus. Partnering with another organization would allow for CACTE to fund equipment and services that would be provided to the adults taking classes.

RECOMMENDATIONS/SOLUTIONS/IMPLICATIONS:

Due to the fact that there are no grants being awarded for adult technology classes that are not GED courses, CACTE will be partnering with SeniorNet to successfully create a central Ohio organization to provide a healthy adult technology education center. SeniorNet is a nonprofit organization founded in 1986 to better “older” adults’ education in the technology world. SeniorNet will be able to bring the structure of the learning center and the backing to our purpose. Also, SeniorNet does not have any learning centers in central Ohio and CACTE will help fulfill their mission statement in giving technology access to older adults (Appendix A). This partnership will benefit SeniorNet a lot because we will be providing the organization an opportunity to locate in central Ohio. Another benefit to SeniorNet is that we will be getting the sites for the center and implementing our curriculum, so they will not need to help with the actual running of the site.

SeniorNet currently has thirty six United States locations and four international locations. They currently have one location in Ohio. The location is in Medina, Ohio. The Medina SeniorNet has a beginner course, intermediate course and an experienced course. Medina has had great success with their learning center and we will be continuing the brand of SeniorNet in the Columbus, Ohio area. We believe the Columbus, Ohio location will be able to help SeniorNet to get closer to their goal of providing “older” adults with a chance to get educated in technology.

The day to day operations of the site will be run by CACTE. CACTE has a staff of four that help with many different areas of the company (See Appendix B). These staff members will be able to provide day to day operations to ensure that SeniorNet will not have to provide that important procedure for the Columbus area learning centers. Also, we will be a branch off of SeniorNet’s organization. SeniorNet has a membership fee that customers must pay in order to attend most classes, CACTE will not be using this method, but we will be offering courses at a range of prices. Our classes will be free courses. This will allow our customers to be able to receive education without hampering their day to day living expenses for their families. We are still locating donors who can help subsidize the free courses. We want every adult who needs career technology education to participate in these programs. Therefore, we will not be charging a class fee for these individuals. Our ultimate goal is not to make money; instead it is to provide a healthy environment for adults to come together and learn about career technology.

CACTE will benefit extremely from this partnership which will also benefit our learning center home site. We will benefit for many reasons. One big reason is that SeniorNet is an established organization with many awards and good community of customers (20,000

worldwide). Another reason why CACTE will benefit from a partnership with SeniorNet is because they will be able to help market the programs we will offer. The marketing that they will be able to bring is first and foremost their website. Even though the people we are seeking to help are not able to use their website at first, their relatives and friends can locate this for them. SeniorNet will be a great asset to the newly organized CACTE organization, where CACTE can get guidance and advice from the well organized SeniorNet. SeniorNet has such a well organized reputation that they have won multiple national awards. These awards bring national recognition and respect, therefore will bring credibility towards the new career centers in Columbus, Ohio. SeniorNet received the 2007 Alliance for Public Technology Susan B. Hadden Pioneer Award for its 20 years of connecting older adults with information technologies.

At CACTE we believe that implementing the potential program would be widely beneficial. Not only will we benefit by succeeding in our attempts to help, but also the community will benefit from the help we provide. Adults, especially older adults, who lack technological skills, are at a disadvantage in life for many reasons. One of those reasons being the job market. In today's world you not only need technological skills to perform most jobs, but you need at least basic skills to even apply for jobs. Those adults who lack such skills will be hard pressed to find positions in which they can make a living. Aside from jobs, there are also problems in everyday life such as using smart phones or self-checkouts at grocery stores. By having a better understanding of technology, which is what we look to provide, these everyday struggles can be solved making daily life easier for those who lack the ability to simply navigate through these everyday tasks.

By educating adults on using technology, we not only help solve a current problem, we also work towards preventing a similar problem in the future. Currently the adults that we are targeting are unable to help develop the technological knowledge and skills of their children and/or grandchildren. Their inability to help can be a real hindrance for these children as the lack of supplemental learning at home can them to be in a similar situation later in life. These programs can help those adults in aiding the learning process of the youth, creating a more technologically adept community as well as setting the youth up for more successful futures.

Not only can these programs benefit the community by creating brighter youths, making current adults better prepared for the job market, and easing the life of older adults, but they can also be beneficial to our potential partners. SeniorNet could be a major beneficiary if partnered with such a program. The global organization could benefit from a partnership with CACTE by extending its already far-spanning reach. Currently SeniorNet only has one Ohio learning center, which is located in Medina Ohio. By partnering with CACTE, SeniorNet will be able to have a learning center in Ohio's capital. A Columbus location could even result in more locations throughout the state as the capital city's push for adult technological education could influence other areas of the state to follow suit. Also the benefits from the partnership could be easily achieved by the organization as all they would have to provide is a structural model and backing and CACTE will execute the educational plans. This is a very low risk situation with a possibility for a high reward.

Another possible beneficiary would be Columbus City Schools and their GED programs. If our programs are housed in their facilities, those adults working towards GEDs who may need technological education as well will surely be able to attend our programs. Once these people

receive education in both areas they will be perfectly capable of finding and holding most jobs. Their success could be beneficial to Columbus City Schools in multiple ways. One benefit would be the success of these adults potentially encouraging others to attend these programs at their schools. Along with benefiting by possibly bringing more people into their GED programs, we believe that it could also have a positive influence on their schools. These more educated adults will now be able to help in the education process of their children, in turn creating more effective schools according to the standards set by the state.

To implement an adult career technology education program we need customers to sign up for the courses. The first step we would take in locating customers would be to use our partners, SeniorNet and our potential new venues. SeniorNet will be able to put advertisement of their new partnership on their website and continue to attract individuals through their website, as previously stated above. Our venues will be a big help for attracting customers as well. Our venues will be able to provide a location for us to drop off flyers, send home letters, and spread the word about CACTE. If Columbus City Schools was one of our venues, we would be able to send home a letter with all the students to the parents. These letters would contain CACTE and SeniorNet's goal and what our programs provide. We would showcase our class schedule and provide our email address and phone number. If Gladden Community House and St. John's Episcopal Church in Franklinton was one of our venues, we would be able to showcase our letter and flyer on their bulletin boards and spread the word by setting up an informational table for questions by the individuals who use these facilities. We would set up these informational tables on a couple days of the week and two members from our staff will be there to answer questions and promote our newly created courses. More details about the informational tables would be ironed out at a later date when we can set up the best times to offer these with the venues.

CACTE will provide courses that are broken into two levels, beginner and advanced. In the beginner class, the adults would learn basic computing skills, including typing and basic navigation. Basic navigation includes using a mouse and keyboard, opening and closing windows or files, saving files on the computer or a flash drive, etc. These classes will help individuals who may be older and have never had any reason to try to learn how to use a computer or similar technology.

The second level course would be for adults that understand the basic computing skills and wish to move into more career focused skills. This advanced course would focus on teaching students how to use the different features of Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint etc. The advanced classes would also incorporate classes for resume building. Students would then learn how to search for jobs and apply online using their resume. The need for adults to know how to write a resume and cover letter is important in finding a job. Also, we would focus on teaching the students how to properly word professional emails and how to work different email services including Microsoft Office, Gmail, Yahoo Mail and others.

As of December 2014, Ohio's unemployment rate was at 5.1%. Which was slightly below the national average of 5.6%. In order for individuals to receive unemployment in Ohio, they are required to complete courses and show proof of actively looking for a job. These processes have become increasingly online-based, and if individuals do not know how to use the computer to complete these forms, they will lose their benefits. The application process for most positions is now an online procedure. People who do not know how to use a computer to search

for positions or fill out the resume portion and submit, will not be able to apply for these positions. CACTE can provide the necessary education to adults to help them to find employment in central Ohio.

CONCLUSION:

As we have discussed, this program has the potential to change the lives of those in the community of Columbus, Ohio. The ability to use a computer is not something that we readily think about in this day in age. The constant availability of technology to society drives us to believe that everyone has the ability to use it. This is just not the case. When you first started to use a computer, someone had to teach you as well. You did not just automatically know how to use a flash drive or even the keyboard. How can we expect anyone to just know? Just like learning to walk or read, it required someone to show us how and have the patience to work with us. It took a lot of consistent practice.

With the establishment of CACTE, we will be able to not only bring a new understanding of technology to adults who otherwise would not have it, but we can help those who are struggling to find jobs or in everyday life because of this lack of information. The possibility of unemployment and poverty rates lowering in the city as a result of this program should be enough to drive all our workers and volunteers to work hard to create the best learning environment for our students. Our partnership with SeniorNet has opened a financial door that we need to jump on right away. To not do so would be a sad loss of a valuable resource and opportunity for the community.

One thing still remains for this program to get off the ground, and that is you. CACTE cannot operate or be a success without a safe and convenient learning environment. We are asking you, Columbus City Schools, St. John's Episcopal Church, and Gladden House to help with this. Columbus City Schools already has an established GED program and we feel that with this partnership we can better enhance the quality of each other's programs. Each of you provide a convenient location within the city that would be ideal for our students, especially those who rely on public transportation. Each of you is already a visible and important establishment in the community that people depend on, and our program will only help with this.

We thank you for your consideration of our program and hope that you will, indeed, choose to partner with us. Our organization has worked hard to develop and establish this curriculum and hope that it shows a positive change in the Columbus community.

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APPENDICES:

Appendix A

Mission Statement

SeniorNet's mission is to provide older adults education for and access to computer technologies to enhance their lives and enable them to share their knowledge and wisdom. In addition to providing education to older adults, we also provide computer education to veterans, the underserved, disabled, and those with impairments.

Appendix B

Organizational Staff

Andrea- Class Organization Consultant and Volunteer Coordinator for the Center

Chelsea- Learning Center Liaison

Jaylin- President of Marketing

Nate- Sponsorship and Partnership Coordinator

Appendix C

5.1% (Dec 2014)

Ohio, Unemployment rate



Appendix D

The screenshot displays the Westerville City School District website. The main content area is titled 'Core 8 View Blog' and features a 'Description' section with a 'M3a' logo. To the right is a 'Calendar' for April 2015. Below the description are sections for 'Announcements' (including 'Online Textbook' and '3rd Quarter Extra Credit'), 'Files / Links' (with links for 'Class Discussion', 'Homework Syllabi', and 'Class Documents'), and 'Image Gallery' (stating 'No Slideshows Available'). The footer includes copyright information for 2007-2015 Westerville City School District and contact information for Westerville City Schools, including the address, phone number, and fax number.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We want to thank our consulting partner at Otterbein Professor Dr. Daugherty. She was instrumental in providing resources and giving feedback in the progress of this upstart organization. She also provided us the spark to start this organization.

We would also like to thank Chelsie House of Heritage Middle School in Westerville, OH for allowing us to use her class website and informing us of the importance of parents/grandparents being able to use technology to better help their children.

We would like to also thank Michelle Williams, Director of Public Relations for SeniorNet. She was very instrumental in answering the questions we had regarding the partnership and history of SeniorNet.