

## **Broadband USA Applications Database**

**Applicant Name:** Youth Policy Institute

**Project Title:** YPI Public Computer Centers

**Project Type:** Public Computer Center

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### **Executive Summary**

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The Youth Policy Institute (YPI) Public Computer Centers will bring expanded broadband access to residents of Los Angeles in Pacoima, Pico Union, and Van Nuys through four Centers. These centers will provide access to technology not available for residents who lack broadband or computers in the home. With the exception of YPI's Center in Pacoima, none of these communities offers a public computer center for use by residents within a three-mile radius of the proposed Centers. Low income and predominantly Latino residents in these communities lack the financial resources for broadband access and computers. Many residents lack even telephone lines required for dial-up services.

The areas proposed for Public Computer Centers have very low rates of broadband penetration rates in targeted census tracts. According to broadband penetration rate information provided by March 16, 2009 FCC Form 477 filings by state video franchise holders and their affiliates in California, only 30% of residents in the targeted census tracts have broadband.

YPI has an annual budget of \$28 million and has spent the past decade pioneering technology initiatives in Los Angeles. YPI has the capacity and experience to address the need and open these Public Computer Centers. The program approach addresses the challenges of broadband usage by linking to specific online education and training programs offered at the Centers and by incorporating programs already provided by YPI. New resources will serve vulnerable populations at targeted Centers. Services will include a custom website and resource directory (LA ParentSmart) where residents can upload and create content, as well as locate broadband resources for education and training. This will include academic tutoring and adult education software such as GED software available (also available via workstations) to support youth to make grade level advancements and adults to earn a high school degree.

YPI will partner with health care, information management organizations (such as public libraries), and public safety organizations such as the fire and police departments to link the LA ParentSmart directory to online information and safety resources that can be accessed via broadband. This will include information available through the Los Angeles Public Library online system. It will include public safety

measures disseminated online by the Los Angeles Police Department, including gang injunction, neighborhood crime statistics, and public safety. YPI will work with area hospitals to promote access to online medical information, while providing access to commonly used online medical services such as WebMD. Participants will access materials that include multimedia project-based learning activities linked to California state standards in fields such as digital music, web design, and photography. The program will include distance learning college and adult education resources provided by community resources such as the Los Angeles Trade-Tech College online college program and the California Virtual Campus. YPI will contract with BEA Enterprises to create and adapt online content provided in LA ParentSmart.

YPI is funded by the National Council of La Raza through Recovery Act funds that support four full time AmeriCorps members to work with low-income residents to provide job training workshops. These members will work with clients at the Centers to help them with computer literacy classes, job search strategies and soft skills training. YPI has current state and federal funding from the California Department of Education, the Corporation for National and Community Service, the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for programming that will be integrated with broadband education and use.

The total population of the Pacoima, Pico Union, and Van Nuys communities served is 207,053, according to Census 2008 estimates. In Pacoima 86.3% of children in area schools are eligible for the federal Free or Reduced-Price Lunch program. The Pico Union/Westlake community has 44.2% of residents below the poverty line and 90.7% of children in area schools eligible for the Lunch Program. In Van Nuys, 75% of children in area schools surrounding the Center are eligible for the Lunch program. Each Center will install swipe-card technology to track the use of Center services on a daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly basis. This technology will allow YPI to meet targeted goals of serving 11,500 youth (2,275 unduplicated) and 10,400 adults (1,740 unduplicated) at each of the Centers each year.

YPI was the grantee or lead partner in five Community Technology Center grants awarded by the U.S. Department of Education in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Albuquerque, and Washington, D.C. YPI received back-to-back Community Technology Center grant awards in 2002 and 2003 to open and expand a community technology center in Pacoima. YPI has successfully operated the Family Technology Project (FTP) since 2001. This groundbreaking partnership has provided computer literacy and complete home computer systems with internet access for 750 families free of charge.

YPI has raised over \$100 million for youth and family services in Los Angeles since 2001. The annual budget of YPI and its affiliated charter schools is \$28 million. YPI currently operates programs that

include a Communities Empowering Youth capacity building program, summer youth employment, poverty initiatives, preschool in eight classrooms, afterschool programs at 56 school sites, two charter middle schools, tutoring and college preparation, adult education and parenting, workforce development for youth and adults, day laborer centers, and technology initiatives. YPI has been awarded U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer's Excellence in Education Award, as well as Cisco's Growing With Technology Award.

32 jobs saved or created

Cost-\$2,264,390