



Digital Workforce Education Society

The Digital Workforce Education Society, (DWES) is an Illinois non-profit organization providing digital infrastructure, training and curriculum development designed to deliver distance education and online training for a 21st Century Global Workforce. DWES maintains internet servers located in cybercenters for the express purpose of delivering reliable online content and collaboration tools to remote users throughout the world. DWES' collaboration tools include board room quality videoconferencing, voice over IP webcast portals, online collaboration portals and a Moodle learning management system.

Clients include US Federal and State Government Agencies, a network of Illinois Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) located in Colleges and Universities providing free business consulting to Illinois companies, US and Foreign Education Institutions and individual distance educators, and Community Training Centers.

DWES also manages an industrial scale computer and electronics recycling and refurbishing program in Illinois and Wisconsin in partnership with state government agencies, higher education institutions and non-profit, grassroots community organizations. The recycling program provides technology access, entry level technology job training to low income and minority populations in Illinois and Wisconsin and employment opportunities to individuals who are caught in the Digital Divide or who seek training for 21st Century technology job skills.

DWES is active in providing technology and entrepreneurial consulting services to community based organizations and the individuals those organizations serve to those would not otherwise have workforce training, employment, computer access or education. Additionally, DWES provides supportive technical and program development services to schools, community groups and non-profit organizations. By combining these direct and supportive services, DWES maximizes the impact of its programs and funding. In addition, DWES has partnerships with a number of government agencies, education institutions, chambers of commerce and non profits and is an Illinois Entrepreneurship Network Affiliate and a partner in the Government Partnership for Economic Development in Illinois specializing in curriculum development, multi-media digital production, technology training and technology support for economic development agencies, Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Networks and the host education institutions housing SBDC centers.

Organizational Capacity DWES' senior management has over 100 years of combined international business development and technology experience. DWES provides the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) hosting and managed services for their Small Business Development Center Network (SBDC) Webcast Portal and maintains the SBDC statewide network of videophones utilized for videoconferencing throughout Illinois. DWES also provides technical support, videoconference bridging services and workforce training for a number of DCEO and other state agencies. DWES' client list for our digital services and webcasting services include; the United Nations World Summit on The Information Society, US Postal Service, US Small Business Administration, Qwest Telecommunications, Compaq Computer Corp, the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce, The Illinois Board of Education, The Illinois Office of Educational Services, University of Illinois School of Library Sciences, University of Illinois Extension Service, PACE Bus, The Partnership for a Connected Illinois, The Chicago Treasurer's Office, The Illinois Government Partnership for Economic Development, the Midwest Supplier Diversity Council, the National Council of LaRaza, Instituto del Progreso Latino, as well as a number of US and international education institutions and professional organizations.

Our Services

Digital Workforce Education Society (DWES) provides refurbished computers, technology training and job skills to the underserved. We provide innovative technology and education solutions to accessibility challenges. We support K-12 schools, non-profit organizations, including homeless shelters, food banks, youth organizations, and community based organizations that provide social services. We also support technology needs of governmental agencies and NGOs. DWES is a 501(c)3 exempt organization funded solely through grants, charitable donations and service fees.



Digital Workforce Education Society

**Digital Workforce
Education Society**
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We Exist To Serve



**Bridging the Digital Divide
Providing Digital Access
One Community at a Time**

Our Mission



The Digital Workforce Education Society's (DWES) purpose is to provide the underserved with skills and resources

needed to function productively in today's digital global economy.

This mission is facilitated by supporting other non-profit community organizations that directly provide education and services and through our distance education technologies. DWES achieves this through a variety of means and partnerships. We build Community Technology Centers for community based groups and K-12 schools; we educate community groups and their staff to use technology more efficiently; provide educational solutions using technology for the unemployed, underemployed and disabled in low-income areas; and we extend these same opportunities worldwide through distance learning and online collaboration via our global network.

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Partnerships

DWES is fortunate to have partnerships and strategic alliances with organizations equally committed to our mission. DWES is an Illinois Entrepreneurship Network Affiliate, and works closely with the US SBA, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, and Chicagoand Chamber of Commerce. DWES has offices at City Colleges of Chicago and is partnered with them on a number of projects.



Digital Workforce Education's videoconference facilities at City Colleges of Chicago

People's Resource Center and the TEAM Illinois Technology Pembroke, IL partner works with our computer refurbishing program. DWES is partnered with Marquette University in Wisconsin and recycles all of Marquette's computers for reuse within Wisconsin schools and non-profit organizations. Using our unique online collaboration technology, DWES provides collaborative opportunities to virtual communities of International Distance Educators. We were an accredited delegate organization for the



first World Summit on Information Technology, held by the UN in Geneva, Switzerland which focused on how to expand technology

access to the underserved globally. We provide technology support to a number of elementary schools in the US. In Mexico, DWES also provides small rural communities access to distance education opportunities with low cost refurbished PCs.

Wisconsin Computer Recycling

DWES is responsible for recycling Marquette University's computers and electronic equipment from all their campus buildings. Marquette's IT Department removes all sensitive data and software from each computer and then



provides the complete computers and cleaned hard drives to DWES. PCs recycled from Marquette that can be refurbished are taken to the Milwaukee Area Technical College's North Enterprise Center in a partnership with Enrichment Training. Enrichment Training provides their transitional workforce Wisconsin WIA approved training and an opportunity to build a foundation, upon



which they can build a successful future. Enrichment Training has over 20 years of experience working with thousands of transitional workers in an incubator environment that enables their workers to get back on their feet and earn a living wage. DWES supplies Enrichment Training with computers, technology know-how in refurbishing computers to Microsoft Authorized Refurbisher standards and trains a transitional workforce for 21st Century job skills.

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DIGITAL WORKFORCE EDUCATION SOCIETY

Sunday, December 14, 2003

Thai delegation was as fascinated as all other delegates by the United Nations Information and Communication Technologies Task Force's Global e-School and Community Initiative

Endorsed in September and spearheaded by Sweden and Ireland, it aims at bringing ICT solutions to secondary schools and communities in the developing world.

“Education unlocks the door to development, and is a prerequisite for achieving the other Millennium Development Goals”, contends Sarbuland Khan, the Head of the Task Force secretariat. The WSIS was the ideal opportunity to officially launch the project, and solemnly, last Thursday, Kofi Anan's Swedish wife Nane Annan cut a virtual ribbon - by pressing a key on her PC. In her heartfelt speech, Nane Annan referred to the millions of children - “most of them girls” - that have not yet been reached by development efforts, and advocated the integration of education in the top priority list of development policies, so that the information society, and all the choices and opportunities it offers, can reach these children. “So many young girls, with eyes full of hope and dreams -

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we need to do everything we can to turn these dreams into reality”, she said, and added humorously: “I know closely of a man who dreamt as a student in Ghana; I know about the human potential we are talking about!”.

An opinion obviously shared by Erkki Antero Liikanen, EU Commissioner for Enterprise and Information Society. Interviewed by Bangkok Post, he exclaims: “If all children in the world are able to get a basic education, this is the safest way to secure an inclusive global community.” Strongly believing that once kids are given access to online knowledge, they will go and investigate themselves and eventually will teach their parents and teachers, Mr Liikanen hence insists that digital divide at school level is absolutely critical. “One of the most important tasks is to connect schools. Thailand is a fantastic example of how it really works and it shows that once children are connected through their schools, it leads their parents to be much more open to the use of technologies”.

At and around the Global e-School session, excited conversations were raising the prospect of achieving education for all children in the world by 2015. A dream? Maybe, but concrete steps are already taken. The project starts in four countries -- Bolivia, Ghana, India and Namibia. Thailand will certainly closely monitor its progress.

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Digital Partners plans to bring their Computer recycle program to Thailand

, the WSIS was the occasion for Digital Partners to announce that they will provide their support to DWES in adapting the successful Mexico model to Thailand. Following discussions between Dr Thaweesak and the DWES, it was proposed that DWES and Digital Partners in conjunction with the UN Foundation will provide the Thai Ministry with a joint portal that will enable Thailand to further explore the possibilities to use such

solution for the promotion of knowledge sharing and distance education. ¶ 3:37 AM

DWES covering important projects at WSIS in Geneva

Thailand made a strong show at the World Summit on the Information Society in Geneva last week. Headed by His Excellency Dr Surapong Suebwonglee, Minister of Information and Communication Technologies, and graced with the presence of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, more than 50 Thai delegates included representatives of the Ministries of ICT and Science and Technology, NGOs, the Asian Institute of Technology, as well as heads of private companies and even a group of students from the Thai Rural Net. Struck by the cold of the European winter, they all warmed themselves with such exotic treats as the famous Swiss cheese fondue and wines - and launched into the myriad of sessions at Palexpo.

Some of the events were of particular interest for the Thai delegation. A CERN-sponsored session on "The Role of Science in the Information Society", set to review the prospects that current science and technology developments offer for the future of the Information Society, reflected on UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's remark in Science Magazine last March: while "recent advances in information technology, genetics and biotechnology hold extraordinary prospects for individual well-being and humankind as a whole, the way in which scientific endeavors are pursued around the world is marked by clear inequalities".

The session's keynote speech was delivered by Princess Sirindhorn, who reminded the participants that there is no single formula for development. Several principles were nonetheless agreed upon: fundamental scientific information must be made freely available; the software tools for disseminating this information must also be made freely available; networking infrastructure for

distributing this information must be established world-wide; training of people and equipment to use this information must be provided in the host nations; and general education is an indispensable basis for the Information Society. “In the field of education, there is consensus that education is necessary for development, that South-South cooperation can play a key role and that ICT are essential in the learning process in all stages of life”, indicated Luciano Majani, CERN Director General, in his concluding remarks.

A joint UNDP/UNCTAD event on National Strategies for the Information Society and the Role of Regional and Global Organizations was the opportunity for Khunying Dhippawadee Meksawan, Thailand’s Permanent Secretary of ICT to speak about “Challenges and Best Practice in the Preparation and Implementation of National Strategies for the Information Society”. Khunying Dhippawadee also had the pleasure to introduce the Thai projects that were selected by the UN as success stories to be showcased at the WSIS, including Global SchoolNet, Software Park, and the People’s PC project. Invited in a side interview with Bangkok Post to provide explanations for Thailand’s success in designing and implementing its ICT Master Plan, Khunying Dhippawadee contented that sometimes, what looks like a weakness turns out to be a great advantage. “We had very few people to work on this project, but this allowed them to build very close relations and to get things done”.

Meanwhile, Dr.Thaweesak Koanantakool, Director of the National Electronic and Computer Technology Center (NECTEC), was invited to contribute to the Joint UNECE/UNCTAD/UNESCO/ITU/OECD/Eurostat Statistical Workshop on “Monitoring the Information Society: Data Measurement and Methods”. In his presentation, Dr Thaweesak observed that “the use of information and communication technologies may be different from country to country. Least developed countries are

typically looking for basic access to information, and basic telephone services, while developed countries are addressing information security, privacy and broadband applications”. Hence the need, according to Dr Thaweesak, to use indicators that take into consideration varying points of focus depending on development level while ensuring alignment with WSIS’ Draft Plan of Action and its global perspective.

Dr Thaweesak proceeded to take the case example of Thailand. “Thailand’s fixed-line telephone penetration is about 12% and mobile phone penetration of about 30%. The Internet user penetration is about 10%. The country enacted the Electronic Transactions Act in December 2001. More than 60% of secondary schools in the country are online with the Internet”, he said and went on presenting the first National ICT Master Plan launched in September 2002 and its seven priority strategies: promotion of the domestic ICT industry, use of ICT for better quality of life, capacity building in ICT research and development, potential social infrastructure raising for future competitiveness, development of potential entrepreneurs towards export expansion, facilitation of SMEs’ use of ICT, and deployment of ICT for e-government.

These strategies became the categories of indicators that were chosen to evaluate ICT development in Thailand. The indicators themselves were identified by reference to the ASEAN e-measurement framework of October 2002 and to the OECD model, but a progressive approach was chosen. “We had to start from what we had and build from there”, explained Dr Thaweesak - hence the publication of the first issue of “Thailand ICT Indicators” in October 2003 with 59 indicators. “The grouping of indicators by policy issues we propose is a concept that simplifies the way to collect data and indicators, especially for the developing countries. The example of Thailand shows that it is possible to start small with usable set of initial indicators. The process

can later be extended to cover other policy issues as required, while the global consistency for measurement is easily maintained”, concluded Dr Thaweesak.

Very interested in solutions that could support Thailand’s ICT Master Plan, Dr Thaweesak was particularly drawn to the virtual conference solution that was offered by Digital Partners and the Digital Workforce Education Society to broadcast the WSIS events live on the Internet. In conjunction with the UN Foundation, Digital Partners, an NGO devoted to bridging the digital divide, offers support to many development projects in terms of business model, funding structure, project management and sustainability monitoring. One of the projects they partner in is that of the Digital Workforce Education Society, a US-based non-profit organization with chapters in Switzerland, Mexico, India and Thailand and providing training and curriculum development designed for distance education. Digital Partners and DWES have been working together for several years on a large-scale project in Mexico. The initiative aims at distributing recycled computers to communities and schools in need, and to accompany these equipments with an extensive education and mentoring package enabling children and educators to integrate these computers and the Internet in their lives. Significant teachers’ professional development efforts are made using the virtual conference tool demonstrated at WSIS and the educators are led to create communities of practice, with the expert help of existing global educator communities of practice, leading to the optimal use of technologies for the improvement of the whole education process and contents.

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The Digital Workforce Education Society in action at The World Summit on the Information Society, Geneva

In cooperation with Digital Partners, a UN-funded non-profit organization devoted to help human beings reap the benefits of the Digital Revolution to improve the quality of their lives, DWES enables the World Summit on the Information Society to become a digital event webcasted to a worldwide audience.

From December 9 to 13, DWES will open a virtual event portal accessible through <http://www.digibridge.org>. This portal will webcast live the World Electronic Media Forum starting on December 9 at (14.30 Continental European Time; 7:30 am No. American Central Standard Time) and ending on December 13 (18.30 Continental European Time; 11:30 am No. American Central Standard Time). In the following days, DWES will rebroadcast the first two days events and webcast live a number of interviews and comments on the on-going workshops and exhibits. Virtual visitors will be invited to exchange views, comments and questions through the portal's text chat. Hence, the world will be able to interact with the WSIS with a simple dial-up Internet connection, high speed will not be required to participate. The whole recording will thereafter will available for re-use through the portal or other media from our website www.digibridge.org . A clear demonstration of what Information Society means!

The Digital Workforce Education Society is a US-based international non-profit organization with chapters in Europe (Switzerland), Mexico and Asia (India and Thailand), and in partnership with City Colleges of Chicago's 8 colleges and PBS TV Channel 20 (e-learning) in Chicago, USA. It provides turn-key computer training centers, training and curriculum development designed for distance education and the training of a global digital workforce. DWES also provides eGovernment and eAuthentication services and training to US Federal, State and local Chicago area government agencies, education institutions and area businesses.

To this purpose, DWES maintains Internet servers located in cybercenters so as to deliver reliable online content and collaboration tools to remote users throughout the world. DWES has developed the unique combination of technological solutions for digital events and has the organizational expertise that was acknowledged by the WSIS and a number of NGOs, universities, government agencies and networks, as what they needed to globalize their activities and help bridge the digital divide during this historic Summit.

Through its Chapters, members and partners, DWES is also very active in research and social endeavors related to socio-economic change, children in the Information Society, education, sustainable competitiveness, and digital divide.

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