The Computerworld Honors Program

Honoring those who use Information Technology to benefit society

Final Copy of Case Study

Status:
Laureate

Year:
2013

Organization Name:
Tohono O'odham Community College

Organization URL:
www.tocc.edu

Project Name:
iPad Therefore I am

Please select the category in which you are submitting your entry:
Mobile Access

Please provide an overview of the nominated project. Describe the problem it was intended to solve, the technology or approach used, how it was innovative and any technical or other challenges that had to be overcome for successful implementation and adoption. (In 300 words or less.)

The Tohono O'odham Community College is a tribal college serving the Tohono O'odham Nation. It is located in Sells, Arizona, approximately 60 miles southwest of Tucson. Please reference Appendix 1 for a map showing the location of the college. The student body is made up of many first generation college attendees of varying ages. The cultural issues and the personal issues that arise in a high poverty area have caused the graduation rates to be low. Please reference Appendix 2 for a map of the nation and a list of demographic information. The idea of using iPads to both increase technology literacy and minimize attrition was discussed between the Title III project director and the IT director in July of 2012. Within 6 weeks, the duo were able to get buy in from the Librarian who agreed to handle the checking in and checking out of the devices, the finance department, and the two teachers who agreed to try this new technology in an educational environment. After some rather tense moments and some frantic emails and phone calls to Apple education, the iPads were ready to be checked out to students in the three classes selected for the pilot program. One of the biggest challenges with this

project was the need for a lot of "hands on" tech support. This need was met by training student interns who were then able to help their classmates. Other issues included running out of IP addresses, which was resolved by adding additional "10 dot" class C address blocks, and running out of bandwidth. The college had a 10 meg pipe to the Internet, which was quickly gobbled up. The connection has been doubled to 20 meg and traffic is flowing smoothly.

When was this project implemented or last updated? (Please specify month and year.) Has it incorporated new technologies and/or other innovations since its initial deployment? (In 300 words or less.)

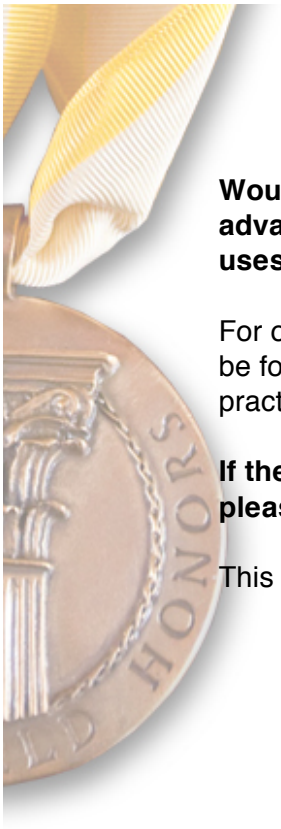
This project started the Fall semester of 2012. Two math classes and one biology class were chosen for the pilot. After a successful semester, the spring semester will feature 6 math classes, one science class, one art class and an economics class.

Is implementation of the project complete? If no, please describe the project's phases and which phase the project is now in. (In 300 words or less.)

This project will be an ongoing one. Last semester was very successful. We intend to continue to add mobile devices to our classes. This is phase 2. The next phase, hopefully fall of 2013, will include integration with our learning management system.

Please provide at least one example of how the technology project has benefited a specific individual or organization. Feel free to include personal quotes from individuals who have directly benefited from the work. (In 300 words or less.)

Students loved working the new technology, Lisa (Elizabeth) Ortega, a 40-something O'odham woman, showed off her iPad during a recent conversation: "I am getting an A in Biology! I would never have believed it. It is because of these iPads! Here, look at this! (She shows her iPad and taps on an application.) You just keep tapping and it goes in deeper. Look, here is a cell and here is the nucleus! (She taps again and smiles hugely.) And here is what is INSIDE the nucleus!! Seeing this, instead of just hearing it, makes it so much clearer for me." Dr. Teresa Newberry, the science teacher, commented, "I also believe that the iPads helped increase student retention, attendance and participation in the class for several reasons. First of all, having the iPad was an incentive to remain in the class and secondly, the iPad helped make the material and class more engaging." The Math Instructor also saw value in the project: "It gave students self-confidence in the process of learning: Technology allowed them to feel knowledge at their hands in an easy, fast, exact and visual way never experienced by them before in a one-on-one environment." Jean Hazen, a 30-something Caucasian woman, expressed it this way: "I am not the best math student in the world and I have always struggled to understand math concepts. I actually started to learn the math lessons we were working on in class. I wanted to cry; furthermore, this is the first time in my life I actually understand a subject that I hated with a passion for thirty years!" Yes, we believe that this pilot was a huge success!



Would this project be considered an innovation, a best practice or other notable advancement that could be adopted by or tailored for other organizations and uses? If yes, please describe that here. (In 300 words or less.)

For our small college this project was definitely an innovation, and I can see that it would be for any small college. In the next few years I can see it being morphed into a best practice. I would heartily recommend other colleges begin such a project.

If there are any other details that the judges should know about this project, please note them here. (In 300 words or less.)

This project was initially funded by Title III.