

RECIPIENT NAME:University of Massachusetts Lowell

AWARD NUMBER: 25-43-B10010

DATE: 05/20/2011

OMB CONTROL NUMBER: 0660-0037

EXPIRATION DATE: 12/31/2013

QUARTERLY 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 25-43-B10010 | 3. DUNS Number 956072490 |
| 4. Recipient Organization University of Massachusetts Lowell 600 Suffolk Street, 2nd Floor, Lowell, MA 01854 | | |
| 5. Current Reporting Period End Date (MM/DD/YYYY) 03-31-2011 | 6. Is this the last Report of the Award Period? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No | |
| 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 Carol McDonough | 7c. Telephone (area code, number and extension) 978-934-2784 | |
| | 7d. Email Address Carol_McDonough@uml.edu | |
| 7b. Signature of Certifying Official Submitted Electronically | 7e. Date Report Submitted (MM/DD/YYYY): 05-20-2011 | |

Project Indicators (This Quarter)

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

Trainers continue working with our partner sites, and all trainers hired last quarter successfully completed their shadowings and have started with their own trainings. Furthermore, the trainers have been accepted to present a poster at the University of Massachusetts Lowell's Community Engagement Showcase late in April 2011. Here the trainers will highlight the project, the opportunities associated with broadband technology, and explain their roles and responsibilities. Representatives from partner sites will be in attendance as well to espouse the benefits of BTOP. Community members, particularly individuals from local businesses and organizations, are invited to this event, helping to spread the word about BTOP and the benefits of broadband.

The Lawrence Senior Center has seen a boom in the number of people signing up for BTOP classes, and so we tripled the number of classes offered at this site. As a result, they have asked us to sponsor their newly renovated computer lab. We have agreed to additional computer purchases, which will expand the size of our classes and the number of people to whom we can offer trainings to. Once completed, there will be a ribbon cutting ceremony, which the Mayor of Lawrence will attend. BTOP will be highlighted during this event, and we expect significant exposure from this.

Our subgrantee site, the United Teen Equality Center (UTEC) created a public service announcement (please see Attachment B), which has been broadcasted on loop on the local access channel since mid-March. Teenagers working on BTOP through UTEC conceptualized the PSA, shot the video, and edited the video and added text and music to the background. This particular PSA highlights the benefits of using broadband to find job postings online. UTEC is in the process of creating additional PSAs to highlight other benefits of broadband.

Furthermore, UTEC has been teaching multimedia classes to the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Lowell, as well as another local non-profit called Youth Build. The feedback from these trainings has been positive, and we are in the process of expanding the number of classes that UTEC trainers run. Opportunities for UTEC trainers to shadow BTOP trainers are in the planning process, so that UTEC will be equipped to provide both the multimedia trainings as well as the more basic, practical trainings we provide.

We continue to partner with Lowell Telecommunications Corporation (LTC) to increase broadband usage by installing WiFi equipment in downtown Lowell. Since January 2011 we have been collecting data on the users of this WiFi system. BTOP Lowell is also partnering with LTC to install WiFi on the roof of an affordable housing building. We are in the process of surveying residents to determine the need for wireless in the area, but the property manager is confident that this particular area, which houses mostly low-income elderly residents, would benefit from access to wireless broadband. Furthermore, this WiFi equipment would be in range of the already-installed LTC routers in local businesses, thus strengthening our network.

We continue to meet with Verizon's Regional Director of External Affairs to discuss partnerships to further broadband access in Lowell and Lawrence. We are confident that this will result in increased opportunities to further broadband access for our target populations in Lowell and Lawrence.

We currently have informational flyers being translated from English into Spanish and Khmer. These flyers, which will be placed in key areas of the community (such as libraries and hospitals), will highlight the benefits of broadband and promote subscriptions.

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 | 40 | See below |
| 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).

Trainings were delayed for a short period of time at two partner sites. One of our community partners relocated, and we needed to wait for the necessary facilities to be furnished, and the other site was in the process of renovations. However, we are back in both of these sites and trainings have been running smoothly. Awareness campaigns at local libraries were postponed for a time: limited winter hours, combined with severe snow storms, resulted in libraries being unable to accommodate already-scheduled BTOP activities. We are planning to reschedule these BTOP activities for the summer. Furthermore, while we have been attempting to partner with Comcast and Verizon to garner important information about usage and subscription in the area, we have been unsuccessful to date in getting this information.

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. | 1,920 | 1,875 | 602 | 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. | 7,828 | 1,501 | 0 | 0 |
| Outreach | Greater Merrimack Valley | Public Information about UMass Lowell BTOP and specific program offerings. | 90,328 | 42,751 | 0 | 0 |
| Other | Downtown Lowell | Installation of wireless routers in downtown Lowell for public access. | 192 | 63 | 63 | 0 |
| Total: | | | 100,268 | 46,190 | 665 | 0 |

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 (1867 participants x 31.8% = total is 594). This percentage is similar to other estimated adoption percentages for similar populations (PEW Research Center, 2009).

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 (63 in total).

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. Furthermore, we are installing additional wireless routers downtown, but for now our wireless connection is limited to a particular area of town, which limits the number of individuals who would use the connection.

Our number of subscribers will be higher next quarter. We are in the process of researching the impact of our public service announcement on broadband subscription rates in the area. We predict that by next quarter we will be able to report an estimate of subscriptions resulting from our outreach efforts.

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

| | |
|---------------|-------------------------|
| Households: 0 | Businesses and CAIs : 0 |
|---------------|-------------------------|

Project Indicators (Next Quarter)

1. Please describe significant project accomplishments planned for completion during the next quarter (600 words or less).
 We expect an additional PSA will be completed and broadcasted on Lowell public access by the end of the next quarter. We also expect additional wireless routers will be installed, which will result in increased subscription in downtown Lowell. UTEC teens will shadow BTOP trainers, with particular attention being paid to working with senior citizens. We will have grant applications submitted to Verizon. We will also begin offering additional trainings at particular partner sites. Much like Lawrence Senior Center, the Amesbury Senior Center has already requested additional classes, which we will begin filling by early June.

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 | 70 | See below |
| 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).
 BTOP trainers will be wrapping up their Spring semester courses mid-May. This may mean conflicts between training schedules and final exams, and will delay the start of additional classes in some sites and delay the start of the next set of trainings in others. However, the Program Manager has already began speaking with trainers about the upcoming weeks, and we anticipate that disruption to trainings will be minimal.

We have been unable to establish a partnership with Comcast and Verizon that would allow us to gather subscription data. However, we are planning to focus our efforts on reaching out to wireless broadband providers as a source of subscription data.

