

**W.E.B. DuBois Learning Center
5501 Cleveland Ave.
Kansas City, Missouri 64130**

DuBois Telehub Network Initiative

The W.E.B. DuBois Learning Center (DLC) has been a model for supplemental education, self-help and community action since its inception in 1973. Volunteers are the foundation of the DLC, with roughly 100 active volunteers and only two paid staff. Its long-running free tutorial programs for children in Math, Reading and Science have attracted volunteers from many professions. These have included volunteers from the field of Information Technology who have instituted computerized assessments for tutorial programs and added a Computer Science program with classes for students and adults, including a Cisco Certified Network Academy. In 1999, with the talents and experience of these volunteers, the DLC created a Telecommunication Hub Initiative (Telehub) to extend the reach of scarce educational and technology resources to the underserved community.

- The DuBois Telehub provides free community access to computer technology and the Internet through satellite sites located in community churches and community centers.
- Objectives of the Telehub include promoting and encouraging participating sites to provide supplemental educational programs for children, and providing training and access to technology for the community.
- The network utilizes wireless and VPN connections to reach satellites, with centralized network infrastructure located at the DLC and maintained by its volunteers.
- In 2002, the DLC erected a 190-foot tower, "The Beacon of Hope" to support expansion the Telehub to additional neighborhoods and support expansion to new sites.
- The Telehub has grown into a network of 16 sites with over 3,200 registered users, with requests to participate from more than 20 additional churches and community centers.
- The Telehub serves as the common link for the development of after-school and tutorial programs for area students, and a full-day free Summer Academic Camp that served over 750 children in the summer of 2004.
- The Telehub has fostered community computer training, including one site that has provided internet and email training classes for over 100 senior citizens.
- Utilizing local experience and success, in 2003 the Telehub extended VPN connections to Detroit and Chicago, developing partnerships with community organizations in those cities.
- The Telehub has attracted the support of corporations and foundations, including Microsoft, General Electric-Employers Reinsurance Corp., Sprint, Blue Cross & Blue Shield, Honeywell and the Kauffman Foundation.

The DuBois Learning Center maintains two websites, www.duboisl.org and www.duboisl.net which provide additional detail about the Telehub project, the Center's programs, and a wealth of educational tools and links to serve the community-at-large.