Computers for Schools

Putting Refurbished Computer Equipment into Schools and Related Institutions Across Nova Scotia

April 2008

This Issue

The novaKnowledge Association

Computers for Schools Nova Scotia would not be able to operate without a non-profit organization acting as an umbrella for us. The program has been fortunate to have the novaKnowledge Association as our umbrella since the beginning.

novaKnowledge first opened their doors in 1993. novaKnowledge is a member-based organization that is "dedicated to the development of a flourishing, sustainable knowledge economy in Nova Scotia". The new motto for the organization is to promote change and stimulate action within the knowledge economy of Nova Scotia. They are able to accomplish this by spearheading various events and programs including debates, luncheons, assemblies and a Knowledge Economy Report Card that is published once a year.

The Computers for Schools Nova Scotia program has been one of novaKnowledge's proud accomplishments since we have been a successful project of theirs for over 14 years. Computers for Schools Nova Scotia is also proud to have an organization like novaKnowledge as one our partners and looks forward to a continued successful relationship for years to come.

novaknowledge

Behind forward thinking.

Donate Your Surplus Computers

Does your company have computers you no longer use or plan to upgrade? If so, donate them to the Computers for Schools program and they will be refurbished and put into public schools, private schools, First Nations schools, libraries, and related institutions across Nova Scotia. These computers will be used to further the IT learning of children and adults alike. Please call Stacy at 424-3596 or email trp@ednet.ns.ca for further details. We provide tax receipts for eligible equipment and will pick up the equipment from your company as well. Please read our Acceptable Equipment for Donation section on page 2 for more details.

Your Computers Make a Difference

There are currently 40,342 computers in the public school system that are being used to further the education of the students of today and workers of tomorrow. 45% of the computers have been placed into the public school system by Computers for Schools Nova Scotia Program. In 1996 the student-to-computer ratio was 24:1. In 2007 the student-to-computer ratio was 4.3:1. The computers distributed to the schools by CFSNS have helped lower that ratio.

In addition to the computers that have been placed within the public school system, there have been just as many computers placed in First Nations schools, private schools, libraries, Community Access Program (C@P) sites, literacy programs and non-profit organizations by Computers for Schools Nova Scotia.

This wonderful success and accomplishment would not have happened without the donated computer equipment received from the federal and provincial governments as well as the private sector organizations. Your organization could be a

A pallet of CPUs ready for use in a school.

part of this success and able to say that you have contributed to technology needs of today's students. Below is a description of the equipment that we accept that can be put to use in our program.

How the Standards Have Changed

The latest computer standards change faster than any other technology in any industry. What was current six months ago could be considered out-dated today. For this reason Computers for Schools Nova Scotia has had to continually increase our minimum standard of computer that we will accept and put into the school system so that the equipment we are refurbishing is useable by the students. Each year CFSNS consults with the provincial school boards to discuss the minimum standard, and it is decided with their input.

In January 1994 the minimum standard of computer that was being refurbished and distributed to the recipients was a PC XT with 128 Kb of memory, a 360 Kb double-sided 5 ¼" floppy drive, a 10 Mb Seagate ST-412 hard drive. Today, April 2008, the minimum standard is a Pentium IV, 512 Mb of memory and 20 Gb hard drive.

Computers shipped to date:

45,520

Acceptable Equipment for Donation

Each year Computers for Schools in co-operation with the Nova Scotia School Boards set a minimum standard of computer that they will accept. This is based on what they require the computer to be used for, therefore the school boards assist us in determining what computer equipment is useable in the school system for the next year. The minimum standard computer that is being put into our schools for 2008/2009 is: P4 CPU, 256 Mb RAM, 20 Gb Hard Drive, CD ROM, NIC Card and Sound Card.

Computers for Schools, co-founded in 1993 by Industry Canada and the Telecom Pioneers, refurbishes computers and related equipment donated by governments and businesses. These computers are distributed across Canada to schools, libraries and registered not-for-profit learning organizations.

Our History ....

Computers for Schools Nova Scotia began in January 1994. It was an idea created by a few people that saw there was a shortage of computers in our schools and there were surplus computers everywhere. How can we use the surplus to supplement the computer technology demands of our schools? A pilot project was proposed to the Federal Government and limited funding was received. A Steering Committee was formed to run the CFSNS Program which included representatives from novaKnowledge, Department of Education, Aliant, Nova Scotia Teachers' Union, Nova Scotia School Boards Association and The Home and School Association. The Technology Recycling Program was formed.

While Nova Scotia was busy setting up the steering committee and getting the pilot program off the ground, a meeting was held in Ottawa to discuss the possibility of this idea becoming a national program. Soon after, every province and territory in Canada had a program operating in their provinces and the Computers for Schools Program was formed.

There have been many changes in the 14 years since our beginning

TWEP Technicians hired to date:

241

but the mandate of providing computers to Nova Scotia schools has remained—it has been expanded to include other similar organizations over the years. With all the changes that have taken place, there still remain constants that have helped CFSNS grow and succeed. A few of those constants are the partners like Nova Scotia Department of Education who have been with CFSNS since the beginning and Bernie Hart, Chair of our Steering Committee. He has been the only Chair CFSNS has ever had and still continues to be a valuable part of the program.

Since inception CFSNS has distributed more than 45,000 computers. Of course, the first computers we put into the schools, are no longer in operation but have been replaced year after year with our new and improved minimum standard models.

In 1997 the program expanded to include a Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC) program called "Technical Work Experience Program". This program was aimed at recent IT graduates that were looking for their first work experience after graduating. Since then, CFSNS has helped over 240 young IT graduates gain their first time work experience so they could go on to get jobs for organizations such as IBM,

Department of National Defence, school boards across the province and even the Island of Belize.

Today we operate five workshops across the province and distribute an average of 5,000 computers per year. Everyone involved in the program looks forward to many more years of continued success, and to adding to our already impressive history.

Our Partners

Industry Canada   Industrie Canada
Computers for Schools

novaknowledge
behind forward thinking.

NOVA SCOTIA
Education

Pioneers
Aliant Volunteers

Canadä

Aliant Pioneer Volunteers

Aliant has been a partner in Computers for Schools Nova Scotia through the Aliant Pioneer Volunteers since almost the beginning of our program. Over the years they have provided CFSNS with volunteers, equipment and warehouse space and use of a van for travel and pick-up of equipment. The use of the Van alone is a contribution that is worth more than $10,000 annually to the program.

In addition to the above-mentioned support, Aliant Pioneer Volunteers also sit as members on our steering committee that is responsible for Computers for Schools Nova Scotia.

Van provided by Aliant Pioneer Volunteers to the CFSNS Program.

Aliant Pioneer Volunteers have also been a wonderful supporter of CFSNS and are always willing to help us in any way they can. Their continued contributions and support are much appreciated by everyone involved in the CFSNS Program.

"The Aliant Pioneer Volunteers are thrilled to have been involved with the Computers for Schools Program since its inception. Our volunteers help in the refurbishment of computers throughout Atlantic Canada and have volunteered tens of thousands of hours to this great program."

*— Michael Sears, Executive Director,
Aliant Pioneer Volunteers*

Tax Receipts

We provide tax receipts for all equipment that has a current market value. To determine the current market value, all data concerning the equipment including the hard drive size, the amount of RAM, the processor speed, etc., are entered into a program that we use, which then calculates the current market value for us. Tax receipts are provided to our clients courtesy of the Nova Scotia Provincial Government.

We will do an appraisal of the donated equipment, provide you with the appraised value, and you approve the appraisal. We then forward the signed appraisal to the Provincial Government and they will issue you a tax receipt. This process takes approximately three weeks from the time of donation.