



## **TechBridge Facilitates Partnership With Cisco to Change Lives**

Local Students Given Scholarships to Cisco Networking Academy

Atlanta – November 29, 2007. In 2007 TechBridge saved Georgia nonprofits an estimated \$1 million in technology-related consulting fees and since inception in 2000 has facilitated the distribution of more than \$6 million in free Microsoft software. Now, TechBridge and its partners are working together to create opportunities for five local students – work it considers priceless.

TechBridge corporate sponsor Cisco Systems announced at the TechBridge Digital Ball® in May 2007 that it would provide scholarships to the Cisco Networking Academy Program to five young people from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The scholarships were dedicated in memory of Bill Aussem, a former Cisco employee. TechBridge worked with its nonprofit partners to identify the five deserving students and at its Sponsor Reception on September 25, 2007, jointly announced with Cisco the scholarship recipients. They are: Jason Julius Clarke, Kenneth M. Johnson, Richard Shah, Jr., Dorothy M. Washington, and Elijah Blue Thompson. All recipients are currently enrolled as students at Atlanta Technical College.

The Cisco Networking Academy, administered locally by The Atlanta Technical College, is a comprehensive curriculum that teaches critical IT skills in a high school or community college learning environment. Students can earn college credits, and become a Cisco-certified network associate. Since the program's launch in 1997 approximately 400,000 students have graduated in the United States. "Graduates of the Networking Academy Program will be fully certified Cisco networking associates." says Atlanta-based Cisco account manager, Brian Panosian. "Certification provides an opportunity for a lifelong and life-changing career in technology."

The Atlanta Technical College joined the Cisco Networking Academy Program in 1999. Since then approximately 250 students have participated. "We were among the first of the Cisco Academies," says Dr. Peter Ejindu, Atlanta Technical College. "Most of our students have proceeded on to get their four-year degree and are employed in the technology field and related fields."

To further support the scholarship recipients, TechBridge worked to secure IT executive mentors for the five students and is urging its sponsoring companies to provide internships. TechBridge is pleased to announce the following executives will serve as IT executive mentors to the five scholarship recipients: Brian Shield, EVP and CIO, The Weather Channel; Helen Berg, SVP and CIO, Merge Healthcare; Steve Winterbottom, VP and CIO, Scientific Atlanta, a Cisco Company; Dave Kardesh, VP IT Corporate Systems, The Home Depot; and Robert Marburger, CIO and Partner, Alston & Bird. "Following the Cisco scholarship announcement at the Digital Ball, CIOs began immediately stepping up to help" said Jack McMillan, CEO of TechBridge. "We are honored to be in a position to facilitate the amazing spirit of philanthropy and

compassion among Atlanta's technology community to improve the lives of these five deserving young people."

### **About TechBridge**

TechBridge provides professional, affordable technology consulting services, innovative technology solutions and access to the financial, technical and human resources that nonprofits need to be successful. Founded in 2000, TechBridge is home of NPower Atlanta and an affiliate of the national NPower Network. For more information about TechBridge or the Digital Ball, visit [www.techbridge.org](http://www.techbridge.org).

### **About Cisco**

Cisco (NASDAQ:CSCO) is the worldwide leader in networking that transforms how people connect, communicate and collaborate. Information about Cisco can be found at [www.cisco.com](http://www.cisco.com). For more information about the Cisco Networking Academy, visit the company's web site or contact Atlanta Technical College.

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Photo Included: 9\_25\_07 Cisco Scholarship Award Winners 003.jpg

Photo Caption: Students receive their scholarships to Cisco Networking Academy. L to R: Brian Panosian, Cisco; Dr. Peter Ejindu, Atlanta Technical College (front); Elijah Blue Thompson (back); Richard Shah, Jr.; Jason Julius Clarke; Kenneth Johnson; Susan Weatherly, Cisco; Rodney Ellis, Atlanta Technical College; Jack McMillan, TechBridge. Not pictured: Dorothy M. Washington.

