

## **Broadband USA Applications Database**

**Applicant Name:** Adams Public Library System

**Project Title:** Developing Computer and Educational Skills for Adams County Indiana Residents

**Project Type:** Public Computer Center

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### **Executive Summary**

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Developing Computer Education Skills for Adams County Indiana Residents will provide the equipment and the software necessary to provide new and additional educational opportunities and job skills to a rural county in Indiana. The libraries within the county have seen an upsurge in use due to a large increase in unemployment and an additional need to provide additional opportunities for educational and computer based skills.

By providing a laptop computer center, more customers will have access to training opportunities. At present limitations in public space allow only four students at a time to sign up for computer classes while there are no computers currently available for GED students or meeting rooms and large classes.. With the addition of the computer center, ten students may attend the computer classes and the GED class will have access to the computer lab as well. Additionally, the multi-media projector and the smart board/interactive board will allow the instructors to visually show the students how to maneuver through the computer or learn new aspects of the curriculum.

This computer lab will be the only one available within a 22 mile radius with the exception of Academic classrooms. Currently we draw students from three counties to the computer skills classes (Adams, Jay and Wells counties) and from at least two counties to the GED classes (Adams and Jay). The classes also provide for training of unskilled and under-skilled laborers who need to increase their knowledge of technological skills.

Most of the customers within the computer lab's radius are at or below poverty level (61% of the residents are low-mod income level before the recent drop in employment as related by a Ball State University Income Study). These customers have little or no access to computers within their homes. Additionally, most customers now file their unemployment, create resumes, and apply for employment online. This has increased the need for computers and training in the area. The Library has shown a 21% increase in computer use year-to-date in comparison to 2008.

The project will also provide broadband education, awareness, training, access, equipment and support to Adams County's Adult education program, Work-One institutions and to low income residents of the community. This will be done through unemployment help sessions; classes on job skills, resume writing, computer skills; and educational needs through GED classes and after-school tutoring programs.