

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 54-43-B10008	3. DUNS Number 831355321
4. Recipient Organization Future Generations Graduate School HC 73 Box 100, Franklin, WV 26807		
5. Current Reporting Period End Date (MM/DD/YYYY) 12-31-2011	6. Is this the last Annual Report of the Award Period? <p style="text-align: center;"> <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No </p>	
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 LeeAnn Shreve Director of Operations	7c. Telephone (area code, number and extension) 304-358-2000	
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7b. Signature of Certifying Official Submitted Electronically	7e. Date Report Submitted (MM/DD/YYYY): 02-10-2012	

PROJECT INDICATORS

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).

This project promotes the the use of Open Source software and web-based applications as a means to achieve more sustainable outcomes.

The Linux operating system used in our public computer centers simplifies long term maintenance via an automatic update system that provide new features and bug fixes for all the software on the computer. It does not require anti-virus software, and is practically immune to other forms of malicious software.

We developed a secure remote authentication system based on Kerberos and LDAP which integrates with our online course system. Following a one-time sign-up, a person can sit down and login at any computer, and will be automatically logged into the course site where they are prompted to take a survey and can sign up for classes. This enables us to monitor the number of users of our computer centers and collect valuable feedback while protecting their privacy.

The same Linux operating system is installed on refurbished laptops, replacing obsolete software with a modern operating system, which in most cases makes them run faster than when they were new. These computers are distributed to the participating communities and sold to the public at very low cost.

Much of our curriculum focuses on learning the fundamental concepts of computing, rather than specific applications. This approach prepares people who have taken our courses to adapt to the ever-changing landscape of the software world. Learners who are exposed to multiple operating systems acquire valuable job skills which set them apart in today's highly competitive job market.

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).

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

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).

We set up and additional 20 computer labs across WV. Each of the 20 beneficiaries serve as either volunteer fire or rescue squads.

The 20 stations receiving computer labs across West Virginia during this reporting period were:

Banks District VFD, Belington VFD, Big Otter VFD, Clay VFD, Coalwood-Caretta VFD, East Lynn VFD, Erbacon VFD, Fairlea VFD, Fort Ashby VFD, Hillsboro VFD, Lizemore VFD, Matoaka VFD, Milton VFD, Ona VFD, Princeton Rescue Squad, Richwood VFD, Ripley VFD, Teays Valley VFD, Thomas VFD, and Valley Head VFD.

Most of these communities are in located in rural, low-income areas. The areas served also include many towns and communities that lack even basic access to sustainable broadband connections. Due to the rural nature of West Virginia, broadband connectivity is an issue for much of the population.

Each station received 10 desktop computers, 1 laptop computer, 11 desks, 11 chairs, 1 printer/scanner combo, 1 webcam, 1 camera, 1 camera case, 1 camera card, 1 whiteboard, 1 aluminum sign, 1 podium, 11 headphones, 1 mouse (for laptop), 1 router, Cat5 cable, 4 surge protectors, 16 port switch, cable ties, and floor cord covers. Each station has also received either a 47" flat screen tv and a wall mount or a projector, projector cart, and portable screen.

Each beneficiary also received a \$1000 stipend to purchase office supplies for their lab. Also, each site received an additional \$250 for mentors to use for office supplies.

In addition, 162 families across the state purchased laptops refurbished by our project to access broadband in their homes.

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 cumulatively 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 completed the course.

Types of Access or Training	Number of People Targeted	Number of People Participating	Total Training Hours Offered
Open Lab Access	7,760	4,786	28,716
Multimedia	0	0	0
Office Skills	0	0	0
ESL	0	0	0
GED	10	4	192
College Preparatory Training	0	0	0
Basic Internet and Computer Use	3,880	418	5,016
Certified Training Programs	32	28	672
Other (please specify): Computer Mentor Training	780	390	5,304
Total	12,462	5,626	39,900

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).

Economic: Jobs have been created at each of the new 20 computer centers. These jobs are computer mentors (independent contractors) who manage the lab and teach basic computer skills and facilitate other online course offerings as needed. Mentors are paid \$20 an hour for six hours a week (and volunteer a minimum of four hours a week). The mentors, even in the spirit of volunteerism, bring additional income into their communities as well as increased professional capacity.

The mentors are better equipped to engage their community's needs and access the resources to do so. Each computer center also received a \$1000 supply stipend, and mentors received a \$250 supply stipend. These funds are being spent locally, thus providing much needed local business in their community.

In addition, in FY2011, Future Generations hired three new employees (2 full-time and 1 part-time) to assist in supporting the program.

Social: Community members and the fire and rescue squads have contributed much time and resources into making their public computer lab successful. A few examples are: building additions onto buildings, partnering with local agencies such as West Virginia Adult Basic Education and New River Community college to address and provide community curriculum needs, and making presentations at local schools and civic group meetings. These are but a few examples of the investment of hope that this project has inspired.

Two of our more technologically advanced computer mentors designed and offered a "Poweruser 101" training for their peers geared towards improving their computer trouble-shooting and maintenance. Also, two of our "top" computer mentors were trained to conduct site visits this quarter. We have implemented these types of peer collaboration into our program in order to build capacity among our mentors that will lead to sustainable practices once the grant is completed.

This program reached out to the children of WV this year by designing and hosting three Technology Camps for youth ages 8-12 across the state. These camps were very successful and not only opened the eyes of the children to the "wonders" of the internet, but sparked the interest of their parents as well. We've even received requests to hold Adult Technology Camps in the future.

In addition, we have had many people share how having free access to computers and broadband has made an impact in their lives. Following are a few of those stories (taken directly from the correspondence sent to us by the patrons):

"Spending time at the computer lab several times a week has helped me to improve on basic computer skills very quickly and has also helped improve my attitude towards computers. In fact, I am so hooked on the internet that I now want to subscribe to it at home. I am in the process of putting up a website for my home business and the computer lab has really helped with that." - Circleville, WV

"High-speed internet has given us a way to be connected with organizations and educational institutions around the world. It has given the words, "being involved" a whole new meaning." - Hillsboro, WV

"High-speed internet allows me to find new ideas that improve my family's quality of life. I use the internet to search for jobs, recipes, cleaning solutions, social networking, and so much more. It is a very important tool for my daily needs." - Flatwoods, WV

"I started college in 2010. Access to free high-speed internet enabled me to do this at the Computer Center. Without the high-speed internet, it would be nearly impossible to complete my homework assignments." - East Lynn, WV

"Being the bookkeeper for our own small business, I am now able to keep up with financial accounts much easier with high-speed internet and a computer. Instead of sitting at a desk for hours going through statements and balancing each checkbook monthly, I am able to access these accounts online and keep up with them daily. Bill paying and ordering parts for our equipment is also much easier, more secure, and less time-consuming with high-speed internet." - Franklin, WV

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).
40	<p>We do not yet have a completely accurate method for determining the number of subscriptions that result from our programs. Baseline data of broadband subscription rates are not publicly available. We continue reaching out to ISPs on accessing their private subscription data. Until we have full cooperation, we are cautiously and modestly estimating that roughly 1% if the individuals reached through our awareness campaigns and training programs will decide to subscribe to broadband.</p> <p>During outreach and training activities, many mentors and lab patrons have informed our mentors and staff that as a result of their training program they are now themselves subscribing to broadband. Also, patrons of the computer labs have been completing quarterly surveys. Users are prompted to update their broadband subscription status each time they sign on either for the first time and once each quarter thereafter.</p> <p>We are also now investigating if we can count smartphone (cell phone) users who utilize broadband via their mobile devices as sustainable broadband adopters. In addition, the continuing discussions and webinars with BTOP addressing the issue of adopters has been helpful. Our evaluation and research continues, and we plan on developing an appropriate system to track sustainable broadband adopters by end of the second quarter of 2012 utilizing the advice and guidance from BTOP.</p> <p>We believe that broadband subscription rates have steadily increased throughout the life of this project directly relating to the outreach, awareness activities completed by Future Generations through the WV Broadband Opportunities Program. The subscription rates will continue to increase as patrons and citizens learn how access to broadband is relevant to their lives.</p>

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)?

Future Generations has been conducting baseline household surveys and phone-based small business surveys in 20 communities of this project's year two service area. Initial survey results show the most common barrier to broadband adoption is perceived irrelevance. Broadband seems irrelevant to those "who don't know what they don't know", or rather, many people are either unaware of the benefits or do not perceive them as benefits. Our media outreach is directly targeted toward these groups of people. Those that are either still unaware of the benefits or are intimidated by technology are being made aware of learning opportunities available to them through the use of broadband - and that this service is free of charge to them at their local fire/rescue station.

The second most common barrier to broadband adoption we have see is cost. As previously mentioned, many of our computer centers are in low-income areas of the state and many just can't afford to subscribe to broadband and/or purchase a computer. We have addressed the cost issue by providing access to those who absolutely cannot afford broadband subscriptions through free broadband access at their local fire/rescue station. This program allows people to experience the "benefits of broadband" without having to first dive into an expensive contract with an ISP before even knowing how to use a computer.

We are addressing these issues in several ways. This year we started a statewide monthly media campaign specifically focused on the "Benefits of Broadband". Each month we highlighted a specific benefit, such as education, online shopping, online medical resources, entertainment, and provided examples of each - hoping to "hit" on areas that matter to individuals and grab their interest. Posters highlighting these benefits are also posted our partner communities.

Also, our computer refurbishing program has provided laptops to participating communities that can be sold at cost to promote the use of computer and broadband in a way that low-income citizens can afford.

We believe that by facilitating the creation of relationships/partnerships with these volunteer fire and rescue stations and other social and governmental organizations in their communities, we are providing them with tools they need for sustainable broadband and computer access for their citizens. This type of relationship-building ultimately increases a community's capacity to build on other successes in their community to combat issues such as poverty and substance abuse.

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).

Frequent advertising is key. Once people begin using the labs, word of mouth will increase the number of users, but advertising early and often to get those initial users in is important. Also encourage computer centers to take advantage of free community calendar advertising on cable channels and at radio stations.

By providing eye-catching incentives for survey participants on a quarterly basis (digital camera and \$50 gas card), the participation in crucial participant online surveys has improved dramatically.

Engaging community partners in evaluation and research findings through the mentor trainings better equips them to understand their community and actively engage in applying the data to good use.

Using a Kerberos-based single sign-on system for our public computers has enhanced security and made our monitoring and evaluation easier. Our mentors use a web-based form to create user accounts. The users can then sit down and log in to any computer. Their login history is recorded by our central server, and their credentials are automatically passed along to our online learning platform, where they can register for a class or take a survey.