



TWICE in the Community
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The Women in Computer Engineering, or TWICE, at The Ohio State University work together on both research projects and projects centered around improving the community. This poster focuses on the community projects. It is important to us that we share our knowledge of computing throughout the community, since many of the residents lack formal education in computing skills, and would not otherwise be given the opportunity to learn these skills. Some of our current projects involve the creation of public computing centers, where residents who cannot afford to purchase a personal computer can learn how to create documents and surf the Internet. Other projects involve instructing residents in the use of computers. Still other projects aim to use technology to spread information about other campus area improvement campaigns. The following are TWICE's current community projects:

Computer Club for Girls

Through the Weinland Park Elementary School after School Computer Club for Girls, fourth- and fifth-graders are gaining important computer skills. Led by Eva Bradshaw, the Director of Technology and Enhanced Learning for Ohio State's College of Human Ecology, the program is in its second year. The goal is to teach the girls about and interest them in computers. TWICE members serve as mentors, with the hope of showing that computing is fun.

The group, named "Computer Girls: Don't Hate, Congratulate" by the girls, meets once a week for two hours. Meetings are held at Maynard United Methodist Church, and funding comes from 4-H. Attendance ranges from 6 to 11 any given week, with an average of 4 adults helping. A typical afternoon consists of snack time, the 4-H pledge and Pledge of Allegiance, review of the past several weeks, and hands-on experience on the computers. Topics covered so far include computer components, word processing/formatting, and the Internet. Each participant is also keeping a glossary of newly-learned words. The computer club is fun and educational for both the students and the helpers.

Godman Guild / Maynard Avenue Church

The TWICE group has also helped to set up computer centers around the campus area, with the purpose of giving the children and youth of the neighborhood in which the centers are located a place to learn basic computing skills. The first, and largest, is called the Godman Guild, which is affiliated with The Ohio State University Extension

Learning; this program reaches out to the neighborhoods surrounding campus. The computer center on the Godman Guild site was built and is maintained for use by the Columbus area, with a focus on teaching basic computer skills to the youth. Also, the computers have been loaded with software designed to help better prepare them for school, such as proficiency testing and SAT or ACT testing programs.

The second computer center built by the TWICE group is located in the Maynard Avenue Church. This is actually an extension of the Godman Guild, but this site is more focused on the youth of the surrounding community. The 12 computers there were all donated to the group, and TWICE was able to help by putting the computers together and making them useable for the patrons. Also, a weekly checkup is conducted, with recommendations for improving the systems. This center also hosts the aforementioned Computer Club for Girls.

UAEA

Another project currently underway by members of TWICE is the construction of a website for the University Area Enrichment Association. This project is a means of communicating information regarding campus area activities, locations of various facilities such as recycling centers and computer centers, property, local businesses, and much more to university area residents. The website will eventually contain sections where residents can communicate with one another via message boards, as well as view information about living in the neighborhood, what properties are for sale, and local small business job opportunities. Some of the goals that the UAEA has for what the website will accomplish are to encourage home ownership in the area, to encourage physical activity among residents, and to provide a means by which residents can set up neighborhood activities. Completed up to this point are the setup of the message boards, and the construction of several sample web pages, into which will be put the content.

The community residents greatly appreciate the time and effort TWICE puts into proliferating the use of technology throughout the campus area. However, we would be unable to provide our services, generally for free to non-profit campus groups, without the support of our sponsors, Microsoft, GE, C.A.S.T., and CRA Committee on the Status of Women in Computing Research.

