

## **Broadband USA Applications Database**

**Applicant Name:** COMMUNITYVINE, INC.

**Project Title:** Broadband and Computers for Seniors

**Project Type:** Sustainable Broadband Adoption

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### **Executive Summary**

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The vast majority of low-income senior citizens do not have broadband internet access, and a significant number do not own or have access to computers on a regular basis at all. Without this access, and the education to take advantage of it, senior citizens do not participate in online commerce, education, communication, information resources, and healthcare technologies. CommunityVine will meet this unmet need by providing underserved senior residential facilities with broadband internet access, personal computers, computer and eHealth education, personalized web-based applications for internet ease-of-use, and ongoing support. CommunityVine will implement this program in approximately 120 public housing facilities over the next three years. The initial pilot program in Year 1 is a partnership with the Phoenix Housing Authority to implement in 12 public housing facilities serving senior citizens in Phoenix, AZ. The program includes installing broadband infrastructure in each facility, providing a personal computer to each facility resident, providing training to residents in basic computer and internet use including web-based resources and eHealth applications, and facilitating ongoing support via onsite volunteer trainers, helpdesk support for those trainers, continuing educational programs, and an educational computer center. After an initial 6 month free period, users will be asked to pay a modest \$10/month fee for continued internet access. In Years 2 and 3, CommunityVine will collaborate with the Council of Large Public Housing Authorities to identify 108 additional facilities in 7-10 municipalities to participate in this program. Program participants in Years 2 and 3 will be asked to contribute \$100, or 21% of the discounted cost, to their new computer, and will have a \$10/month fee for internet access. CommunityVine will work with residents and the public housing management to identify and access financial support from federal, state, local and foundation programs to assist with these computer and internet fees for those who cannot afford them. This approach is innovative in several ways. First, while many broadband adoption programs focus on expanding infrastructure, few address the specific needs of the end user. CommunityVine recognizes that for low-income senior citizens to become engaged users of the internet, they must first have access to a computer at low or no cost, the computer must be configured for ease-of-use, they must receive ongoing training and support that is appropriate to both their skill level and needs, and their continued internet access must be affordable. By incorporating these important components into its program, CommunityVine works to ensure that broadband access will actually be utilized by the population it is intended to serve. Second, CommunityVine understands that a critical issue in the lives of senior citizens is their access to healthcare and healthcare technologies that respond to mobility issues, the desire to stay at home for as long as possible, and effective management of chronic diseases. As a result, CommunityVine has incorporated eHealth and Personal Health Record (PHR) applications into its training program and will

connect residents to appropriate devices and proper instruction as they become available, as well as to reimbursement opportunities from Medicare programs. CommunityVine is also partnering with organizations committed to improving the access to and use of eHealth technologies as a way of lowering healthcare costs while effectively managing the long-term care and chronic diseases that affect the elderly. Finally, CommunityVine is collaborating with organizations that possess the knowledge and expertise to provide appropriate hardware, technologies, training, and ongoing support to make this program a success. This grant request will serve 12 public housing facilities for senior residents with a total of 1,000 participating units during Year 1, 66 public housing facilities with 4,950 participating senior residents in Year 2, and 42 public housing facilities with approximately 3,150 participating senior residents in Year 3. All residents are either 62 years of age or more, or are disabled and qualify for public housing. The program funded by this grant will ultimately reach approximately 9,100 broadband subscribers. Each program element (broadband access, individual computer, training) will reach all 9,100 program participants. The principles of CommunityVine offer an extensive resume in support of their ability to implement this program: Mark Roussy, Executive Director - Mr. Roussy provides long term vision, strategic planning, and an extensive personal network, while bringing more than 30 years of executive and entrepreneurial experience to the organization. Mr. Roussy's previous roles building successful companies (including 2 start-ups), providing innovative leadership, management, direction and vision, and consistent year after year profit, revenue growth and expansion is integral to his work with CommunityVine. His work experience includes senior leadership positions at VanRelco Corporation, Re/Max International, and MML Relocation Services. Christopher Roussy, Project Manager - Mr. Roussy manages the day-to-day operations of CommunityVine and provides all project management and oversight. As the founder and owner of a successful real estate development firm in operation for over 10 years, Mr. Roussy brings experience in all aspects of multi-million dollar projects, including budgeting, financing, design, permitting and licensing, zoning, subcontracting, materials purchasing, on-site construction supervision, and marketing to provide superior expertise in managing CommunityVine programs. Andrew Fritz, Chief Financial Officer - Mr. Fritz has worked in the commercial banking industry for 10 years and serves as Vice President for Flatirons Bank in Boulder, CO. Mr. Fritz also currently serves as Chairman of the Longmont Humane Society and Treasurer for Boulder Youth Body Alliance, a non-profit organization. Debra Nixon, Ph.D., MSHA, BSN, Chief Health Information Officer - Dr. Nixon has over 30 years of health care management and consulting experience in strategic planning, facilitation of groups, executive services outsourcing, managed care oversight, product planning and implementation, health claims, health care quality improvement and focus group moderation. She is a Board member for the Governor's Arizona Health-e Connection, Phoenix Healthcare Value Measurement Initiative and Arizona Partnership Implementing Patient Safety. To supplement their own expertise, the CommunityVine leadership has established partnerships with organizations offering critical experience in key components of the program. Partners include Kiva Networks for wireless network and components; Xerosphere for web development to provide a simple, customizable home page for each user; Senior Health Foundation to provide basic computer and internet training, video tutorials, live help desk support and online educational materials; Health Guide America to provide web-based healthcare resources; Arizona Health-e Connection to access Medicare instructors to provide information and training on the Medicare PHR Choice Pilot Program in Arizona; St. Luke's Health Initiative to provide match funding to support program costs; and Arizona State University College of

Nursing and Health Innovation to support expanded use of the PHR program, enlist student volunteers in efforts to identify and address barriers to effective communication between patients and providers, which ultimately lead to higher costs and more waste in healthcare, and to assist in developing and maintaining PHRs among users. CommunityVine is also partnering with the Phoenix Public Housing Authority to facilitate program implementation in 12 public housing facilities and provide match funding for infrastructure costs. Job preservation or creation exists in the following areas: ' Contract work for installation of broadband infrastructure ' Production work for broadband network equipment for 120 facilities ' Production work for over 9,100 new computers distributed through the program ' Contract work for trainers in internet and computer use and specific applications ' Help desk positions ' eCommerce growth through increased use of online shopping services ' Medical records and health information technicians through increased use of eHealth technologies ' Healthcare providers, especially nurses and physicians' assistants, to review, analyze and respond to medical information provided by patients through eHealth and PHR technologies Overall cost of the project is \$9,504,720. Cash match of \$5,140,026 and in-kind match of \$146,395 will come from partner public housing authorities, grants, donations, user internet fees, computer contributions, other fees, and in-kind donations.