



## OASIS & AT&T Expand Technology Training for Adults 50+ OASIS Connections Program Will Help Expand Workforce Skills

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ST. LOUIS, Oct. 21, 2011 /PRNewswire via COMTEX/ -- The OASIS Institute has received a \$625,000 contribution from AT&T to expand its Connections technology training program in 2011-12. The contribution will enable the national education organization to expand workforce skills training for adults age 50-plus; support national instructor training, e-learning and certification; and equip thousands of adults with the ability to use technology effectively - both in their personal lives and on the job. This expansion includes training in eighteen cities across the country.

The economic downturn and persistently high unemployment rates have made finding a job difficult for millions of Americans, including older adults. The Department of Labor estimates that 4.2 million people age 55 and older were unemployed in August 2011, the highest rate for this age group in six decades. (1) Older job seekers are often at a disadvantage in finding a job due to a lack of basic technology skills. Just 42 percent of adults over 65 uses the Internet, compared to 77 percent for all age groups combined. (2) Employers cite the lack of current workplace skills as a key obstacle for older applicants.

"Thanks to AT&T, we will be able to reach as many as 11,000 older adults across the country and help them build their technological skills and confidence," said Marcia Kerz, OASIS president. "Some of them may take the classes simply to learn how to stay in touch with friends and family. But more are turning to Connections to help them update their job skills." The Connections curriculum of 34 courses includes basic computer skills; Internet and email; workplace applications such as Word, Excel and PowerPoint; online applications and resumes; social networking; and practical topics like finding reliable health information. In the past ten years, more than 46,000 people have enrolled.

"Connections is a proven solution to a challenge facing many Americans: how to stay current with technology," said Beth Shiroishi, AT&T Vice President of Sustainability and Philanthropy. "Expanding the Connections program will allow more people to develop skills to stay in touch with family and friends, engage in their communities, and prepare for success in the workplace." Since 1998, AT&T and the AT&T Foundation have contributed more than \$3.4 million to support the program.

OASIS currently partners with more than 90 organizations in the 18 target cities to reach diverse communities. OASIS provides these partners with instructor training, partner support, curriculum and evaluation.

Much of the growth in the program is tied to the need to help older adults who are seeking to re-enter the job market. OASIS is refining its "Connections at Work" curriculum, a focused set of courses designed to help older adults improve their work skills. Changes include more practice time, adding practice activities related to the workplace, teaching Internet and email skills, and a comprehensive Job Search course to support people who are actively seeking work while they are building workforce skills. OASIS is also working on updates to existing courses and development of new ones to keep pace with changes in technologies and application software. One new course is All Hands On Tech, a series of classes on emerging technologies such as eBook readers, tablet PCs, netbooks and home health monitoring.

About the OASIS Institute OASIS is a national nonprofit organization that promotes successful aging through lifelong learning, health programs and volunteer engagement. The OASIS vision is to see that adults age 50-plus across the country have opportunities to pursue vibrant, healthy, productive and meaningful lives. Founded in 1982, OASIS serves more than 370,000 adults through partnerships in 39 U.S. cities.

The OASIS Institute in St. Louis is the national headquarters. For more information, visit [www.oasisnet.org](http://www.oasisnet.org) About AT&T AT&T Inc. (NYSE: T) is a premier communications holding company and one of the most honored companies in the world. Its subsidiaries and affiliates - AT&T operating companies - are the providers of AT&T services in the United States and around the world. With a powerful array of network resources that includes the nation's fastest mobile broadband network, AT&T is a leading provider of wireless, Wi-Fi, high speed Internet, voice and cloud-based services. A leader in mobile broadband and emerging 4G capabilities, AT&T also offers the best wireless coverage worldwide of any U.S. carrier, offering the most wireless phones that work in the most countries. It also offers advanced TV services under the AT&T U-verse and AT&T | DIRECTV brands. The company's suite of IP-based business communications services is one of the most advanced in the world. In domestic markets, AT&T Advertising Solutions and AT&T Interactive are known for their leadership in local search and advertising.

About Philanthropy at AT&T AT&T Inc. (NYSE: T) is committed to advancing education, strengthening communities and improving lives. Through its philanthropic initiatives and working with other organizations, AT&T has a long history of supporting projects that create learning opportunities; promote academic and economic achievement; and address community needs. In 2010, more than \$148.2 million was contributed through corporate-, employee- and AT&T Foundation-giving programs.

(1) U.S. Department of Labor (2) Pew Internet and American Life Project Surveys.

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