

RECIPIENT NAME:University of Massachusetts Lowell

AWARD NUMBER: 25-43-B10010

DATE: 01/25/2013

OMB CONTROL NUMBER: 0660-0037

EXPIRATION DATE: 12/31/2013

### QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE PROGRESS REPORT FOR SUSTAINABLE BROADBAND ADOPTION

#### General Information

|   |   |                                    |
|---|---|------------------------------------|
| <b>1. Federal Agency and Organizational Element to Which Report is Submitted</b><br>Department of Commerce, National Telecommunications and Information Administration                              | <b>2. Award Identification Number</b><br>25-43-B10010   | <b>3. DUNS Number</b><br>956072490 |
| <b>4. Recipient Organization</b><br><br>University of Massachusetts Lowell 600 Suffolk Street, 2nd Floor, Lowell, MA 01854  |   |                                    |
| <b>5. Current Reporting Period End Date (MM/DD/YYYY)</b><br>12-31-2012  | <b>6. Is this the last Report of the Award Period?</b><br><br><input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No |                                    |
| <b>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.</b> |   |                                    |
| <b>7a. Typed or Printed Name and Title of Certifying Official</b><br><br>Nancy Desjardins   | <b>7c. Telephone (area code, number and extension)</b>  |                                    |
|   | <b>7d. Email Address</b><br><br>Nancy_Desjardins@uml.edu  |                                    |
| <b>7b. Signature of Certifying Official</b><br><br>Submitted Electronically   | <b>7e. Date Report Submitted (MM/DD/YYYY):</b><br><br>01-25-2013  |                                    |

**Project Indicators (This Quarter)**

**1. Please describe significant project accomplishments completed during this quarter (600 words or less).**

To date 8,958 seniors, unemployed young adults and at-risk teens have been trained for 15,396.18 total training hours. Training sites included senior centers in Lawrence, Salisbury, and Amesbury, the United Teen Equality Center (UTEC) and Mary Immaculate Health Services.

We have experienced a continued increase in broadband adoption due to our efforts. We have been tracking the increase in subscriptions through our training with participants, outreach, and strengthening the wireless connection in downtown Lowell. We have also been getting the word out about Comcast's Internet Essentials Program, which provides low-cost broadband to families with children in the federal lunch program. In just a few months we have assisted 20 individuals directly with applying for this program, and we have discussed the program with community partners such as Community Teamwork Inc., Boys and Girls Club, and Elder Services of Merrimack Valley. We expect subscription rates to continue to rise as a result of our efforts to provide information to our partner sites.

Our community partner the United Teen Equality Center (UTEC) held the grand opening for their newly renovated facility in mid-November. Some of our staff were in attendance for this event, and the LINK-sponsored computer lab was a part of the building tours that were going on. Our program was noted during these tours. LINK assisted UTEC in purchasing several computers, printers, and other necessary equipment.

In early November we presented to the low-vision support group at Mary Immaculate Health Services. This presentation was conducted by our computer trainer for the project who specializes in senior computer use. Her presentation focused on ways to modify your computer to make it easier to use. There were roughly ten people in attendance for this presentation and they received in-person support from our trainer during the session as well as takeaway materials. Another presentation is scheduled for late in January with another partner site, the Amesbury Council on Aging. Originally this was also planned for early in November, but needed to be moved due to a scheduling conflict.

This project has been awarded a no-cost nine-month extension. During this extended time period, several trainers will be working with our partner senior centers to train participants and to gain a deeper understanding of the factors that promote or deter broadband usage among seniors. We expect this activity will boost both our training numbers, and our subscription rates. This also will help to create a sustainable model within the senior centers themselves, so that, when the project ends, the senior centers going forward will be more likely to implement successful training and awareness broadband programs.

**2. Please provide the percent complete for the following key milestones in your project. Write "0" in the Percent Complete column and "N/A" in the Narrative column if your project does not include this activity. If you provided additional milestones in your baseline report, please insert them at the bottom of the table. Figures should be reported cumulatively from award inception to the end of the most recent reporting quarter. Please provide a narrative description if the percent complete is different from the target provided in your baseline plan (300 words or less).**

|      | Milestone                    | Percent Complete | Narrative (describe reasons for any variance from baseline plan or any other relevant information) |
|------|------------------------------|------------------|--|
| 2.a. | Overall Project              | 93               | N/A  |
| 2.b. | Equipment / Supply Purchases | -                | Progress reported in Question 4 below  |
| 2.c. | Awareness Campaigns          | -                | Progress reported in Question 4 below  |
| 2.d. | Outreach Activities          | -                | Progress reported in Question 4 below  |
| 2.e. | Training Programs            | -                | Progress reported in Question 4 below  |
| 2.f. | Other (please specify):      | -                | Progress reported in Question 4 below  |

**3. Please describe any challenges or issues faced during this past quarter in achieving planned progress against the project milestones listed above. In particular, please identify any areas or issues where technical assistance from the BTOP program may be useful (600 words or less).**

We lag below projected milestone completion rates because the program was not fully launched until the second quarter of 2010. No federal funds were expended in the first quarter of 2010. We expect to fully complete the program by September 30, 2013.

We were able to successfully complete one low-vision presentation with a partner site, but we had anticipated at least two more for this quarter. Unfortunately, due to scheduling mix-ups with one of the senior centers, we needed to postpone these presentations until the first quarter of 2013. Our program manager will work part time through the duration of the program to assist with report writing.

**4a. In the chart below, please provide the requested information on your BTOP grant-funded SBA activities. Please also provide a short description of the activity (600 words or less). Figures should be reported cumulatively from award inception to the end of the most recent reporting quarter. Please ensure that the numbers of new household subscribers and business or community anchor institution (CAI) subscribers reflected in the "Total" row represent the unduplicated number of new subscribers that can be attributed to your SBA project as a whole.**

| Name of the SBA Activity | Location of SBA Activity | Description of Activity (600 words or less)   | Size of Target Audience | Actual Number of Participants | New Subscribers: Households | New Subscribers: Businesses and/or CAIs |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|-------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Training                 | Partner Sites            | Hands-on broadband trainings with a focus on employment skills and health information.  | 2,311                   | 8,958                         | 2,848                       | 0                                       |
| Awareness                | Greater Merrimack Valley | Public information regarding broadband technology as critical to modern life and discussion of specific benefits a wired life will bring. | 206,223                 | 87,379                        | 785                         | 0                                       |
| Outreach                 | Greater Merrimack Valley | Public information about UMass Lowell BTOP and specific program offerings.  | 617,146                 | 141,676                       | 266                         | 0                                       |
| Other                    | Downtown Lowell          | Installation of wireless routers in downtown Lowell for public access.  | 1,488                   | 593                           | 593                         | 0                                       |
| Other                    | Greater Merrimack Valley | Assisting community members in applying for Comcast's Internet Essentials Program   | 32                      | 20                            | 20                          | 0                                       |
| <b>Total:</b>            |                          |   | <b>827,200</b>          | <b>238,626</b>                | <b>4,512</b>                | <b>0</b>                                |

**4b. Please describe your method for determining the number of households, businesses, and/or (CAIs) subscribing to broadband as a result of your SBA programs (600 words or less).**

From our pre-test surveys we determined that 52% of those surveyed reported that they did not use the internet. Furthermore, 61.2% of our training participants (who we did not physically sign up for a broadband program) reported that due to our trainings they would be "likely" to sign up for broadband. Therefore, we calculated that 61.2% of the 52% or 31.8% of our participants would likely subscribe to broadband as a result of our trainings (8,958 participants x 31.8% = total is 2,848). This percentage is similar to other estimated adoption percentages for similar populations (PEW Research Center, 2009). Please note, that we have administered additional surveys since previous quarters, however the percentages of participants who reported being likely to subscribe to broadband as a result of our trainings was not statistically different from the previously reported percentages, which is why we continue to use the same formula.

Our trainers have also personally assisted individuals in purchasing broadband, and we have counted those individuals as well (8 in total). Trainers have assisted participants by helping them find the right provider, navigating contracts, and even assisting some individuals in set-up and start-up of broadband in their own homes.

In addition, we are able to count the number of people using the wireless routers we installed in downtown Lowell. From this list we determined how many individuals signed onto the system at least twice, and counted these individuals as subscribers (593 in total).

Furthermore, our first public service announcement has been airing on-loop since April 2011, and our second in September 2011. We are confident that at least .75 of those who have viewed the PSAs have subscribed to broadband. Furthermore, we continue our efforts in leaving informational brochures at local libraries. We are confident that at least .75 of individuals who use the public libraries have subscribed to broadband as a result of our efforts. We were also featured as a significant community partner to the Lawrence Senior Center in the bilingual newspaper Rumbo, distributed to the greater Lawrence area. We are confident, given the respect both the Senior Center and Rumbo have in the larger community, that this write-up influenced at least .75 of the population to subscribe to broadband service. The partnership between BTOP and the Amesbury Council on Aging was featured in an article the in the Newburyport newspaper The Daily News. With a daily circulation rate of 9,649 we are confident that at least half of the people receiving this newspaper read this particular article, and around 1% of those individuals are likely to have signed up for broadband as a result of our efforts to promote the benefits of being connected.

In Q3Y2 we held a public forum on broadband and broadband providers, which was taped and aired in November and December on public access in the town of Chelmsford. We are confident that at least 10% of the population of Chelmsford viewed our forum, and as a result 5% of those who viewed our event subscribed to broadband.

We have also been working to get the word out about Comcast's Internet Essentials Program, and also to assist community members

in applying for this low-cost internet program. We have fielded questions regarding eligibility and the application process. To date, we have assisted 20 individuals in applying for Comcast's Internet Essentials Program.

**4c. Please provide a narrative explanation if the total number of new subscribers is different from the targets provided in your baseline plan (600 words or less).**

We are very close to the number of new subscribers we had projected in our baseline plan. While we provide information and technical assistance when possible for participants, we cannot control the cost of broadband, which has been cited in our surveys often as a prohibitive factor in purchasing broadband. We continue our work to install additional wireless routers downtown, and in fact have installed two new devices since the summer, but the wireless connection is still limited to a particular area of town, limiting the number of people who are able to access it.

Since last quarter we ended the extensive number of trainings we had been conducting over the last few years. This has decreased the number of additional individuals we have been able to reach in regards to sharing information about internet and computer options. However, we have been awarded a no-cost extension and will begin a modified version of trainings with our senior centers and we expect to see subscription rates rise because of this.

**4d. Please provide the number of households and the number of businesses and CAIs receiving discounted broadband service as result of BTOP funds.**

|                      |                                |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Households:</b> 0 | <b>Businesses and CAIs :</b> 0 |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|

**Project Indicators (Next Quarter)**

**1. Please describe significant project accomplishments planned for completion during the next quarter (600 words or less).**

Given our no-cost extension we have been afforded additional time to complete various tasks. First, we still plan to host informational sessions with our senior centers to discuss internet and computer options available to them. One site is particularly interested in a discussion around seniors and mobile devices. Second, we will be hiring two computer and internet literacy trainers to work with participants in senior centers.

**2. Please provide the percent complete anticipated for the following key milestones in your project as of the end of the next quarter. Write "0" in the second column if your project does not include this activity. If you provided additional milestones in your baseline report, please insert them at the bottom of the table. Figures should be reported cumulatively from award inception to the end of the next reporting quarter. Please provide a narrative description if the planned percent complete is different from the target provided in your baseline plan (300 words or less).**

|      | Milestone               | Percent Complete | Narrative (describe reasons for any variance from baseline plan or any other relevant information) |
|------|-------------------------|------------------|--|
| 2.a. | Overall Project         | 95               | N/A  |
| 2.b. | Equipment Purchases     | -                | Milestone Data Not Required  |
| 2.c. | Awareness Campaigns     | -                | Milestone Data Not Required  |
| 2.d. | Outreach Activities     | -                | Milestone Data Not Required  |
| 2.e. | Training Programs       | -                | Milestone Data Not Required  |
| 2.f. | Other (please specify): | -                | Milestone Data Not Required  |

**3. Please describe any challenges or issues anticipated during the next quarter that may impact planned progress against the project milestones listed above. In particular, please identify any areas or issues where technical assistance from the BTOP program may be useful (600 words or less).**

In general the winter months make planning and executing programming difficult; our contacts may often be on vacation, participants are hesitant to come out during inclement weather for presentations, and it's difficult to predict storms that may shut down business.

Furthermore, as previously mentioned our program manager is working very part time hours , and so we are down in staff numbers. However, due to our no-cost extension, we will be hiring computer trainers to training in senior centers in our service area. Our program manager will remain on the project on a part-time basis to assist in reporting and all that goes into preparing numbers.

