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**The Development of CATNeT – the
Coalition to Access Technology and
Networking in Toledo**

Internship Report

(Note: this document's Web links may be out of date; please visit the Urban Affairs web site, <http://uac.utoledo.edu>, for the latest links to CATNeT.)

The Development of CATNeT – The Coalition to Access Technology and Networking in Toledo

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Chapter 1 – Creation

CATNeT is the Coalition to Access Technology and Networking in Toledo. CatNet is a recently formed coalition of over 30 community-based organizations, housing complexes, institutions and businesses whose purpose is to empower low income citizens and community-based organizations through providing or facilitation access to computers and computer training.

The idea behind CATNeT began in multiple places at multiple times, but the organizations of the coalition began with John Kiely of Vistula Management. John was instrumental in directing the multitude of ideas into an active coalition. In 1996 Vistula Management successfully applied for \$200,00 of HUD (Housing and Urban Development) funding from the Neighborhood Networks program in order to establish computer labs in six Vistula low-income housing sites. As John Kiely from Vistula Management was telling other about Vistula's computer project, he found a multitude of organizations and institutions interested in the same issue, that is, equal access to technology. In the fall of 1996, he invited these people to a meeting to discuss our common interests (see attached letter). Over 30 community-based organizations, institutions and residents of Vistula's low-income housing sites offered a description of their program or their perception of the equal access issue. Randy Stoecker and I were invited to the meeting based on our involvement with Toledo portion of the UUNN-Urban University and Neighborhood Network. The UUNN was a coalition of university and neighborhood representatives in the seven states of Ohio with urban universities.

The UUNN's first project had focused on the computer and technical access that community groups do not have.

CATNeT Meetings and Activities

John, Randy, and I began organizing monthly meetings to define the group's goals and determine exactly how we wanted to accomplish them. Working under the auspices of the Toledo UUNN, and its meager resources, I sent out the notices, called interested individuals and organizations, and prepared agenda. We began calling ourselves CATNeT – The Coalition to Access Technology and Networking in Toledo. The attendance at the meetings varied but there were always at least 20 people at each meeting. Some individuals and organizations were involved at every meeting while others came and went. (A current list of CATNeT members is attached.) We always had at least a couple new faces at each meeting, due in large part to John Kiely spreading the word about our group.

With up to 40 people at a meeting, we decided to use a working group model to more effectively discuss the issues. After much discussion we split into the following target groups: children and families, seniors, disabled, non-profits and small businesses, and technology. The working group model allowed greater participation for all present. Each working group came back to the larger group with similar results. All groups recognized the inequality of computers software and Internet access.. They all wanted to find ways to make these items available to people who could not afford them. Among other things, the groups suggested public access sites in locations close to the people who needed them, give low-income people used computers, and hardware, software, Internet, and web design training. Each group also discussed issues relevant to their particular

target population, such as the disabled group wanting assistive technology for disabled individuals.

Using the University of Toledo computer-training lab, we held five Internet training sessions. The first was to show people what was possible with a community network (what we were talking about creating). The need for four training sessions was held because the group asked for them. Each training session started out as an Internet training session and transformed into basic computer usage, Windows, and WWW training session geared toward those present.

At the beginning, John, Randy, and I met before each general CATNeT meeting to set the agenda and discuss CATNeT's progress. In March we began having steering committee meetings, partially, for this purpose. The steering committee meetings were also organized to discuss the results of the group work. Each group nominated a representative to attend the steering committee meeting. In the smaller group we were able to ask each other specific questions about the group work and clarify ambiguous points. Our regular schedule consisted of one steering committee meeting a few weeks after each monthly general CATNeT meeting. When the time came to prepare the TIIAP grant application the steering committee meetings were scheduled more frequently.

In preparation for the TIIAP (Telecommunications Information and Infrastructure Assistance Program) grant proposal, but also as part of the CATNeT planning process, we also began a series of research projects into the needs and desires of senior citizens, small businesses, people with disabilities, and disability service providers. Through a partnership of students from a graduate research methods class taught by Randy, Vistula

Management staff, and CATNeT members, we ran focus groups, sent a mail survey to small businesses, conducted a phone survey of disability service providers, and conducted a phone survey of local Internet service providers. This research was to verify what we had already been learning through the CATNeT planning process, recruit more participants into the CATNeT process, and provide some baseline measures for later evaluation. For focus groups, Vistula staff brought in four laptop computers for people to use the day before the focus group, since many of the focus group participants had no experience with computers, thus combining the focus group research with beginning computer training. The phone survey of disabled service providers helped bring two representatives of those organizations to CATNeT meetings.

The press, of the TIIAP grants application deadline disrupted our participatory process. The grant required specific information about our project, and the deadline required John and I to make some decisions quickly. The bulk of proposal consists of ideas and projects determined by the larger group, but the finer details, such as the type of computers to ask for, were not. I wrote most of the grant proposal but the grant writing committee, consisting of myself, Sue Wuest of Urban Affairs Center, and Bob Soncrant of the Private Industry Council; we spent approximately ten hours working out the details of the proposal. We will use the proposal as a working document for the group to revise. Future grant proposals can then be based on the revised document.

The CATNeT meetings were often long (between 2 and 3 hours), tedious and repetitive. A few members became irritated with our participatory method. John, Randy, or I usually facilitated the meetings. Each of us tried to hear the comments of as many people as possible, making sure the low-income people present (our target end users)

were heard by all. When everyone has a chance to talk, comments are often repeated and the process seems to drag out. It was only after five long meetings that we were able to succinctly state our mission and goals. And they will probably be revised yet again. Even though it took us five months to define our mission, goals, and future plans, at the end we were confident all shared the ideas. At the beginning we were concerned that the most vocal people would deeply affect the results. The drawn out process of hearing everyone's opinions and splitting into working groups helped to make the process participatory. Since there were different members present at each meeting some decisions were discussed multiple times, further lengthening the process.

In addition to the CATNeT meetings and training sessions, the CATNeT members also gathered for the first CATNeT public access site Open House. Our Open House at Michaelmas Manor actually consisted of a whole weekend of events. On Saturday, April 26 I facilitated a computer and Internet training session at the University of Toledo Community and Technical College. On the evening of Sunday, April 27 we celebrated the opening of the computer lab at Michaelmas Manor (a Vistula Management low income Housing site). Michaelmas Manor also happens to be the location of our computer-recycling center. The open House was an opportunity for all of the CATNeT partners to see the physical results of their work. For the residents of Michaelmas Manor (consisting of seniors and disabled), this was the first time they used the computers. They knew the computer lab was coming so many were anxious to see what the computers could do. The most popular program that night was Solitaire. Some of the residents had never touched a computer before so the game allowed them to get used to the computer at their own pace. CATNeT partners and guests who are familiar with

computers helped the residents learn how to use the mouse and various keys on the keyboard.

Our colloquium speaker for Monday, April 28, Doug Schuler from Seattle, Washington attended the Open House. On Monday morning Doug Schuler spoke with CATNeT members about CATNeT and other community networks around the country. On Monday afternoon Doug spoke at a colloquium at the University of Toledo. We brought Doug to Toledo with the University of Toledo Arts and Sciences College Colloquium Funds I applied for. All of the events during the Open House weekend were well attended. Channel 13 News attended the Open House at Michaelmas Manor and we received some publicity during the 11:00 news. Since Michaelmas Manor is a HUD (Housing and Urban Development) Neighborhood Networks site, HUD sent out a press release for us. Unfortunately the press release did not even mention CATNeT so I faxed another press release to the local media. Both press releases and the Open House flyer are attached.

One-way CATNeT would like to spread the word of our existence and our mission is through attending local festivals and community fairs. Our first was the Ottawa Coalition Family Fair held on May 17, at Ottawa Park. We had a booth complete with laptop computers. Working in pairs, I stationed CATNeT volunteers in the booth from 9:30 to 5:00. We ended up with two names of individuals interested in being involved in CATNeT. Most importantly, we learned how to run a CATNeT volunteers in the booth at a public festival with no electricity and a bright sun. The laptop screens were difficult to read because of the sun and the wind blew our materials around, but otherwise the day was a success.

John and I also met with representatives from the public library, the University of Toledo, a local ISP (Internet Service Provider), the office of our federal Representative of the House, and the county school district. We have yet to work out an arrangement with the public library other than to keep them informed of our activities. The University of Toledo Information Technology office has offered us use of a computer lab once a month for our Training of Volunteer Trainers Program. We are in the process of developing an arrangement with them for the Non-Profit Web Development Program. The university has a server bought by the public library to be used exclusively to house non-profit web pages. The University of Toledo Information Technology office has offered to train non-profits, including CATNeT, in the development of web pages. We have to work out an arrangement with the local ISP. Vistula will be purchasing their Internet connections through this ISP and we would like to work something out with them for the Internet connections in our public access sites.

Mission and Objectives

The current CATNeT mission statement is “to contribute to the empowerment of low income citizens and community based organizations by providing or facilitating access to the technological tools that are more routinely available to our community’s more affluent citizens and organizations.”

Our objectives are to help low income citizens and community based organizations get access to computers, computer software, local networking, and Internet connections; and to the training and technical assistance necessary to use the technology effectively. We are currently working on the following objectives

1. Identifying additional coalition participants with emphasis on increasing participation by low-income citizens and community-based organizations operating in economically disadvantaged neighborhoods.
2. Assessing all efforts underway to provide hardware, training, and network access to area residents. The following institutions or organizations have developed or have received the funding to develop computer projects for Toledo area residents: Toledo-Lucas County Public Library, EOPA / Head tart, Area Office on Ageing, Black Data Processing Associates, and Vistula Management.
3. Assessing available as well as projected future technologies (cost, system requirements, efficiency, etc.).
4. Identifying and assessing successful technology access and community networking programs operating in other cities.
5. Identifying potential sources of support and funding.
6. Developing training for Volunteer Trainers Program.
7. And attending local festivals and community fairs as a means of reaching the public.
8. Establishing additional public computer labs and supplementing existing sites.
9. Developing a Non-profit Web Development Program.

The mission, objectives and goals were developed during the monthly general meetings, steering committee meetings and meetings John and I had with various CATNeT members. Many of the ideas come from the working groups held during the beginning of

CATNeT's creation. More recently we have been revising them. We have a July planning meeting scheduled during which they will be revised again. The last four objectives are the most specific. We will be working toward these four objectives over the summer and by the fall they will be the strongest projects within CATNeT.

CATNeT's Solution to the Technical Inequality in Toledo

The TIIAP grant proposal to the U.S. Commerce Department forced us to succinctly state our plans. The plans described below rely on CATNeT receiving the necessary funding to complete them. These plans are sure to be revised but currently, our solution to the technical inequality in Toledo contains three distinct but interrelated pieces. First, we plan to supplement the few public accesses sited Toledo already has with additional equipment, staff or information and we will also create new public access sites. In addition to the one computer available in each Toledo-Lucas County Public Library, The Black Data Processing Associates (BDPA) Information Technology Center and the W.J. Murchison Community Center are the only organizations in Toledo, which have made an effort to offer the use of their computers to the general public. The BDPA Information Technology Center is located in the Frederick Douglass Community Center. They currently have 15 computers and have acquired the funds to purchase and Internet connection. The W.J. Murchison Community Center currently has 4 computers and no funds for an Internet connection. We would like to supplement the BDPA and the W.J. Murchison computer labs. We plan to create new public access sites at the Seventh Day Adventist Church, Northgate Apartments, and in 6 low-income housing projects managed by Vistula Management. In addition to our permanent public access sites, we will create

a portable site that we will make available to the public a Toledo's numerous ethnic festivals and public events. See attached map and address list of proposed public access sites.

Second, we will technically aid our individual and organizational end users. We would like to hire a technical director to take care of the public access sites, aid already established public access sites, organize our computer-recycling program, and provide assistance to non-profits. The technical staff would be supported by a Technical Advisory Board, which will consist of experienced technical staff from our partner organizations or institutions,

Third, we will provide information and encourage our users to become information providers. We plan to help our end users develop World Wide Web pages for themselves or their organizations. We will continually ask the end users what information they would like to have access to and then we will organize the information relevant to our users and develop web pages of new information. Our web sites will list public meetings and events, including the face-to-face meetings of end users we will organize to discuss local issues.

Chapter 2 – Definition of a Community Network

In the past, the term “community network” was used by sociologists to refer to patterns of communication and relationships among a specific group of individuals (Schuler: 25). Today, many people have begun using the term to refer to electronic communication among the residents of a place-based community. Schuler defines community networks as “geographically centered computer systems that support the local

community with a wide range of free or low cost information and communication services”(1996b,p.1). A server with a modem pool and phone lines are the basic hardware tools needed to create a community network (“Community Networking: What are CNs?”), but their purpose is only to electronically connect the users to one another. The “community” part of the community network is what makes the community networking phenomena so fascinating.

The “Community” Portion of Community Networks

The definition of “community’ has long been disputed (Bell and Howard). Within the concept of community networks, “community’ refers to the relationships between residents of a specific geographical area, such as a city, county, or region. The term’s use often depends on who is using it, and academic, an activist or a community leader (Batteau: 3). The common goal of all community networks is to provide its member’s access to relevant information such as data and access to local residents, issues, businesses, and government officials. A community network connects the people who live in a specific geographic area, not those who may live in different places but have common interests. Many of the community networks provide access to the Internet for free or at a low cost as an additional resource to information access. A local community focus is more of a primary goal for community networks, not providing access to the Internet (Guy, section 7.1). Community networks are often developed in conjunction with local institutions such as universities, colleges, grade schools, libraries, non-profit organizations, and local government agencies (Schuler: 25).

Doctor Ronald and Kalyani Ankem developed the most recent data on the number of community networks. Their June 1996 Directory contains contact information for 438 community networks. 301 of them are located in the U.S. 81 are in Canada and 56 are in other nations. Doctor and Ankem's definition of a community network is similar to what I have described. To be included in the directory a community network must: 1) Be people oriented and place focused; 2) Include direct or indirect or indirect interactivity (such as chat systems or discussion forums); 3) Organized from the bottom-up rather than the top-down (which excludes networks such as those run by a Chamber of Commerce or organized for the benefit of tourists); and 3) Diverse information offerings (Community posting, 10-22-96). Madeline Gozalez, from community network in Boulder, Colorado, includes community-wide community network training and public access sites as criterion of community networks. She defines a community network as typically providing, "official and not-official community information, news and events, community members' commentary, poetry, stories, art, and some kind of communication" (p.1).

A Community Network May be...

A community network may be a bulletin board service (BBS) or an organized group of World Wide Web (WWW) pages. With local information link to other WWW pages. CATNeT has WWW pages that describe our coalition, our activities and our plans (<http://uac.rdp.utoledo.edu/catnet/catnethome.htm>). Randy Stoecker created CATNeT's web pages but with the University of Toledo Information Technology office's help we plan to have others add to the pages after they are trained on web development.

A community network may provide access to information locally and it may provide access to the Internet. CATNeT only provides access to the Internet at our public access sited and during training sessions. Some cities only have a bulletin board service (BBS which is an electronic place for users to post, read, share, and download information. All BBSs are not community networks since many are focused on specific non-local issues such as sports, or fantasy role-playing. ABBS may or may not be connected to the Internet. A local resident can dial directly into a BBS without first connecting to an Internet Service Provider (ISP) since all that is required is a phone line, a computer and a 2400-baud modem. In the United States, a BBS's local focus may simply stem from the fact that the cell is free to those in the area, thus the users are local. A free call means a BBS may attract people who would otherwise never use a computer network (Cavaline; 92).

A Community Network:	CATNeT
❖ Is place based	yes
❖ Provides users with electronic access to local information	not yet
❖ Provides users with electronic access to one another	not yet
A Community Network may:	
❖ Be a Bulletin Board Service (BBS)	no
❖ Have World Wide Web (WWW) pages	yes
❖ Provide access to local residents, business, organizations, And government offices	partially
❖ Provide Internet access	no
❖ Facilitate discussion among the users	yes
❖ Be supported by local institutions such as libraries, universities, Local government agencies, or non-profit organizations	yes
❖ Support public access sites	yes
❖ Provide computer, software and Internet training	yes
A Community Network does not:	
❖ Always provide Internet access	
❖ Specifically facilitate communication for a non-places based community	

Some community networks, which are operated through Bulletin Board Services, do not even have e-mail capabilities, such as the Phoenix Agenda Access Bulletin Board (Noack: 54). The city of Phoenix has also put the BBS information on a web site, which includes the city contact bidding process, instructions on how to request a permit or license, and information concerning garbage collection, recycling, and transportation services. Some cities have a BBS with additional capabilities. Glendale, California set up a system that they refer to as LNX, which not only provides a variety of city and community information but also has e-mail capabilities and access to the Glendale Community College library card catalog. The minimal information included on a BBS or a web page is usually listings of city services, city events, and city department and city council phone numbers. Pasadena, California's system, PALS (Public Access Library System), also provides information on local schools, businesses, human services, Pasadena city bids, contracts, proposals, and local clubs and organizations. Establishing a BBS does not necessarily connect the residents to the Internet but it does connect them to each other. Some cities that have placed information on the World Wide Web (WWW), such as Phoenix, have maintained their BBS as a means of insuring access to those who do not have Internet access.

Free-Nets are the most well known community networks. They are operated by non-profit organizations. Contrary to what the name implies, these services are often not free, but are usually very cheap. Cleveland was the first city to develop a Free Net. Case Western Reserve University provides the Cleveland Free-Net with computer resources. Very few universities have agreed to shoulder this cost (Schuler: 281). After helping create the Cleveland Free-Net, Tom Grundner of Case Western Reserve University

organized the National Public Telecommunications Network (NPTN). He did so in response to all the requests for information and advice he received from other cities wanting to establish their own Free-Net with a membership to NPTN (which declared bankruptcy in 1996) provided new Free-Nets with a membership to NPTN, helped them get organized and provided the NPTN “blue book” which contains organizational and technical advice on setting up community networks (Schuler.281). Free-Nets are based on a network of bulletin boards and a concept called “teledemocracy’ Noack: 54).

Teledmocracy offers direct interaction with local, state, and federal government resources (Abernathy: 62). Free-Nets often use the metaphor of the “electronic village”, listing information under the headings: schoolhouse, hospital, town hall, post office, etc.

(Morino Institute: 14). These headings house numerous directories of information resources and databases (Noack: 56). The charter of the Tallahassee Free-Net is, “to provide, free of charge, a local repository of community information, public forums and electronic interactions, and connectivity into the worldwide network of computers known as the Internet. Its emphasis is on providing local information and Internet access in an easy and intuitive manner to the general community (Morino Institute: 14).

Who is the Community in a Community Network?

Today the “community” in community networks is almost exclusively defined as a specific geographical area. Occasionally the term community network is used to refer to common interest networks (Cisler), such as Handsnet and CityLink. The information on-place based networks provide depends on the common interest that defines them as a community. Handsnet, based out of Cupertino, California, is a network of non-profits

who use Handsnet as an Internet Service Provider and/or who want to share information and ideas. Many of Handsnet's members are interested in housing and community development so they use the network to keep informed and inform one another about policy issues and new programs (Gurwitt: 54). City Link, run by the League of California Cities, facilitates discussions about problems the member cities are facing (Gurwitt: 56) and serves as the maintainer of an extensive list of links to city sites. Some of the sites are community networks, many are city sponsored official sites developed for tourism while individuals maintain other. Alaina Kanfer and Christopher Kolar conducted a survey of the City Net's list of city sites and found only half provided information about local events and a very few provided information about libraries, health care or local community networks (Kanfer and Kolar, slide 5).

CATNeT is different from other community networks because we are making a great effort to involve the community in the development of CATNeT, CATNeT is not being created by technical people for the community, the community is creating CATNeT for itself. In fact, we could use a few more technical members to help us make technical decisions about our public access sites. This is why the training portion of CATNeT is so important. We want to be self-sustaining which means quite a few of us must become "tech-heads" if we are to survive. Our community focus is what led us to involving so many non-profit and low-income individuals during the process of creating CATNeT. It was also the low-income individuals attending the meetings that insisted on the training sessions and continue to ask for additional sessions.

The Two Community Networks of Seattle, Washington

The city of Seattle, Washington is one of the few cities, which can boast the existence of two community networks, a non-profit operated community network and a city operated community network. They each tend to complement the other's services. The City of Seattle Department of Administrative Services operates the City of Seattle Public Access Network (PAN) with the goal of providing residents with electronic access to civic information and services. The administration of PAN systems and coordination of content development and maintenance currently requires four full time employees. Residents can dial in to the PAN BBS from home or use a public workstation in community and neighborhood service centers. The PAN BBS receives an average of 580 calls per day. The PAN BBS contains the same information as their web site, plus users of the PAN BBS can e-mail other users, retrieve information from city database services, use a fax back service of applications, take part in online discussions, and contribute to moderated public discussion forums. Resident of Seattle don not have to choose between a WWW graphical interface and the additional benefits of using the BBS because the PAN BBS can be accessed with free graphical interface software called World group. PAN includes city program information such as the Neighborhood Matching Fund, which matches funds with volunteer labor, materials and donations, and the Utility Assistance Programs, which provide senior citizens with financial help to pay for utilities. The Office of Economic Development provides information about permits, licenses, loan programs, land use and zoning and sign permits.

The Seattle Community Network Association (SCNA), a non-profit group, operates the Seattle Community Network (SCN). Registration to SCN is free and includes an e-mail account and write access to Usenet and SCN's purpose is community

empowerment and they are committed to free speech. SCN uses the Seattle Public Library for an Internet connection (Schneider). SCN is run almost entirely by volunteers. SCN does not post city related information because the Seattle PAN covers that need. SCN has extensive information on neighborhood, environmental and arts groups, peace groups, schools, health care and social advocates, and outdoor clubs. Each group posts their own information. For example, the Capital Hill Community Council makes use of the SCN by posting a description of who they are, what they do, when they meet, and volunteer opportunities.

Chapter 3 – My Role Within CATNeT

My role within CATNeT began as a representative of the UUNN (Urban University and Neighborhood Network). UUNN was one of the CATNeT partners with the resources to send out mailers and make copies, and the personnel (me) with the time to do these things. At the beginning my role within CATNeT consisted mainly of sending out meeting notices, writing up the results of meetings, writing up agendas, making copies, and keeping the database of members current. Within the last 4 months my duties have expanded as CATNeT has matured. I have written most of a grant proposal to the Commerce Department, facilitated five computer and Internet training sessions, and organized activities and agendas.

The Early Months

Through my graduate assistantship with the Urban Affairs Center, I had been working with Dr. Randy Stoecker of the Sociology Department on the UUNN – Urban University and Neighborhood Network project. It was our involvement with the UUNN and its equal access to technology interest that led us to John Kiely and what we would

later call CATNeT. After John Kiely's luncheon, the first meeting was held at the Urban Affairs Center and it included a computer and Internet training session. The meeting notice was printed on UUN letterhead (see attached letter). The computer and Internet training session was based upon a scavenger hunt I developed of LibertyNet, the community network in Philadelphia. The purpose of the scavenger hunt was to give the participants an idea of the kinds of information a community network could provide (see attached scavenger hunt). I underestimated the computer and Internet experience of the users so the scavenger hunt became more of a computer and Internet training session.

For each CATNeT meeting I contacted members and interested potential members through mailings (see attached meeting notices), phone calls and/or e-mail. The mailings required a database of member's addresses, which I created and maintain. The database allows me to simply print out address labels for each mailing. I also created agendas (see attached agendas) and made copies of other relevant information for the meetings. I helped facilitate the general meetings while answering the community networking and technical questions of the working groups.

The Later Months

The beginning of CATNeT occurred at the same time as the decline of the UUNN. The UUNN lost half of its fund during its second year (1996-97) and sustaining a statewide coalition with little money became very difficult. As my responsibilities with the UUNN became fewer, my CATNeT related activities increased. I became the contact person for individuals and organizations interested in CATNeT. I answered questions and determined how the individuals or groups could be part of CATNeT. I also became responsible for CATNeT activities and projects. My first major CATNeT project was

writing the grant proposal for TIIAP, the Telecommunications and Information Infrastructure Assistance Program (see attached grant proposal). The TIIAP grant proposal was written during the end of March and submitted March 26. The TIIAP proposal required a detailed budget, description of the project, and catching funds from CATNeT partners. I had never written a grant proposal but the deadline forced me to learn quickly. The experienced grant writers Randy Stoecker, Sue Wuest from the Urban Affairs Center and Bob Soncrant from the Private Industry Council were immensely helpful. Due to the deadline, the grant writing team, John Kiely, and I were often forced to make decisions about CATNeT's future plans without consulting the general group. Regardless of whether we receive the \$440,000 requested, the proposal will be used as a working document for CATNeT to revise. It was during the TIIA grant writing process that members of the group determined I should have a title for the work I had been doing. Since March my title is now CATNeT coordinator.

With a lot of help from Randy Stoecker I prepared the CATNeT brochure and made sure we had sufficient copies of the brochure for upcoming events. The brochure has already gone through one revision so both brochures are attached. Our biggest activities lately have been our Open House at Michaelmas Manor and the Ottawa Coalition Fair. For the Open House weekend I sent out the notices, including a press release, and generally took care of all of the details of the weekends events. I called CATNeT partners to remind them of the events, answered questions, and sent out parking passes (for the colloquium). I also made sure Doug Schuler, our speaker, was where he needed to be at all times. I had applied for the colloquium funds from the Arts and Sciences College so I also worked out the specifics of reimbursing Doug Schuler and

paying for his expenses. For the CATNeT booth at the Ottawa Coalition Fair I organized the schedule for volunteers working the booth. We chose to have a booth at the Ottawa Coalition Fair because it was a small fair with other informational booths. This was the first year for the Ottawa Coalition Fair so we knew we would not be overpowered by the size. I am also the secretary of the Ottawa Coalition so I was well aware of the Fair's arrangement and planning. CATNeT shared the booth with the Bancroft Hills Neighborhood Association, of which I am a co-chairperson. Having two groups from which to garner volunteers to staff the booth made filling all of the time slots with two people much easier.

The program that we will probably become most well known for is the Training of Volunteer Trainers Program. The purpose of which is to have the "end users" train each other. Since the beginning of CATNeT I have facilitated five computer and Internet training sessions at the University of Toledo. At first we just wanted the members of CATNeT to have the opportunity to learn about what it is we are trying to promote. The training sessions have now become part of the Training of Volunteer Trainers Program. Many of the attendees of the training sessions are interested in teaching others once they are comfortable with the computer. The training sessions are also an opportunity for individuals to determine if they are interested in learning how to use a computer and surf the web. Some of my most consistent students are residents of Vistula Management elderly low-income housing sites. We are currently working out the details with the UAW – Chrysler Ohio Training Center for the two –hour training sessions they have offered to provide. Their training sessions will be more intensive than the ones I teach. The monthly computer and Internet training sessions at the University

of Toledo are more exploratory. The attendees have a variety of experience levels so I have chosen to give the group general tasks and then I roam the room answering specific questions.

I have had two opportunities to travel on behalf of CATNeT. In April of 1997 I discussed CATNeT and the UUNN at a presentation with Randy Stoecker at the Urban Affairs Association Annual meeting in Toronto, Canada. Randy and I presented a paper we had written about the differences between the UUNN and CATNeT. Attached is a copy of the paper printed from the CATNeT web pages. "Building a Superhighway of One's Own: A Comparison of Two Approaches". In May of 1997 I attended the University and Community Forum in Columbus Ohio to get some ideas about resources CATNeT could apply for. The Ohio State University seems to be more involved in community projects than the University of Toledo, but I did not gain much insight into potential financial resources for CATNeT. The program was targeted toward OSU faculty so many of the grants discussed were for Columbus area.

Chapter 4 – Conclusion

CATNeT is a project I am very fortunate to be a part of. CATNeT has drawn lots of people I might otherwise have never met, nor have the opportunity to work with. As the coordinator of CATNeT I learned a great deal about planning meetings, networking, computer and Internet training, grant writing, and working toward a goal I strongly believe in.

Not only is CATNeT's mission impressive, so also are its methods of participation. Both John Kiely and Randy Stoecker encourage all of the member to

participate fully in the meetings and the planning of the meetings. We have made and effort (that has partially succeeded) to involve our potential end users; that is low-income individuals. Some Vistula residents have been very active in CATNeT, attending meetings and computer training sessions. I am proud of the participatory methods CATNeT has employed in developing our mission, objectives, and projects. There are organizations, businesses, and institutions that are probably potential partners of CATNeT and should be contacted but time had limited us from reaching all of them.

CATNeT has decided that I should remain the coordinator and we are actively searching for the funds to pay my salary. One of the partners has agreed to fund my position for summer while we find money to sustain CATNeT. This summer I will continue the work I have been doing with the addition of formally beginning the Training of Volunteer Trainers Program and the Non-profit Web Development Program.

Interning with CATNeT has been an amazing experience and I will be forever grateful.

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