Broadband USA Applications Database

Applicant Name: Research Foundation/CUNY on behalf of the College of Staten Island

Project Title: Staten Island Community: Computer Centers for Education, Health, Job Training, and Social Welfare

Project Type: Public Computer Center

_____**Executive Summary**_____

Statement of the Problem

There are several areas on Staten Island in high need of access to internet-based training and support. These areas, containing large populations of underserved and disadvantaged residents, include the Port Richmond district, St. George, and some of the areas surrounding the College of Staten Island. According to the latest census data, the median income for a Staten Island household was 55,039 and unemployment is 9.4%. Yet in the target areas, the household income is far less, averaging $25,000 per household, and with unemployment rates as high as 60%. Add to this a very large population of foreign-born and illiterate residents, who read at a 3rd, 4rth and 5th grade level, and residents who have no computer capability, and the need becomes critical to provide services that address these needs. Services include computer skills training, access to broadband technology, and broad education (including health and business-related) and other training opportunities. To meet this challenge, the partners have come together to create the Staten Island Broadband Community Project.   The hallmark and center of the project is the installation and implementation of 5 Public Computer Centers that address these needs.

Overall Approach to Addressing the Need

The Staten Island Broadband Community will provide new and significantly enhanced Public Computer Center access and capability for the purpose of delivering education, health, job training, and social welfare at a range of locations and institutions to vulnerable populations. An integrated approach is taken, consisting of the sharing of expertise and resources by partners to address hardware, software, access, training, education, awareness, student service learning, and support. This approach will not only assist strategic organizations that provide service to underserved populations, but also stimulate the demand for broadband, economic growth, and job training. A critical component of our goals is to provide general internet access and support in using the internet to various vulnerable populations on Staten Island

The specific goals of the Broadband Community Network are:

•To Conduct Community Outreach in the Port Richmond and St George areas: Community outreach will include awareness campaigns to build demand and the creation and delivery of innovative computer center training and education programs that will support access to a wide range of educational and health and small-business services in an underserved and disadvantaged urban community.

•To provide Education and Job Training: To improve education and job training we will enhance computer center access in Saint George, Port Richmond and at CSI, with a focus on workforce and job training organizations. Delivering education with advanced technology trains students for 21st century jobs and provides distance learning and job training for adults.

•To support Community-Based Organizations: Fundamental to the approach is that the Partnership would work with and through existing Community Based Organizations including Senior Citizens Centers, Clinics, Workforce Development Organizations, Faith-based Organizations, After School Centers, Libraries, Schools, and other Not-for Profit Organizations. Specific activities will include providing computer centers, training materials, one-on-one training and support in using the computers for computing based activities associated with the mission of the organization. Vulnerable populations identified and key areas of focus include Seniors, ESL populations in particular Spanish speaking people, unemployed, and other disadvantaged demographics.

•To promote a Healthy community and workforce: This project will put in place critical public computing access and capability to enable a wide variety of health and welfare applications and activities. With the SI hospitals at the center of the activity, outreach, material creation and Internet resources will be identified with the theme of Health Education and Social Welfare.   Included among these are: health education and public health programs; and community health initiatives which bring health education and health information to the communities where citizens live and work. With the focus on vulnerable populations such as seniors and those with limited health care, the role of computer access will be in supporting health and safety by providing related information, awareness and use of the Internet.

Area to be Served

The target areas are the Port Richmond Section, the St. George Section and the lower income populations surrounding the College of Staten Island.   We expect a minimum nuber of people to be

served by the centers is 920 per year. The number of people served by the education and training will be 145 per year.

Qualifications of the Applicant

The College of Staten Island; Richmond University Medical Center; St. John's University; Staten Island University Hospital and Wagner College bring an enormous wealth of experience and resources which demonstrate its capacity to fulfill the goals of this project. The educational and health institutional partners have combined extensive experience running technology-based educational programs and delivering health services such that the goals of the project are feasible and the partners highly qualified. The community-based organizations are long-standing experienced providers to the populations targeted.

Jobs to be Saved or Created

Through the training that will be provided, which includes GED, Resume and Career skills, computer training and possible entrance into an undergraduate program, the Staten Island Broadband project will enable more residents to obtain the skills they need to enter into existing jobs, and it will also create jobs in the staff needed to run these programs, as well as the additional staff partners will need as the program expands.