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# Pennsylvania Univ brings community tech center to Pune

PHILADELPHIA: The University of Pennsylvania's School of Engineering and Applied Science has announced that Puente, a global community service initiative, will soon be brought to India.

Puente (Spanish for bridge) is a student-run organization that seeks to bridge technology gap in low income urban areas throughout the world. Puente is presently establishing a Community Technology Center (CTC) as part of the New Life Program in North Philadelphia. And by mid-2000, Puente will build a similar CTC in Pune.

The CTC will become an integral part of the after-school program for neighbourhood children. This program will allow students to be exposed to technology at a young age in an educational environment.

Pune was chosen as the focus of this year's international project because of its commitment to community development and educational activities.

The CTC will be located in the Oswal Bandhu Samaj Community Center. Both - New Life and Pune Community Technology Centers - will comprise networked computers, each with full multimedia capabilities and Internet access.

Puente will continue to manage and guide the New Life CTC along with the help of other Penn Engineering student groups such as the Penn Student Technology Exchange Program (PennSTEP), CommuniTech and the Community Service Information Technology Advisors.

Local high schools will also be involved with the installation and maintenance of the lab. In Pune, a board of trustees, consisting of members from non-profit, education and



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business sectors will be given the responsibility of insuring long-term sustainability of the center.

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Certain aspects of the Pune CTC project will be coordinated with the University of Pennsylvania's summer study program that is currently held at the University of Pune, says Director of Penn-In-India Abroad program Surender Gambhir.

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