Applicant Name: SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION COMMISSION, THE

Project Title: BRINGING BROADBAND HOME

Project Type: Sustainable Broadband Adoption

Executive Summary

This project is called Bringing Broadband Home (BBH). Problem. The state faces these challenges, among others: * SC ranks 48th for households with Internet use at any location (69%). For households in rural areas, SC ranks 48th (62.8%). For households having access at some location in principal city, SC ranks 50th (67.2%). * SC ranks 46th for citizens with broadband access at home (50.3%) and 50th for access in principal city (48.3%). * SC ranks 48th for households with broadband access (53.3%). (US Census Bureau, Internet and Computer Use Supplement to the Current Population Survey, 2009). * 22.1% of SC Children live in poverty, 10th highest in the nation (SC Kids Count Data Book, 2008) * All of the 86 SC school districts have designated Title I schools (meaning at least 40% of students are from low income families) by Dept of Ed; 75.2% of SC students are in Title I schools. (See Addendum A and B) (National Center for Educational Statistics, US Department of Education, 2009) * Only 66.3% of entering 9th graders graduate from SC high schools in 4 years (National Center for Educational Statistics, US Department of Education, 2006) * SC ranks 3rd highest in the nation for violent crimes with 729.7 violent crimes per 100,000 population. SC's reported violent crime rate is 62% above the national average (US Dept of Justice, FBI 2008 Uniform Crime Report). SC has a very pressing need to stimulate broadband adoption in all areas of the state. SC ranks last or near last in virtually every category measuring broadband access and use. SC's non-adoption rate for households is 49.7%. Broadband access is vital to economic development, access to health care information, and access to public services and education resources. The major barriers to broadband adoption are an absence of perceived need and an assumed irrelevance of services. SC needs an aggressive, comprehensive statewide awareness campaign to counter perceptions/relevance concerns and stimulate adoption. SCETV and its partners must make broadband relevant to the needs of all state citizens, by making content and services broadband accessible. Approach. SCETV has assembled a large and impressive group of 16 partners including the SC Technical College System; SC Dept of Education; SC Commission on Higher Education (Office of GEAR UP); SC Office of Regulatory Staff; SC Budget and Control Board, Office of Network Services and Disaster Recovery; SC Dept of Consumer Affairs; SC State Library; SC State Museum; SC Criminal Justice; SC Law Enforcement Officers Assistance Program; SC Council for African American Studies; Benedict College; Central Carolina Community Foundation, DigitalBridge Communications, SC Cable Television Association, and the SC State Fair. (See Addendum C) Together, they are uniquely qualified to alert the various vulnerable populations in the features and benefits of broadband utilization and to implement appropriate targeted training programs. They are especially well-equipped to promote the creation of a state virtual commons. Due to the state economic situation, without federal grant funding, this project could not be achieved. SCETV and its partners will work together on
three prongs of BBH: 1. A campaign to increase public awareness and promote broadband to all non-adopting citizens across the state with over 7,656 TV/radio spots and ten TV specials during the grant’s term; 2. Training and education on broadband educational resources aimed at PreK-12 teachers, staff and administrators; law enforcement and public safety community; medical educators and health care professionals; state and local government agencies; and local community organizations (912 total training programs, training an estimated 18,584 people during the life of the grant term, including 1,000 GEAR UP teachers, 1,000 early childcare providers, 12,000 teachers, 4,000 law enforcement officers, 584 online webinar partner participants); 3. A statewide virtual commons of broadband-accessible content, information, and services, available to all citizens through the installation and operation of a 65-terabyte asset repository and management system (ARMS) for project partners and other anchor institutions.

Areas served. SCETV’s statewide approach reaches every state resident, including vulnerable populations and every non-adopter in the state. SCETV also has a unique relationship with the K-12 community because SCETV currently serves all of the state's 85 K-12 public school districts, over 150 private schools, and hundreds of home schools and home school associations. SCETV also works with higher ed institutions offering K-12 teaching degrees by acclimating pre-service teachers to broadband education resources and applications. The power of BBH's awareness and training campaign, coupled with the development of a statewide virtual commons, can reach across regional boundaries, ethnic and racial lines, educational and economic realities, to provide benefits to the persons who most need assistance in engaging fully with state and local government. The flexibility and economies offered by broadband allow content and services to be custom tailored to the needs of vulnerable populations such as the rural and urban poor, the under-educated, the unemployed, and persons with visual, auditory, and motor disabilities, just to name a few. SCETV and its project partners seek to increase broadband adoption by 1% across South Carolina. Qualifications. Through the combined power of television, radio, Internet and other multimedia assets, SCETV provides comprehensive educational opportunities to schools; the law enforcement and public safety community; medical educators and health care professionals; state and local government agencies; and local community organizations. SCETV is SC’s only statewide media outlet with 11 television stations and 8 radio stations that blanket the state; a closed-circuit educational telecom system in more than 2000 schools, colleges, businesses, and government agencies; and multiple web portals headed by www.scetv.org. SCETV also provides each school district with an IP-based media streaming system that delivers live and archived content directly to the classroom. SCETV has an experienced training staff. Over its 50 year history, SCETV has become the hub of SC media and educational services serving the public, PreK-12, higher education, law enforcement, state and local agencies, and community organizations. SCETV is uniquely positioned to help create a broadband-driven virtual commons in the state. The virtual commons brings to broadband the functions of a small-town public square. At one time, people were able to find, arranged around the town square or village commons, all of the information, ideas, services, and support necessary to be fully engaged as citizens. In urban, suburban and rural areas, access to the information, services, and support that people desperately need requires mobility, time, money, awareness, and assistance—things not readily available especially to persons from disadvantaged and vulnerable population groups. Jobs Created/Saved. BBH will create 18 full-time equivalent positions, totaling 36 job years across the two-year grant. In addition, eight full-time jobs are projected to be sustainable beyond the grant. Private sector media buyers and software and hardware suppliers will receive the majority of grant funds to
support the virtual commons and awareness campaign. Funds not spent on direct job creation at SCETV will pass through to software/hardware vendors, media and marketing companies, and private sector entities involved in supporting content creation for broadband dissemination. Applying the Government’s Simple Rules for Job Creation, 154 job years would be created by the $10,863,948 grant. With 36 job years at ETV, and 64% (76 jobs) indirect jobs created, 42 job years would be induced. In actuality, with the BBH tie-in to SC Reach, a sizable impact on the 12.6% unemployment rate in SC may be reached through computer instruction which teaches job skills. Costing of positions is determined by using comparable positions at SCETV, using existing salary rates and comparable market data where appropriate. Overall Cost. The overall cost for SCETV’s BBH initiative is $10,863,948. This amounts to a grant investment of $4.88 per SC resident not using broadband now. SCETV proposes a match amount of $4,010,229 (36.9% match).