

Word on the Street

Volume III, Issue X, Feb. 2010 Here's Life Inner City in New York City Matt and Anna Shenk

The Sweet Spot of Ministry: Matt

Last week, I found myself in the sweet spot of ministry: building up a young man *and* building up a church, all by using technology in the inner-city.

Hope For All Outreach Christian Center, a partner church of Here's Life Inner City, recently started a job training program for adults. The church is located in East New York, Brooklyn, one of the toughest and most economically depressed neighborhoods in the city. **This job training program is providing hope in the community by teaching vital job skills and by sharing the hope of Jesus.** When they called and told me that they really wanted to teach computers as a component to the job skills, I was immediately excited to help them out. I worked hard to prepare ten computers and within a few weeks, we planned a date to set up the computer center.



Matt and James setting up the computer center

For the installation, God put on my heart a recent high school graduate in our neighborhood who hasn't been able to find a job amidst the highest unemployment in NYC in 33 years. I gave him a call and asked if he wanted to work for me for the day to help me set up the computer lab. **The excitement that he showed at even having employment for a single day made me happy to help him out, but deeply sad at how tough it is for young African-American males to find jobs today** (according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, more than half of black males between the ages of 16-19 are unemployed). James (not his real name), is a bright and hard-working young man who is hoping to enter a city college in the fall. I wish I had the funds to hire him myself because he would make a great employee!

On the day of the installation, James and I arrived at the Here's Life Inner City warehouse early in the morning to load up my van with computers. **By late afternoon, we had installed a first-rate computer lab of ten computers, loaded with software and hooked up to the Internet!**

I mentioned above that I was in my sweet spot that day. I had the privilege of helping a church set up a computer lab that will be used to serve people in their community, help them gain employment, and develop relationships with people and share the Gospel message with them. Besides being able to resource yet another church in New York City, I was able to spend time with James, share the Gospel with him, provide an honest day's work, and start to develop a relationship that I hope will continue to grow. For me, it doesn't get much better than that.

At the end of the day, James said to me, "Man, I really like your job." I said, "Me, too. It's a great job." Thank YOU for the privilege of allowing me to do this work. Your prayers and support are making a difference in the lives of New Yorkers.

Matt and Anna Shenk • 932 St. Marks Ave. #3E, Brooklyn, NY 11213

Anna (347) 276-4419 or annashenk@yahoo.com • Matt (646) 287-4197 or mattshenk@yahoo.com

www.theshenks.org