

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PROGRESS REPORT FOR SUSTAINABLE BROADBAND ADOPTION

General Information

1. Federal Agency and Organizational Element to Which Report is Submitted Department of Commerce, National Telecommunications and Information Administration	2. Award Identification Number 21-43-B10546	3. DUNS Number 086130007
4. Recipient Organization Connected Nation, Inc. 1020 College St, Bowling Green, KY 421012137		
5. Current Reporting Period End Date (MM/DD/YYYY) 12-31-2013	6. Is this the last Annual Report of the Award Period? <div style="text-align: center;"> <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No </div>	
7. Certification: I certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that this report is correct and complete for performance of activities for the purposes set forth in the award documents.		
7a. Typed or Printed Name and Title of Certifying Official Bernie Bogle Grants Management Officer	7c. Telephone (area code, number and extension) 270-781-4320	7d. Email Address bbogle@connectednation.org
7b. Signature of Certifying Official Submitted Electronically	7e. Date Report Submitted (MM/DD/YYYY): 06-26-2014	

PROJECT INDICATORS				
<p>1. Does your Sustainable Broadband Adoption (SBA) project foster a particular broadband technology or technologies? If so, please describe this technology (or technologies) (600 words or less).</p> <p>No, Connected Nation's Sustainable Broadband Adoption project does not foster a particular broadband technology. Rather, it focuses on encouraging adoption of any form or variation of broadband technologies, including but not limited to DSL, Cable, Wireless, Mobile, and Satellite.</p>				
<p>2a. Please list all of the broadband equipment and/or supplies you have purchased during the most recent calendar year using BTOP grant funds or other (matching) funds, including any customer premises equipment or end-user devices. If additional space is needed, please attach a list of equipment and/or supplies. Please also describe how the equipment and supplies have been deployed (100 words or less).</p>				
Manufacturer	Item	Unit Cost per Item	Number of Units	Narrative description of how the equipment and supplies were deployed
N/A	N/A	0	0	N/A
Totals		0	0	
Add Equipment			Remove Equipment	
<p>2b. To the extent you distribute equipment/supplies to beneficiaries of your project, please describe the equipment/supplies you distribute, the quantities distributed, and the specific populations to whom the equipment/supplies are distributed (600 words or less).</p> <p>No equipment will be distributed through this project.</p>				
<p>3. For SBA access and training provided with BTOP grant funds, please provide the information below. Unless otherwise indicated in the instructions, figures should be reported <u>cumulatively</u> from award inception to the end of the most recent calendar year. For each type of training (other than open access), please count only the participants who <u>completed</u> the course.</p>				
Types of Access or Training	Number of People Targeted	Number of People Participating	Total Training Hours Offered	
Open Lab Access	0	0	0	
Multimedia	0	0	0	
Office Skills	0	0	0	
ESL	0	0	0	
GED	0	0	0	
College Preparatory Training	0	0	0	
Basic Internet and Computer Use	183,737	43,644	202,844	
Certified Training Programs	0	0	0	
Other (please specify): N/A	0	0	0	
Total	183,737	43,644	202,844	
<p>4. Please describe key economic and social successes of your project during the past year, and why you believe the project is successful thus far (600 words or less).</p> <p>Sixty-nine percent of training participants indicate they will begin subscribing to broadband service within the next year as a result of their digital literacy training. That's an estimated 30,425 new subscribers. Several trainees have advocated for the basic digital literacy training over the past year as a direct result of what a difference the training has made to them. Some of these stories are shared below:</p> <p>Goodwill Industries of South Central Ohio Trains More than 400 Participants on Computer Basics http://connectohio.org/blog/post/goodwill-industries-south-central-ohio-trains-more-400-participants-computer-basics. Goodwill Industries of South Central Ohio offers the free ECO computer training at 10 locations across 7 counties. "Participants are looking to learn about Internet usage and e-mail," said an ECO instructor for Goodwill Industries. "Many come in not knowing how to turn on a computer." One participant said she signed up for the training after realizing her computer skills were lacking and her boss's</p>				

expectations were increasing. "I'm not good on the computer," she said. "It's hard to apply for jobs and most places require online applications."

Unemployed Older Workers Get Free Computer Training

http://www.thepostnewspapers.com/brunswick/local_news/article_f9d3c3b3-d05f-5ca9-aaed-518585bfb043.html

Unemployed older workers have turned to the Medina County Career Center for basic computer training. "This course has been a big help to me," one trainee said. "It's given me a lot more confidence in navigating the Internet. That's the only place jobs are posted anymore, and I feel more comfortable that I can find them and complete the application process correctly."

Portsmouth Public Library Partners with Connect Ohio to Offer Computer Training to Area Adults

<http://connectohio.org/recent-news/release-portsmouth-public-library-partners-connect-ohio-offer-computer-training-area-adu>

"We have trained more than 270 people so far through this program," said the technology coordinator at Portsmouth Public Library. "Many have continued taking other computer classes here at the library, and we also have helped people who were struggling in their jobs because they couldn't use computers. One student was able to start an online business after completing the training. We have collaborated with several other local organizations to offer classes to their clients, and have had agencies send staff to us for training."

Connect Ohio Unveils First Job Skills & Placement Center in Zanesville

<http://connectohio.org/recent-news/connect-ohio-unveils-first-jobs-skills-placement-center-zanesville>

"Access to broadband service is critical to bridging the digital divide and is essential for the economic strength of Ohio's rural communities," said Senator Sherrod Brown. "I congratulate Connect Ohio as it launches this new job training program that will prepare Ohioans in Muskingum County — and throughout Ohio — for good-paying twenty-first century jobs that will allow our workers to compete in the global economy."

Ross-Pike Educational Service District to Offer FREE Computer Training for Adults

<http://connectohio.org/recent-news/advisory-ross-pike-educational-service-district-offer-free-computer-training-adults>

"I found the classes to be very helpful," said one ECO participant at Ross County Service Center. "The part about online security was really good, I really appreciated learning that. It has helped me to stay in touch with people I don't see often. I would recommend this class to anyone."

The Career Center, COAD, Partner with Connect Ohio to Offer Computer Training to Area Adults

<http://connectohio.org/recent-news/release-career-center-coad-partner-connect-ohio-offer-computer-training-area-adults>

"The program has been received very well, especially from older residents or participants with limited computer experience," said the program manager for the Corporation for Ohio Appalachian Development. "We heard from a great-grandmother who was eager to learn how to use Facebook to see family pictures, a retiree who wanted to be able to shop online, and individuals who were trying to pursue different career paths."

5. Please estimate the level of broadband adoption in the community(ies) and/or area(s) your project serves, explain your methodology for estimating the level of broadband adoption, and explain changes in the broadband adoption level, if any, since the project began.

5a. Adoption Level (%):	Narrative description of level, methodology, and change from the level at project inception (600 words or less).
71	Ohio's adoption level is 71% of households. This number was derived from Residential Technology surveying conducted in 2012 by Connect Ohio as a part of the State Broadband Initiatives program, through random digit dial surveys to more than 1,200 heads of households. The findings from the 2012 Residential Technology survey shows the greatest jump in home broadband adoption, increasing 5% from the 2010 and 2011 findings.

6. Please describe the two most common barriers to broadband adoption that you have experienced this year in connection with your project. What steps did you take to address them (600 words or less)?

A 2012 Residential Technology survey conducted by Connect Ohio, as a part of the State Broadband Initiatives program, indicated the primary barrier to adoption in Ohio is relevance - the perceived lack of need. Statewide, 35% of non-adopters cite this as their main reason for not subscribing. Second to that is the lack of affordable broadband service. Twenty-six percent of non-adopters cite this as their main reason for not subscribing. By producing a large awareness campaign as part of the program and promoting grass-roots efforts, the first barrier is directly addressed. The program's training aims to identify value for each participant so that they will see a broadband investment as invaluable and more affordable based on its merits.

7. To the extent that you have made any subcontracts or sub grants, please provide the number of subcontracts or sub grants that have been made to socially and economically disadvantaged small business (SDB) concerns as defined by section 8(a) of the Small Business Act, 15 U.S.C. 647, as modified by NTIA's adoption of an alternative small business size standard for use in BTOP. Please also provide the names of these SDB entities. (150 words or less)

N/A

8. Please describe any best practices / lessons learned that can be shared with other similar BTOP projects (900 words or less).

In April 2012, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) released a Public Notice to announce the launch of the Broadband

Adoption Lifeline Program. The pilot program aimed to gather high-quality data to identify effective approaches to increasing broadband adoption and retention among low-income consumers. The FCC Public Notice specifically called upon applicants to work with existing nonprofit organizations in administering the pilot.

In 2013, Connect Ohio partnered with Assurance Wireless, Frontier, and Nexus in the FCC's Lifeline Pilot. Individuals who completed the ECO training were offered discounts on at-home broadband service from the partner providers. Assurance Wireless offered facility-based training through the Every Community Online program as an add-on to its service. Frontier provided individuals who received a certificate of completion of the ECO training access to a low-cost device. The certificate of completion came directly from the Connect Ohio office, once the individual's participation had been confirmed; a certificate was made and e-mailed to them. There were some instances where the individual said that they had completed the training but had not. This caused the individual to go through all of the training again. There were also instances when the individuals had called Frontier directly which in turn made Frontier contact the Connect Ohio office to confirm their completion and then a certificate was sent directly to Frontier.

Through its partnerships, Every Community Online provided training to 184 Lifeline participants from May to September 2013. Wind down of the ECO program started at the beginning of the year when program staff began to provide sub-recipients regular guidance regarding expectations of sub-award closeout. Amendments to sub-award agreements were awarded to those whose initial agreements were not going to be met; mutually agreed upon adjustments between the sub-recipient and Connect Ohio were determined reasonable when sub-recipients had met an expectation of training 12 ECO curriculum hours per computer received. Overall, this proved to be a timely process that began by coming to an agreement for the final expectation of the sub-recipient's efforts, then required sending the amendment request to Connected Nation's legal counsel, followed by hard copies being mailed out to the sub-recipient for signing, and ultimately, waiting for the signed amendment to be returned. This process was also impacted by a greater issue of getting sub-recipients to submit their reimbursement requests in a timely manner for payment. This proved to be another time consuming task for the Field Ops Managers and Compliance Coordinator as both worked to continuously follow up with sub-recipients in an effort to get the necessary requests and reports turned in. Ultimately, the delay in invoice submissions and the need to adjust sub-award amendments did not hinder the program's timeline.

In regards to variances seen related to training (question 3 above) amounts reported in this report compared to previous Annual Performance Reports:

1) Within the 2011 and 2012 Annual Performance Reports (APR), Connected Nation reported training hours based on the total classroom hours provided. In this instance a three hour course with nine participants present was counted simply as three hours. Based on guidance provided by the granting agency, Connected Nation has adjusted its calculation method within the 2013 APR. Now the Every Community Online (ECO) basic computer training course instruction hours have been calculated against the number of participating students. For example, nine students present during a three hour course has been reported (within the 2013 APR) as 27 training hours. Across the life of the ECO program, Connected Nation has conducted 202,844 hours of training.

2) Through the required 2012 reporting process, program staff identified a calculation error with regard to the program's methodology for calculating the number of people targeted. As a result, a significant change can be seen in the response to question 3 above versus the response to question 3 in our 2012 Annual Performance Report. The former methodology counted a target audience based on county demographics of the sub-recipient's main location as well as each county in which the sub-recipient had training facilities. Connected Nation, to be sure it is presenting the most accurate information possible, has adjusted this methodology and is now only counting the demographics of the specific training facility's county.