Foster month kicks off with laptop giveaway

Bernard Naquin shows off the new laptop he was awarded Monday morning at the Nevin Center. Naquin said plans to use the new computer to complete homework assignments and to study for upcoming finals. The computer comes with Windows 7, Office Home and Student, Word, Powerpoint and Excel. (Photo by Tyler Orsburn)

Richmond High graduate Bernard Naquin, 19, won’t have to look too far to find a computer these days. The Contra Costa County teenager and Diablo Valley College student was awarded a brand new Dell laptop Monday morning at the Nevin Center. “I was surprised when they told me I was going to receive the computer,” Naquin said. “Out of everyone in the county, they chose me. I didn’t expect it.”

The laptop didn’t just fall from the sky. The laptop giveaway was organized by Contra Costa Supervisor John Gioia, California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF) president Sunne Wright McPeak and iFoster founder Reid Cox.

CETF granted iFoster, a California-based non-profit, $300,000 to expand its technology-based child welfare program in seven California counties. The idea is to provide foster children, those like Naquin, who have recently left the foster care system, access to low-cost computers and high-speed Internet connections.

“Computers and Internet are priced out of range for a majority of families raising vulnerable children,” Cox said. “Our intention is to help their children succeed at school and enter the work force.”

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