

AT&T grant funds new Business Training Center program at Urban League

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Marian Giles, of Northwoods, recently enrolled in free computer classes at the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis to restore her skills following a debilitating stroke.

“I enrolled in the A+ class to increase my skills,” said Ms. Giles, a former computer teacher with two master’s degrees in business administration and management.

“I used to teach computers, and I’m now using this class to rehabilitate my memory.”

Since 1966, the local Urban League affiliate has offered free courses through its Business Training Center. The program provides computer training and basic office skills to adults seeking jobs in the technology field. Currently, the program teaches Microsoft Word, Access, Excel, Powerpoint, A+ and hardware and software applications.

“In the office, it is a hindrance if you don’t know how to use spreadsheets,” said Katherine Hudson, a BTC student who works as the educational director of America Scores.

“I like these courses because they allow you to apply what you learned immediately instead of having to wait until graduation.”

Now students will have opportunities to learn more new skills. The Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis was recently awarded a \$25,000 grant from The A.T. & T. Foundation, Inc. to offer free wireless technologies training classes at the BTC.

In the new wireless training program, participants receive hands-on training in Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, RFID and other wireless devices. This new program will teach clients to utilize basic wireless technology fundamentals, configure hardware and security, and troubleshoot wireless area networks with an array of wireless devices.

These sessions are offered free to individuals who have demonstrated abilities in the IT field but do not have financial resources to obtain further training.

“Computers have gone from being optional to being mandatory for your career,” said Talena Acon, a young student from North St. Louis.

“Education can be expensive, so I am honored to have these classes offered to me without cost. The only thing you have to pay is attention.”

“AT&T is a longtime supporter of the Urban League, and I am pleased that we will use our technology to help the organization do what it does best - help others,” said David

Nichols, president of AT&T Missouri.

“The Urban League would like to thank A.T. & T. for their commitment and support,” said James H. Buford, president and CEO of the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis.

For more information or to enroll in classes, please call Sharon Johnson, Business Training Center instructor, at (314) 615-3642.