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Savior Antes Up for PS 7

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Back-to-school time turned into a disaster at P.S. 7 when teachers opened up classrooms at the Kingsbridge school to discover that their computers were missing. But unlike many horror stories, this one has a happy ending.

Despite no signs of a break-in, 80 laptops and desk computers were stolen over the summer. In total, the equipment was worth approximately \$100,000.

Enter Per Scholas, a Hunts Point-based nonprofit that helps low-income people gain access to technology and also recycles discarded computers. The group immediately volunteered to help the school replace the stolen equipment, earning the praise of local elected officials.

“I was dismayed by the theft of a large number of computers at P.S. 7, which represents a serious loss for the students,” said Councilman Oliver Koppell. “I am extremely grateful to Per Scholas for its generous offer to help replace the stolen equipment.”

Plinio Ayala, president and CEO of Per Scholas, and members of his staff met with principal Renee Coutier and Koppell to discuss the computer needs of the school and ways the organization could help.

The organization has already agreed to immediately supply P.S. 7 with 30 laptops and reach out to businesses to acquire additional compatible computers for the school.

“As soon as I heard about the theft at P.S. 7, I knew we could help,” said Ayala. “Although the circumstances are troubling, I am pleased that Per Scholas was able to provide this much needed equipment.”

The organization sells recycled and handmade computers to low-income children and families at the lowest-possible cost and provides home PCs and training for teachers and students at a number of schools where there is little or no access to computer technology. As it pertains to low-income children, P.S. 7 fits the bill.

DOE recently stated that due to limited funds, it would reach out for partnerships to help the school and it was no surprise to Koppell that Per Scholas would answer the call.

“I have been aware of Per Scholas’ excellent work for some time and, in fact, I have been assisting the organization in its recycling efforts by collecting used computer equipment at my district office, and I have provided the organization with a small grant to further its endeavors,” he said.

“Per Scholas’ generosity has lifted the morale of the principal and teachers, who were disconsolate at the invasion of their space, and has helped to restore their faith in the goodness of people.”