

## **Broadband USA Applications Database**

**Applicant Name:** Arlington Housing Authority

**Project Title:** Menotomy Manor Community Computer Center

**Project Type:** Last Mile

---

### **Executive Summary**

---

For the past three years we have been providing two after school opportunities for the children living in the manor offered by Operation Success and the Arlington Boys & Girls Club. These programs have been operating out of two three-bedroom units within the manor and are in desperate need of additional space. They are only able to serve a small amount of individuals and in many cases must turn children away because of lack of space, staff and funds. Presently, Operation Success is only able to help middle school students in the neighborhood but they want to expand their after school program to include high school students. The internet continues to play a large role in education as well as in every day life for all individuals. Many of these families do not have access to broadband technology in their own home, so they are unable to progress independently and thus are at a great disadvantage to the rest of society. A good amount of our residents are without their GED or other types of trainings that would allow them to increase their earned income. All the residents of this neighborhood are of low or very low income. Most have debt and poor credit scores that seriously affect their ability to become independent financially as well as get their own housing. Simple things such as budgeting, saving, utilizing the internet were never available to them and thus they never knew what tools or resources were able to help them. Having access to broadband technology will be a huge asset to these families – one that would bring remarkable changes to their knowledge level and lifestyle. Allowing outside agencies to come in and teach individuals and families the proper skills that they would otherwise never have known will allow them to become independent and have more self-worth. By doing so, we would be able to start a cycle of success – where families increase their earned income and are able to move out of housing assistance and live independently. This would allow us to house new families with dire needs and allow them to have access to technologies that will one day assist in their independence as well. The primary beneficiaries of this project will be at-risk youth, elderly individuals, individuals with disabilities, and a low and moderate income area. A break down by race is as follows: 170 white families, 61 black/African American families, 43 Asian families, 37 Hispanic families and 58 other multi-racial families. Our target population is assessed and determined based upon income, handicapped needs, age, children in need of services, referrals from the Arlington Police Department, Arlington School Department, Elderly Associations, Physicians and Medical Community, Arlington Boys and Girls Club, Arlington Board of Health, Arlington Board of Youth Services, as well as Personal and other Professional referral services. The target population will continue to be reached through the means mentioned previously. The Arlington Housing Authority has been in existence for over sixty years and has executed a variety of different projects that helped improve the wellbeing and life of the tenants that live in the units. We have 520 state-funded units and 422 Federal Housing Choice Voucher tenants. We have executed many

different construction projects throughout the years, most recently a modernization project in our family-housing neighborhood. We continuously secure funds for our projects through many different resources. The Town of Arlington has granted us CBDG funds for the past three consecutive fiscal years. As well as funding from Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development and other federal funds. Operation Success would be able to expand their program to fit the needs of high school high school aged individuals, but they do not have the space, funding or staff to do the job properly. They only have six computer workstations and enough desk space to accommodate 15 students. They have learned from past experience that having high school students along with the middle school students is too much strain and work for the staff and space. They have decided to solely focus on middle school aged children because they believe they are of the age where diligence and a structured environment must be taught to ensure success for the remainder of their school career. Having a community center that would provide a sufficient number of computer work stations and desk space would allow them to expand the program to high school students; students who are known to become more distracted and care less about their studies. By building a new community computer center we will be able to bring back online two three-bedroom apartments that are currently being occupied by two different organizations. We would then be able to offer a new housing opportunity for two needy families. The overall cost of the project is going to be approximately \$1,000,000.00. We are respectfully requesting \$800,000.00 from this BTOP Federal Grant and will receive \$200,000.00 in matching funds from the local Community Block Development Grant, through the town of Arlington. The overall cost includes construction of the building, equipment and installing broadband technology.