Executive Summary

a) Statement of Problem: With regards to broadband access, Clayton County has a large community that is unserved and underserved. Though its Library System has been working hard and has a good program that addresses some needs, it is unable to address the needs of all of its constituents. They need more computers in more of their locations to address demand for computer literacy and workforce development training. In these uncertain times, the need for affordable broadband services is critical. Due to a lack of available resources, underserved and unserved communities are facing additional challenges as they struggle to obtain employment and acquire additional competencies and basic skill sets. With unemployment and high school dropout rates at an all time high, families are now also competing for a limited number of employment opportunities. b) Overall Approach: With funds from BTOP, ADE will expand the Learning Without Walls (L WOW) Initiative, a two-tiered, community based collaborative program to cultivate and promote broadband adoption, workforce development training, education and online tutorials in unserved and underserved communities. We will target computer illiterate adults and youth using community-based resources designed to extend broadband content into every corner of their communities, and meeting new and existing requirement of educators and employers. Tier 1: The 'Workforce Development and Job Training Track' will cater to the needs of underserved and unserved adults. Through this track adult participants will be provided computer-based career training and job enhancing skills courses. ADE- Clayton County will develop educational competencies and career opportunities within specific careers such as industry, allied health, financial services, education and civil service. Tier 2: The 'Education and Tutorial Track' examines and addresses the need to educate and provide resources for students. ADE will collaborate with educators, school systems, local libraries, and community centers to bring technology to students and their families. The program will provide students with relevant online and portable broadband accessibility, through the use of after-school online tutoring. This program will stimulate and promote educational dialogue, digital literacy, e-learning, research, and peer education. LWOW will undergo qualitative and quantitative measurements and evaluations to measure the effectiveness of these broadband adoption programs and look for opportunities to adjust programs to meet the needs of participants. Program effectiveness will be monitored on a real-time basis in an effort to stay apprised of reoccurring trends and potential training shifts that may require periodic modifications. In addition to monthly reviews, annual qualitative progress reports will be produced. c) Areas to be Served: LWOW Initiative will be expanded in Clayton County, GA by establishing a Digital Outreach Center (DOC). The DOCs will be housed in the county's 6 library branches. Approximately 525 people per month will be served. The DOC will overcome broadband adoption barriers by providing the community with access to culturally
relevant online educational and workforce development training resources. The DOC will serve as a gateway for thousands of families to reap the benefits of relevant online and broadband content using innovative techniques and technologies. Additionally, the DOC will provide access to knowledge resources and enhance quality of life while advancing career development skills through the use of digital technology. Recent statistics show that the high school dropout rate in Clayton County is 7.2%. Their unemployment rate is 11.1% which is higher than the national unemployment rate of 9.7%. Most employers now require workers to have basic job skills that include a high school diploma or GED plus competencies in computer usage and familiarity with the Internet and other broadband technologies. To address this demand for basic computing skills, ADE-Clayton County has made a formal commitment to the development of program initiatives that foster the revitalization of these working families.

d) Qualifications The Alliance for Digital Equality (ADE), a national grassroots non-profit organization established in 2007, serves as an advocate for communities seeking to explore and benefit from the revolution of distance learning, broadband services, and information technology. In the fulfillment of that mission, ADE seeks to educate and train individuals in unserved and underserved communities about the global benefits of broadband services and the digital empowerment that flows based on its use. The key to expanding opportunities for all communities is through Digital Empowerment. Since its founding, ADE-Clayton County has launched nine Digital Empowerment Councils nationwide: Charleston, SC, Houston, TX, Detroit, MI, Miami, FL, Atlanta, GA, Boston, MA, Chicago, IL, Los Angeles, CA, and Washington, DC. These innovative Councils examine the impact of broadband access on the local communities in the areas of civic participation, public health, public safety, urban and economic development, and education with 575+ nationwide DEC members to date.

e) Jobs Saved/Created: The implementation of ADE-Clayton County Library's LWOW will advance two of BTOP's statutory purposes: 1.) Provide improved broadband access to consumers in underserved areas and 2) Stimulate demand for broadband. LWOW will directly employ six people with a network effect that will maintain jobs at all our partner organizations. This initiative will impact thousands who are out of work through their participation and completion of the education and workforce development tracks.

f) Cost Total federal funds being requested for the Learning Without Walls (L WOW) Initiative for the Clayton County Library System totals $929,028.38. Jobs to be saved or created and overall Program Cost: Successful deployment of a sustainable adoption initiative is expected to cost $1,314,839.37 and will create or retain more than 5 jobs.