Digital Wish Press Kit
2011

What is Digital Wish?

Digital Wish is a vibrant and free resource for teachers who are seeking technology for their classrooms. Visit http://www.digitalwish.org for the following resources:

- Over 50 Digital Wish Grants - Apply for over 50 grants directly from the Digital Wish website with one application.
- Free Lesson Plan Library - Browse a free lesson plan library that includes extensive ideas on using digital technology in the classroom curriculum.
- Grants Library- Search a database of grants available from third party sources, which may also help schools find much-needed funding for classroom projects.
- Fundraising Ideas - Explore additional fundraising ideas.
- Printable Letter-Writing Resources - Run a letter-writing campaign to raise money for technology in the classroom.
- Shopping - Teachers can shop for technology resources and cast their Digital Wish.
- Teacher Profiles - Create a detailed classroom profile with lesson plans, project ideas, and a classroom **wish list**. See example.
- Class Locator - Supporters can click through a series of maps to locate a local school to make a tax-deductible cash donation or purchase an item directly from a teacher's wishlist.

About Us

Digital Wish is on a Mission to Solve Technology Shortfalls in Classrooms!

Digital Wish believes that every child deserves a technology-rich education that will provide them with the skills necessary to excel in the global economy.
Every day, Digital Wish develops new online tools and promotions that empower teachers and their supporters to get new technology for their classrooms and enhance learning for our children.
With your help, we can provide the resources our schools need to thrive.

We invite you to invest in our children's future!

Our Story

In **2006**, Digital Wish founder Heather Chirtea's 7-year-old twins were enrolled in a small, rural elementary school on the brink of closure. In order to keep the school open and preserve its small class sizes, 62 kids embarked on a letter writing campaign to the local community describing the value of the school and exactly how community members could help. In just 3 months, those 62 kids helped raise over $20,000 in donations, in-kind help, and volunteer hours that saved the school. Members of the community reported, "I wanted to help the school, I just didn't know how until the students' letters arrived." It was a powerful lesson. The community was ready to help, but they needed an organized mechanism to do so.

From this experience came the idea for a website to empower teachers to solve *their own* technology shortfalls by connecting classrooms with their communities using the Internet. A year later, www.digitalwish.com launched with a simple wish list feature and a few technology products. The need for classroom technology was so great that 1,000 teachers posted wishes in the first month. With such high demand, we began the process of turning Digital Wish into an official non-profit organization.

In September of **2008**, Digital Wish was officially became a nonprofit and one week later Digital Wish received its first grant to scale operations and rebuild its website to serve the ever-increasing demand from teachers.

Since August 2009, Digital Wish has granted over 24,000 classroom technology wishes and delivered over $10 million in technology products to American classrooms. However, we've still only scratched the surface of the need.

Our Research

Behind the scenes, our dedicated staff works in local schools to implement one-computer-per-child initiatives and study the complex process of technology integration in schools. Digital Wish is working to streamline every step in the process of classroom technology integration and craft step-by-step models, useful automation tools, videos, downloadable resources, and instruction so that schools nationwide can replicate the same processes that have been successful in our schools. Students across the 27 local schools we serve are already reporting higher engagement levels in learning.

Our Vision
We are striving to make www.digitalwish.org the most comprehensive technology integration resource for teachers on the internet.

Join us and grant a classroom technology wish!

Logos

http://www.digitalwish.com/dw/digitalwish/download_logos

Recent Press

Start an Online Fundraiser in Just a Few Clicks with Digital Wish *Posted by John Sullivan at 12:21:16 PM Wed 04/20/2011*

Manchester Center, VT- April 20, 2011- You now can build an online fundraising page for your favorite classroom in just a few clicks on Digital Wish. New tools like online credit card processing make it easy for **anyone** to start a fundraiser. Teachers, supporters, organizations, PTAs, and PTOs can start fundraisers for any classroom or school and share it via e-mail, social media, or customized printable flyers to encourage donations. Everything from fundraiser information and team comments to donation progress and sharing buttons is centralized on one page.

"We really wanted to give PTAs and PTOs better tools to help them fundraise online," said Heather Chirtea, Executive Director and founder of Digital Wish, "Schools don't typically have the capacity to process credit card donations at their events. Now they can make a giving page in a few minutes on Digital Wish and add online fundraising to every event. Our mission is to help solve technology shortfalls in American classrooms, and parents play a huge role in helping schools."

Starting an online fundraiser is simple. After signing up on the Digital Wish website, users can click "Start a Fundraiser" from the homepage. By sharing it with friends, family, and community members, a fundraiser will grow and thrive with no set up cost. Organizers can view progress, and edit and manage details throughout the fundraiser. Funds raised will be automatically deposited into the beneficiary's Digital Wish account at the end of the fundraiser and can be immediately used towards the purchase of new classroom technology.

"Our fundraising mechanism is designed to be easy and fun to use," said Chirtea, "By automating the giving process, we've provided an easy way for anyone to organize a fundraiser for their favorite classroom or school."

To kick off the new fundraising engine, Digital Wish will be offering $300 off the Premier Classic Configuration Digital Camera Lab - one of the most wished for items on the site! This special pricing will last until June 30th, so everyone can utilize the new Digital Wish fundraisers tool to see their wish granted. Digital Wish is also offering $100 matching grants on every ELMO TT-02RX document camera ordered through their site.

About Digital Wish
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WhitePages Unveils Run & Hug Contest to Find America's Favorite Teacher in Time for National Teacher Day

SEATTLE, WA – 04/06/11 – While everyone may have differing opinions surrounding the debate to reform public schools, we can all agree that teachers — some more than others — play an incredibly important role in our lives. To help identify these exceptional teachers and to award one with the crown of "America's Favorite Teacher," WhitePages (www.whitepages.com) today announced the Run & Hug Contest. The crowned teacher, as well as the person who nominated them, will each win two all expenses paid trips to New York City where they will be reunited so the student can thank their favorite teacher in person. The winning teacher will also be awarded an additional $1,000. The Run & Hug winners will be announced on May 3, which is National Teacher Day and will be reunited sometime between May and July.

For every entry submitted, WhitePages will donate $5 to Digital Wish, a non-profit with a unique mission to modernize K-12 classrooms and prepare students for tomorrow's workforce by creating equity in school systems so that each child has equal access to technology.

"The nation's best teachers often times go unappreciated," said Alex Algard, CEO and founder of WhitePages. "Whether it's Waiting for Superman, President Obama's Race to the Top initiative or recent debates about teacher's benefits, at least one theme remains common… good teachers matter. The Run & Hug

contest is a perfect opportunity to showcase just how much exceptional teachers touched the lives of their students."

About the Run & Hug Contest

From April 6th to April 22nd, people can go to www.runandhug.com to nominate teachers who have made a lasting impression on their life. All nominations will be posted and open for the U.S. public to vote on. People submitting the teachers, as well as the teacher themselves are encouraged to share their nomination with friends via email, Facebook, and Twitter since the nomination that receives the most votes will win the reunion. People are encouraged to submit their entries as early as possible to allow more time to accumulate the most votes.

About WhitePages

WhitePages is the leading provider of contact information for people and businesses in the U.S. With over 20 million unique monthly users and powering over 2 billion searches on over 1,500 sites including MSN and the United States Postal Service, only WhitePages offers consumers one-click access to more than 200 million adults, also providing them with the ability to edit and control their own listings. The company's suite of mobile products includes a top-50 mobile website and popular iPhone, Android, and BlackBerry applications that have been downloaded more than 7 million times. WhitePages' social buying website DealPop offers deals on local businesses around the U.S., at up to 70 percent off retail prices. For more information, please visit www.whitepages.com, www.dealpop.com or check out the WhitePages blog at blog.whitepages.com. WhitePages and their respective logos are trademarks, registered trademarks, or service marks of White Pages. Other products and company names mentioned are the trademarks of their respective owners.

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About Digital Wish

Digital Wish is a non-profit on a mission to solve technology shortfalls in K-12 classrooms. The www.digitalwish.org website is designed to help teachers locate much-needed funding for classroom technology. In addition to making over 23,000 wishes come true for American educators, Digital Wish provides a host of fundraising ideas and allows teachers to craft a technology wish list so that parents and community members can make a classroom contribution and invest in America's future.

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[Espresso Elementary Subscription is Granted to Every Teacher Who Registers on Digital Wish in April!](#) *Posted by John Sullivan at 08:44:36 AM Fri 04/01/2011*

Manchester Center, VT- April 1st, 2011- Digital Wish is livening up every elementary classroom in America with a shot of Espresso...Espresso Elementary, that is. For the month of April, every elementary school teacher who signs up on Digital Wish will receive a free subscription to Espresso Elementary through June 30th. Teachers who are already registered can also take advantage of this special grant opportunity.

Espresso Education has been the leading digital curriculum service in the UK for years and is now expanding its high quality educational program to America. Appropriate for the PreK-5 classroom, Espresso is a vast library of video clips integrated with interactive activities, games, quizzes, and a weekly news service, News Roundup. Its cross-curricular learning modules help elementary school teachers deliver memorable lessons, engaging students in the learning process.

Educators need to act fast to take advantage of this special grant opportunity, as it is only available to those who register with Digital Wish in the month of April, or who have already registered. After this grant period passes, teachers will still be able to purchase or have Espresso Elementary subscriptions donated to them through Digital Wish for the full cost of the subscription service, valued at $1595.00 annually.

"We are excited to introduce Espresso Education's high quality program to America's teachers," said Heather Chirtea, founder and executive director of Digital Wish, "but we are even more excited to bring this huge grant opportunity from Espresso Education to potentially every elementary teacher in the country."

Lewis Bronze, Espresso CEO commented, "We think Digital Wish is a fantastic organization and a real service to teachers who need extra support to bring technology into their classroom. We are proud to have been selected as a 'wish list' product. Espresso's mission is to inspire children of all abilities to learn and to support teachers in delivering memorable, interactive lessons. We hope that Digital Wish teachers who try Espresso will agree and we look forward to the feedback!"

After they are registered with Digital Wish, teachers will be provided with a code to start using the service, free of charge. The subscription will run until June 30th, 2011

About Digital Wish

Digital Wish is a non-profit on a mission to solve technology shortfalls in K-12 classrooms. The www.digitalwish.org website is designed to help teachers locate much-needed funding for classroom technology. Teachers make technology wish lists, and supporters make those wishes come true. Over 23,000 technology wishes have been granted. Digital Wish provides a host of fundraising ideas and allows teachers to e-mail and print their technology wish lists so that parents and community members can contribute.

About Espresso Elementary

Espresso Elementary for Pre-K to 5 is a cross-curricular, multimedia learning site with a wide range of interactive, video-rich classroom resources that inspire children to learn. The award- winning resources on Espresso Elementary have been built up since 1997, and have proven to engage students while helping them to achieve educational outcomes. Each week, fresh curriculum material and News Roundup new stories are added, with links to learning outcomes, alignments to common core and state standards, and links across other relevant subject areas.

Espresso Elementary is a product of Espresso Education, the U.K. market leader in the provision of video-based digital curriculum services to primary and secondary schools. In April 2010, the company launched and announced an agreement with Defined Learning, Inc. to adapt, market and sell Espresso in the United States.

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A netbook for every student

Posted on December 20, 2010
 By **Tamara Hilmes, Bristol**

BRISTOL — For the students in Hannah Estey and Rebecca Zavadil's fifth-grade classes, Christmas came a bit early this year.

On Thursday, the Bristol Elementary School fifth-graders all received new Dell netbooks to use at school and at home through the end of the school year as part of the education portion of the "e-Vermont" grant awarded to the town earlier this year.

FIFTH-GRADERS BRADLEY Hill and Abby Perlee work on their new laptops for the first time Thursday morning. Independent photo/Trent Campbell

In May, Bristol was one of 12 towns to receive a portion of a $3.8 million grant meant to boost community access to Internet resources. e-Vermont goals for Bristol include improving the town's web site, creating public wireless hotspots and developing programming related to the new resources.

The grant also provided the 40-plus netbooks to the elementary school, along with training for both students and teachers by representatives of e-Vermont's partner, Digital Wish. Digital Wish is a Manchester-based nonprofit whose goal is to get technology into schools and enable students to enter "tomorrow's workforce."

"These students need to be trained in this type of technology starting in these young grades so that they can advance as the years go by throughout their education," said Digital Wish Lead Trainer Eric Bird. "You look at any job requirements and you know, students are going to be graduating and tech skills are necessary to land a good job. So that's really one of our goals. We want to go in and help the schools, we want to get them technology and we want to provide training."

On Thursday, the students could hardly keep still as they waited for their teachers and Principal Catrina DiNapoli — who helped write the town's e-Vermont grant application — to call their name and hand them their very own netbook.

"Dude, this is so sick!" called out one student, as his computer powered up and Windows tones began to chime around the room.

Bird proceeded to introduce the overjoyed fifth-grades to the various icons on the desktop toolbar, allowing them to test out programs like "Snapshot" and "Microsoft Paint."

"This is just like a Christmas present!" another girl cried, eyes still focused intently on the tiny screen of her mini-laptop computer.

Though this was the students' first introduction to the netbooks, it was not the first time that Bird had presented to the class. Earlier this fall, Bird began meeting with Bristol Elementary teachers and administrators in order to assess the school's technology needs, and to plan technology lessons that would fit into the existing curriculum.

Before the netbooks were doled out, students were equipped with the basic knowledge they need to enter the digital sphere. Each week for the last month, Bird visited both fifth-grade classes to teach lessons related to "Digital Citizenship and Cyber Safety."

"We thought that was the most important thing, perhaps, to address upfront," he said. "Each one of our units ties in with the NETS-S standards."

NETS-S is shorthand for the standards for students set by the International Society for Technology in Education. Digital Wish crafts lessons that not only tie in with NETS-S, but also strives to make a connection to the school's curriculum and to the community, as a whole.

"There are three primary things that we always keep in mind and those are responsibility, respect and safety," Bird said. "We bring it up every time we come in. But you make it fun for the kids, you do special claps — they love that. You make it a really positive experience."

But even without the goofy "volleyball" and "bodybuilder" claps that Bird uses to get the class' attention, the students were hooked. Smiles lit up their faces as they eagerly checked the status of their computers' batteries.

"Mine has five hours and 40 minutes!"

"Mine has five hours and 21 minutes!"

And even trickier tasks like capturing video and moving it to the recycle bin did not seem to faze them.

"It's really the world that they're growing up in, so they're way more capable than when we were kids," said Bird, who explained that in future lessons, students will learn how to use video-editing and podcasting software. "What's really awesome is that they see it as applicable to the world that they live in."

But the learning won't end after students leave the classroom.

NOT JUST FOR KIDS
"One really cool thing that we're doing with this project, too, is the school-to-home initiative," Bird said. "They have the netbooks here at school during the day and then they'll go home at night to be used within the household. And that's one of the primary reasons why we selected the fourth-through-sixth-grade range, because you still have that really strong tie between parents and students. We want the kids going home and sharing what they did, sharing their projects and saying, 'Hey! Look at this new technology.'"

Bird explained that each night, when the students return home with their netbooks, their parents will have the chance to get online. Each student will also take home a printer package, allowing families to save and print off documents. And in addition to the lessons taught at school, Bird will be offering training sessions for parents later in the year.

"It's not just a school initiative for us, it goes well beyond that and it ties in with the community," Bird said. "And that's always a key aspect that we're hitting."

Though e-Vermont only provided netbooks for the fifth-graders, Bird said that Digital Wish's overall plan is to have the technology spread organically throughout the school. He encourages other teachers to follow the progress of the two classes, and to start applying for additional grants.

"Something really neat happens when we get the netbooks into the school, suddenly the surrounding grades start to see what's happening in other classrooms," he said. "It starts in one grade level and then it starts spreading through the school."

Though Bird will only be working with the school through the end of this year, the netbooks and hardware will remain with the fifth-grade classes. Bird hopes to make both the teachers and Lisa Brande, the school's tech expert, completely self-sufficient before the grant money dries up.

"We want to make self-sustainable system so that once we're gone, it just keeps on going and keeps on growing," he said. DiNapoli is confident that the school will continue to improve on its technology education programs. Though they only have enough netbooks for one grade, she hopes that once these students have moved up to sixth grade, they will be able to pair up with their fifth-grade peers and show them the ropes.

Both fifth-grade teachers are very excited about incorporating new technology into their teaching plans, according to DiNapoli, and have already assigned projected using wikis and other media tools. Estey and Zavadil also maintain class websites, and DiNapoli writes a blog.

"We're just very excited to have this opportunity," she said of the e-Vermont project as a whole. "It makes the projects so much stronger when you have a lot of people working together to problem solve and get things done. Bristol is looking toward the future."

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Wish Fulfillment – *EdTech Focus on K-12- 11/1/2010*

"Buy one, get one free" is a great deal. But for teachers in cash-strapped schools around the country, getting two Flip Video camcorders at no cost sounds too good to be true. With Digital Wish, it isn't.

Executive Director Heather Chirtea founded Digital Wish in 2007 "to solve technology shortfalls in classrooms," she says, and to better prepare students for tomorrow's workforce. The nonprofit allows teachers to register for document and digital cameras, camcorders, projectors, interactive whiteboards, mobile labs and other tools they'd like to have in their classrooms but can't afford.

More than 39,000 teachers from 116,000 schools in all 50 states have registered, allowing both "large- and small-scale donors to directly impact their local schools," Chirtea explains. Donors may give money to or buy products for a school or teacher of their choosing, or they can donate any amount to Digital Wish, which then applies the gift to a randomly selected classroom. Chirtea says Flip cameras "are by far the most wished-for item" because of the two-for-one deal Flip offers exclusively through Digital Wish and because "of the creative possibilities they provide for the classroom."

Since signing up last spring, Jodi Hernandez, a fourth-grade teacher at Pine View Middle School in Covington, La., has received rechargeable batteries for her class's digital camera and two software packages. Her current wish list includes the Flip UltraHD camcorder and additional educational software that she hopes to use on her Promethean board.

The generous support of donors "is allowing me to teach the way I want to teach," Hernandez says. "I request what I can use to support the curriculum that would also be fun for my kids."

To learn more, visit digitalwish.com.

[The Draper Richards Foundation Awards Prestigious Fellowship Grant To Digital Wish](#) *Posted by Digital Wish Support at 10:33:31 AM Tue 10/14/2008*

Digitalwish.org, a Vermont based public charity on a mission to modernize American schools, receives a $300,000 grant to expand operations and fundraise for schools.

Manchester, VT, October 14, 2008 – The Draper Richards Foundation has awarded Digital Wish a $300,000 grant in recognition of Digital Wish's potential to modernize American schools. The funds, distributed to Digital Wish over the next three years, will be used by the organization to expand its fundraising operations. In response, Digital Wish has announced the launch of its corporate donation program that allows companies to set up employee matching funds programs at little to no administrative cost. Digital Wish will also matches every donation with an additional 2%-10% in funding, ensuring that 102%-110% of the giver's donation will be allocated directly to school technology programs.

Digital Wish now joins the impressive lineup of high-growth nonprofit organizations that Draper Richards helps usher through startup phase including: Room to Read, Kiva, and the Genocide Intervention Network, among others. Digital Wish was one of only four nonprofits to be selected for the grant in 2008, and no more than six grants are given in a single year.

"I am honored to be amongst such distinguished peers and excited by how this grant will impact our ability to help teachers acquire the technology they desperately need," said Heather Chirtea, Digital Wish's founder. "With the influx of both money and Draper Richards' managerial support, we can significantly increase our impact on US education. We now have the resources we need to scale our fundraising effort."

Draper Richards also provides its social entrepreneurs with support and guidance, in addition to financial assistance, and Digital Wish will work closely with Draper Richards on strategic growth issues. Further, Jenny Shilling Stein, Executive Director of the Draper Richards Foundation will join Digital Wish's Board of Directors. She commented, "Digital Wish provides inspiration for thousands of teachers to bring technology into their classrooms. Heather and her team really understand teachers' needs. Digital Wish is the most efficient way for individuals, corporations and foundations to connect with teachers and give them what they need to be successful in the classroom."

The Draper Richards Fellowship Grant, combined with Digital Wish's corporate giving tools, paint a bright picture of Digital Wish's future and the future of American classrooms. "When innovative technology is accessible to teachers and students," said Chirtea, "everyone benefits. Classrooms are modernized, students are prepared for the technological demands of tomorrow's workplace, and corporations can hire locally." In short, Digital Wish has the potential to

bridge the gap between schools and community funding, and take strides towards solving America's technology crisis.

About Digital Wish
As a public charity, Digital Wish is on a mission to modernize American classrooms and prepare students for tomorrow's workforce. Educators build technology wish lists and describe how each resource will be utilized. Teachers write project plans or browse a free lesson plan library to find project ideas written by educators, outlining best practices in technology. Their classroom's story is then posted online, for review by any donor. Digital Wish works with many institutions to set up cost-free grant programs for schools, then matches every donation with an additional 2%-10% in funding. Visit www.digitalwish.org.

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