



Valassis Computers Connect Soldiers in Iraq to Home

Valassis recently donated more than 100 used or retired laptop computers to a local organization that distributes the refurbished systems to organizations in need.

JDS Computer Donations was founded by Northville dentist Dr. James Payne who is also its director. Since September of 2003, Dr. Payne's organization has rebuilt and donated more than 1,000 computers.

The Valassis computers were cleaned, repaired and updated then sent overseas to troops that are stationed in Iraq for use by soldiers to e-mail their loved ones at home.

A recent request for computers by Sgt. Maj. Douglas Howard of the Headquarter and Headquarters Company (HHC), 51st Signal Battalion out of Fort Bragg, North Carolina was one of several granted because of Valassis' donation. Sgt. Maj. Howard oversees more than 450 soldiers in Iraq.

Soldiers have put the computers to immediate use, many sending thank you notes.

Capt. Jeffrey Kuechenmeister wrote, "I respectfully thank you for your help with

computers for us and our troops over here in Iraq. Hats off to Valassis for the actual computers as well. Thank you so much."

Spc. Kristofor Jacobson wrote, "Thank you for the computers. They will get lots of service and bring some morale to the troops. Knowing that they have a place to come to and unwind being able to talk to love ones or check email, makes life away just a little easier."

1st Sgt. James Mortimer Jr. has been working on what he calls an entertainment room and he will soon put in an Internet café.

Dr. Payne also received this thank you on behalf of the entire unit, "We the soldiers of 51st Signal Battalion appreciate your support of services. The computers that were sent to the unit were a big help and moral booster for the soldiers in the unit. Thanks for supporting our troops and may God bless you."

JDS is always in need of computers and computer components. To learn more about the organization or to make a donation, visit them on the Web at www.jdscomputers.net/firms.com. ■