

Okay, welcome everyone. This is Kristin Johnstad [assumed spelling] at Search Institute and this is the fourth in our series of CVO Social Media Learning Network webinars. We have two great grantees that are going to present today and so without further ado, let's turn it over to Calvin Allen [assumed spelling] and you can introduce your folks and get us started with your work.

Okay, thank you so much. First I'd like to apologize. Annette Cohen [assumed spelling] will not be present today so I'll be the only one speaking officially from HMCUC. I'd like say that it's been a pleasure working with the River City folks, Angie and Ty [assumed spelling], they've worked very hard with the students as they will explain later on in our presentation, you know, they definitely have some challenging students to work with but they've been able to get them to do some amazing things in regard to getting their Web 2.0 sites up and participating in all those good things as we desire for our young people to do so again, kudos to Angie and Ty. With that said, I would now like just to simply defer everything over to Angie and Ty because they are the organization that HMCUC chose to use this grant to further the push to get social networking out there to young people and to use it as a service learning vehicle. So Angie and Ty, I defer to you.

Okay. Hello everyone. It's a pleasure for us to be able to present today our actual participation in this project and just to kind of give you some history about who we are. We are a non-profit 501(c) (3) community based organization, River City Community Development Corporation. We were founded in 1990 for the express purpose of strengthening communities and improving the quality of life for our community residents and more importantly we serve communities of low wealth in providing assistance in affordable housing, assistance in economic development, youth development and empowerment programs. We also seek to enculture culture awareness in addressing issues relating to seniors. So we've been around for quite some time providing service over time in our local community and of course today we're here with some focus more specifically on our youth development and youth empowerment programs. Over time we have provided services to youth of all ages and more importantly youth that are primarily at risk. We live in a rural community and we serve a fairly high [inaudible] level as it relates to youth in our community. Unfortunately we do have a high high school dropout rate and also fluctuating in low into the grades for testing in our local community. So we have a lot of challenges as we work towards trying to build and strengthen communities here in Northeastern North Carolina. So that's just some brief history as it relates to our youth development program. Now as it relates to focusing on our Web 2.0 project, we were very excited about working with Calvin and Nan on this project because it really gave us an opportunity to empower our young people as it relates to technology and being able to expose them to social networks that they would not normally get the opportunity to really begin to start capitalizing and building a product and I think that's pretty much what our aim is on is that we were able to really build a product with this project. So our students both of again of rural and urban connections is has worked in collaboration with several organizations including our faith based community in order to really get implemented projects. So we pulled together some additional partnerships and resources to really assist us in pulling this whole Web 2.0 project together. But what we really used as a vehicle was our website, which is www.rivercitycdc.org, and we kind of use our website as a base really to get, communicate this whole social networking product that our students were actually able to build but through their community service activities, community service and service learning activities, as we integrate those services into our existing programs and I think that was kind of one of the goals is that we were able to take every program that we actually implement with youth and integrate this Web 2.0 concept into everything that we do. So they're living it and breathing it and they're thinking it as we're working through this whole process that you know technology has the ability to empower a nation. So just to kind of see what type of influence that they

could see that this technology can actually do for us. So as we begin to get started, I just want to focus in right now more specifically on our website.

[inaudible]

So as Ty brings up our website, we just want to emphasize on some areas that we really worked on building our students actively participated in you know the brainstorming about how we can really actually build a website that will speak the message and show all of the various outcomes as we're working on service learning projects for our youth program. So as we scroll down to our website and hopefully everyone is seeing what we see, that we actually integrated on our first page of our website. Is everyone able to see our website where you are?

Yeah, it looks great.

Okay. So if you come down to our website, we have actually, we're going to scroll all the way down and then if you can see that we've integrated all of this on our front page, Face Book, Twitter, You Tube, and I'm going to get Ty to talk a little later about kind of what actually transpired in the back room as the students and he were actually kind of building on the website. But we're going to come up just a little bit to the actual video. This You Tube video was incorporated into our front page just to kind of show highlight one of the major projects that our young people have been working on over time and this particular video in this You Tube video actually highlights our Youth Build students providing an introduction into a what we call Group Work Camp Project that the students actually assisted in implementing. This is where our organization actually were able to provide rehabilitation, housing rehabilitation to over 50 houses in our local community. They actually were able to provide elderly, low income and disabled communities provide a service to them by building handicap ramps, doing interior and exterior painting, weatherization, they did some roofing projects and the like. So we're just going to click onto that link right now and just give you just a little highlight or taste of what we actually the students were able to really put together as it relates to an intro to this particular project.

Just to note, we'll be able to see it but we won't necessarily be able to hear it.

Oh, okay.

[inaudible]

Alright, so we're going to click onto that.

River City Community Development Corporation will host, organize, and implement the 2009 Group Work Camp Project in partnership with Group Work Camp from Loveland, Colorado. Group Work Camp is a proven program that prepares hundreds of teenagers and adults representing 14 states with communities like ours to provide home repairs for the elderly, low income and disabled residents. We will provide

Okay so that actual clip was just an introduction to some of the work that we were actually able to complete in our local community. Again, we rehabilitated I believe it was like 52, 53 houses of low income and elderly residents right here in our local community and as a result of that we were able to get some regional, I guess, regional media coverage from that where the local television station actually had to come down from Tidewater, Virginia because we are again we're located in rural Northeastern

North Carolina, so we don't really have a major television station here but they came down from the Tidewater area and then they actually were able to capture some of the coverage of some of the rehabilitation work that the young people did in the local community.

How would you react if someone offered to take care of pricey home repairs free of charge?

I would say what's the catch, right? Well one Elizabeth City non-profit is doing it with no strings attached. 10 On Your Side's Eric Harryman joins us now with more. This sounds too good to be true man.

But this time, guess what, Tom, it is not. This week River City Community Development brought in a small army of volunteers. In all 62 work crews took on home repair assignments for homeowners who can't afford to do it on their own and applied for help. 10 On Your Side caught up with two very eager work crews and one very grateful homeowner.

Okay so that was just a clip that we actually integrated into the intro and we just put a little clip there just kind of explaining what was actually happening. So again all of this has been integrated onto our front page of our website. So just to give you some additional information, I'm going to have Ty actually explain some of the work that he actually worked with the students in trying to get on our front page, some of the things that actually goes on in the back room as it relates to trying to get all of this set up.

Okay as Angie said we kind of integrated all of our social media sites on our front page including Face Book, Twitter and You Tube. One thing we added was called a Tweet Widget which is on our website. You can probably see it on the left side on the left column under the far lower left hand line and pretty much a widget is a small gadget that shares specific data from one location, in this case on Twitter our actual account, it shows individual tweets from another location. It helps to connect our website with our social networking websites and also or social networking websites with other social networking websites like for example Twitter with Face Book and Twitter with You Tube and vice versa and also like with the actual You Tube. You Tube has an auto-share function that allows you to automatically share like a newly uploaded video to your Face Book and Twitter accounts. So pretty much that works well because when you upload a video, one that you share to Twitter as a tweet, it automatically comes onto our website onto our widget as a tweet so it pretty much automatically updates and it makes you know keeping up with what we're doing a lot easier. This video that we have on our page, the one that we just viewing, it is a video that we uploaded with various other videos on You Tube. Pretty much what we did was we embedded it on the page. We're going to go to the

No we're going to go to Face Book.

[facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com)

Right. Let's go, we're going to go to Face Book and kind of show you some various products that the students were actually able to upload onto our Face Book page and it just shows you some various video coverage that they were able to capture, some of our present and past students and being able to allow them to provide testimonials. You'll see here on You Tube we have pictures uploaded from some of the various housing rehabilitation projects that we've worked on. We listed some of our partners in all of this. Our students were able to go to a homeless shelter where they provided landscaping. They did a landscaping project here at our homeless shelter. They, we've actually adopted a highway and the students are actually participating on actively in the Adopt-A-Highway Program. There has been some

CPR training and we've actually captured a lot of that and as you can see, as things actually transpire within our youth programs and service learning projects that we're working on, that we are able to very you know real time and able to come back and upload it onto our Face Book site. So now we'll go to You Tube.

Hold on one second [inaudible].

Okay, sure.

I just want you to bring attention to the rural conference that the students presented at in regard to Web 2.0. This was early on. You have to figure [inaudible].

Okay. Our students actually attended a conference in Hendersonville, North Carolina where they actually did some research focusing on our high school drop out rate in our local community and they were able to take that information and then integrate some the Web 2.0 into putting together a Power Point presentation that was actually presented at the Rural Schools and Community Trust's Annual, it's a national conference. So they actually presented on Web 2.0 at this conference. But the whole focus was how to address the high school drop out rate in our community and the students actually took it from birth because they actually started from the ground in doing the research and putting together the Power Point presentation and the video for that and then they were able to actually present it at a national conference up in Henderson, that's up in the mountains of North Carolina. So the students were really excited about that and as you can see we were able to come right back and upload some of that information and pictures and everything on our Face Book site. And one of the things I'd just like to talk about is how can we deepen the youth engagement in service learning activities and throughout the community and I think that the website is a vehicle for doing that but also being able to expose our young people to be able to access these information resources and we see down the road and being able to possibly provide a presentation to our public schools, our alternative schools and even communities of low wealth and one of the things that Calvin and I have talked to at some length is the ability to be able to communicate and speak the language of our young people. The ability that technology has empowered a new generation and that if we're able to effectively communicate positive educational information and resources, that our young people are able to really grasp that theory quickly. So we are really excited again about this project and we're looking to work with our public schools in seeing how we think and possibly integrate this technology into a lot of the work that they do. It is, unfortunately, I'm aware that a lot of public schools actually block a lot of these You Tube and My Space sites on the campuses because the ability for students to get in and abuse it unfortunately. But if it's some, under correct supervision, we really think that these technologies have the ability to really empower a generation and to assist in you know increasing the outcomes of into the grade testing, even have an effect on our high school drop out rates and some other social issues that actually transpire in communities of low wealth. So again I think this, we invite you, of course, after the conference to feel free to go to our website and browse through some of the photographs and some of the video coverage that the students were able to actually upload and put on the system for River City. I think it really has taken us to a new level of communication as it relates to how we communicate with our young people. So again we are again happy that we were able to participate in this project with the national community service project.

I know we're running short on time but I did want to mention before we begin our presentation that on the Twitter site, that's become sort of a resource for the students and they have begun to log in to the Twitter site on a regular basis as well. There's a lot of different URL's that they can you know click on

there to get resource information and they're beginning to utilize that. So right now we're sort of using our Twitter site as a resource for the students and they're finally beginning to come aboard and again I'd like to say that both Angie and Ty have done a great job again challenging some students who have a whole set of issues to deal with with regards to their life but they got very excited about this social networking project and again I'd just like to commend Angie and Ty for their hard work.

Okay, thank you.

Can you guys just wait a second? This is Kristin. My guess is that there's some folks that have questions.

Definitely.

So we'll open that up for people to either ask the questions or type in the questions.

Okay.

Well I'll ask a question now. This is Kristin. One of the things that we found that was a challenging was that the young people in our projects like to take the videos but then we just got lots and lots of video that needed editing that they didn't have time to do so were there certain things that you did to make sure the quality was high because the clips you showed were great?

Well, yeah, um. Well with the grant we were able to get cameras, camcorders and cameras. Actual cameras, two of each, and both of them, the cameras and the camcorders, were HD so that helped with actual you know producing quality footage. With the HD camera, I did a lot to the editing. I used some software I got my hands on to do the actual editing. Once I got familiar with the actual software, I was able to go in and you know do a lot of stuff like layering the actual video footage, and to add you know graphics in with the footage. You know, taking a bunch of different clips you know because it's like when you actually do try to make a clip or an actual movie you have so much footage you have to go through and you have to cut out certain things like audio, you know and actually bring it together and you know you keep playing with it until you get something that you you know feel comfortable with.

Let me say this. Now where the students really contributed is in terms of the look and the feel of the video. You have to figure young people have a great sense of I guess this video look because of all the videos they watch on television. They have an idea of what they want so they scripted their videos, they even the staging or the way they're standing in the video, they did all of that.

[inaudible]

Yeah, so that was where their input came along and in order to have a quality project, Ty's expertise was definitely a part of that as well.

But did Ty, Ty did you help them with some of that again helping them know what makes good content or were you able to so they gave you a good enough that when you edited it, it was really strong?

Well yeah, I mean, for some movies, some of the actual footage we shot I mean we had like limited footage so you know so some stuff we had to you know do a lot of editing but some stuff we you know

wrote scripts for. You know, you know when you actually do plan for it comes out a lot better and a lot easier so you know it's less work that we have to do.

I don't know if you guys can see but there are people, Deedee's saying very cool from Camp Fire, there's other folks that are talking about how exciting this is so. Any questions from other people that are on the line? I want to ask one more question and then, folks if you want to type in your questions otherwise we'll give a big round of applause to these folks before we transfer to Heartland but did I understand correctly when you showed that TV piece, the regional television coverage, do you think that was a result of some of the incredible short pieces that you were able to have students produce? I mean is that how they caught wind of it?

Well I think it has a lot to do with that and then also our marketing efforts as it relates to what was actually transpiring in our community as it relates to young folks and the actual service learning project and rehabilitating low income housing at no cost and was a lot of buzz in our local community as it relates to what was really actually transpiring with communities of low wealth.

No it's just great. I think I remember meeting Calvin in October and he was talking about the power. I mean in many ways this could be powerful but sort of just promoting and getting the story out there.

Exactly.

It seems like you know that you have just done beautiful examples of all these stories but then other folks are going to start picking up and saying oh we want to send our reporters or we want to know more because the stories are so compelling. So it's really, really fabulous.

Well thank you.

Okay. Well is there anything else then that you all want to say before we shift to Heartland?

I think it was a great presentation. Very good.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Yay!!

Thank you and again we're excited at HMCUC and River City with what we plan to do next so I think Ty and Angie both see where this, see that there's a lot of possibilities for utilizing social media and we're excited about doing even more with them.

Well thank you. Thank you very much and it was really fun to have a site just from the ground to talk about what it looked like too so Calvin thanks for having them be able to feature their work so specifically. That's great. It gives me an idea for next time for me.