



*“Charlottesville is a finite place. There will undoubtedly be shining stars coming out of Computers4Kids, students who will go on to make a difference in the community. Many of them will perhaps get jobs in fields they otherwise wouldn’t have imagined.”*

– Mark Giles, Chairman of the Board, Virginia National Bank  
Computers4Kids Board Member



945 Second Street SE  
Charlottesville, VA 22902  
www.computers4kids.net  
**434.817.1121**  
info@computers4kids.net

## Success after Computers4Kids: Graduates Go Far and Come Full Circle

As Computers4Kids (C4K) approaches the 10th anniversary of our mentoring program, we are excited to start seeing the long term impact of involvement in Computers4Kids for our students. We have found that 97% of mentored students tracked by C4K have graduated from high school. In contrast, 70% of all economically disadvantaged students living in Charlottesville graduate from high school on time. Our students are attending college, and they are returning to C4K to become the next generation of mentors to at-risk youth in the Charlottesville-Albemarle community.

### Meeting a Community Need

In a locality where there is a demonstrated lack of adequate after-school programming for older, low-income youth, C4K is meeting a critical need. 54% of youth living in Charlottesville qualify for free or reduced price school lunches, and according to the Charlottesville-Albemarle Commission on Children and Families, this number is growing. Youth who live in homes with fewer resources have less access to technology, are more likely to engage in risky behaviors, and are more likely to drop out of high school. Local and national experts, as well as parents and youth in our community, have recognized that access to after-school programming is a much needed protective factor for our youth. Mentoring in particular, is a powerful tool for helping students believe in their own abilities and meet their potential. C4K recognizes this as well, and has created a winning combination: after-school mentoring that enables students to develop the technology skills essential to success in academic and career settings.

### Facts

- In its 10 short years of existence, C4K has already reached out to provide one-on-one mentoring and technology training to over 600 low-income middle and high school students living in Charlottesville and Albemarle County. Over 500 students have earned a free home computer system.
- We have found that 97% of mentored students tracked by C4K have graduated from high school. In contrast, 70% of all economically disadvantaged students living in Charlottesville graduate from high school on time. Of the 118 students we know have graduated from high school, 94% have confirmed they went on to college.
- C4K is working to create a cycle of success, where volunteers from the community help train the next generation of mentors. Six former C4K students have already made a contribution to the community by returning to C4K to mentor.

**Tadelech** is a former student who came to C4K because she thought she would eventually need computer skills for a job. She says, *“Everything about my C4K experience was valuable. It was helpful for school, and it was helpful for the future. I used the home computer I received from C4K for a long time. I taught my dad a few basic things and he used it too. The computer skills I learned at C4K made it possible for me to really build more advanced skills once I got to PVCC.”*



**Robert** is a C4K graduate who maintained his involvement with C4K over the years, even after graduating from the program. While in high school, Robert struggled to overcome learning disabilities. During this time he continued to use the computer lab, seek guidance from his mentor, and draw support from C4K staff. Robert credits his academic success to the encouragement he received at C4K, and stays in touch with staff. He was recently selected to be a 2011 recipient of Virginia Commonwealth University's "Black History in the Making Award." This award recognizes students who exhibit outstanding achievements and are expected to make a difference in the world. Robert is currently applying to graduate programs in Social Work.

**Erica** is a former C4K student who attended Buford Middle School and walked to C4K's Learning Lab every day after school. Erica liked the environment at C4K, and the Learning Lab was a positive place for her to be while her mom was at work. Erica says, "accessing the computers, printers, and other supplies at C4K made getting my homework done much easier." She also made her own website, learned about computer programming, and earned a free home computer. Erica now attends Virginia Commonwealth University. In the Spring of 2011, she will provide a group of current C4K students with a personal tour of her university. Erica has maintained her connection to C4K and wants to help encourage the next generation of C4K students to make college a part of their future.



**Florance** is currently a student at Piedmont Virginia Community College and is hoping to transfer to the University of Virginia. In the fall of 2010, C4K was honored to feature Florance as the keynote speaker at our 15th Graduation Ceremony. As a C4K graduate who has already mentored her first student, Florance was an inspiration to our students, mentors, family members, and friends who were present for this special event.

### Community Support: Your Impact

You can help C4K give local at-risk students the tools for success, and the chance to make their own positive contribution to our community. You can make a direct impact on the life of a local student by investing in C4K. In addition to a track record of recognition for program success, C4K has a history of effectively drawing on community resources to both raise funds and keep costs low through donations of in-kind services. C4K's annual operating budget is below \$500,000. 90 cents out of every dollar donated goes directly to program costs and services provided to deserving students. The generosity of our supporters is what sustains our efforts to give students a vibrant learning environment and a knowledgeable support system so that they have every chance of success. We need your help to continue actively breaking the cycle of poverty, not only preventing students from dropping out of high school to face unemployment, low wage jobs, or worse, but also helping students to realize their full potential and make a positive contribution to our local community.

*Pictured above:*

*Erica and her sister; Florance speaking at Graduation 2010.*

