Executive Summary

a. Consistent with BTOP Statutory Goal # 3, over the next decade providing broadband education, awareness, training, access, equipment, and support to low-income seniors will become even more crucial as our society becomes more and more Internet and Computer-based and the number adults 65 and over skyrockets to 55 million nationwide. Currently, older adults have lower rates of Internet use than younger populations. This is especially true for the 65 and older group in which only 42% use the Internet. In addition, the usage rate among somewhat younger older adults (60-64 year olds) of 61% still lags behind rates of those younger. Access to home high speed-internet among those 65 and over did triple between 2005 and 2008. However, even with this increase, their home access (42%) remains very low compared to younger groups. This is especially the case for those 70 and over with rates between 16% (age 76 & older) and 31% (age 70-75) versus rates of 80% or above for those 49 or younger.

Isolation is the enemy of good health. To maintain healthy, active lives, seniors need the power to stay connected with family, friends, new information, breaking news, and opportunities for activities of interest. Through computer technology & training, the Staying Power project will enable seniors to remain connected to the wider world. To combat these lower rates of Internet usage and seniors' discomfort in addressing their broadband education and training needs in intergenerational settings, the Staying Power Project proposes to expand and improve the existing computer center at PSC. Funding will also be used to provide beginner, intermediate and expert level broadband and computer training specifically geared for the senior populations at this location. b. For more than 125 years, NewCourtland, and its predecessors, have been serving the good people of Philadelphia. Our mission is to go to where the greatest need is for the citizens of our city. We firmly believe that serving seniors in Philadelphia is critical to our success and more specifically, teaching seniors to understand and use the many benefits of a computer will yield multi-fold and multi-dimensional societal benefits. Our proposed Staying Power Project will provide broadband education, awareness; training, access, equipment, and support to a specific vulnerable population (low-income seniors) by leveraging over $360,000 in BTOP grant funds to expand and improve the existing computer center at Philadelphia Senior Center-Main Branch, which became a proud member of the NewCourtland Network in July 2009, and to provide education and training to the seniors served at that location. The outreach strategy for the Staying Power Project will be targeted to 72,000 seniors in the zip codes surrounding PSC. The audience will be seniors 55 and older living in the city of Philadelphia who either do not have access, or do not have the skills to access, broadband internet. This includes unemployed or low-wage seniors who desire to increase their computer and internet training and education for job-related purposes. c. The area to be served is Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, which the United States Office of Management and Budget says is
the fifth largest Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA) in the country with a population of nearly 6,000,000. In February 2010, Proximity One, a decision making information data center, estimates the senior population of this SMSA to be as follows: ' 65-69: 220,177 ' 70-74: 168,629 ' 75-79: 145,428 ' 80-84: 118,112 ' 85+: 116,902 According to the Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA), the following is how Philadelphia's elderly population compares with the 2009 Profile of Older Americans. 'The 2009 Profile of Older Americans report, compiled by the Administration on Aging, provides a snapshot of the current generation of Americans age 65 and older. It shows a growing number of persons age 65 and older with growing life expectancy and greater diversity among the elderly in income, ethnicity, living arrangements and geographic distribution.'The nation's elderly population is becoming more diverse, but that diversity will not be seen in every part of the country. Some places, including Philadelphia, will see growth among the poorer, sicker, and minority elderly, while other places will see more healthy, wealthy, and well-educated seniors in their midst. This will be largely determined by the overall wealth of a given area,' said Allen Glicksman, director of research and evaluation at Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA). The proportion of persons age 65 and older is 12.8% in the both the U.S. and the City of Philadelphia. But in other ways, Philadelphia's older population is very different from the nation's elderly. Almost 20% of the nation's elderly are minority, while 46% of Philadelphia's elderly are members of minority groups. The nation's 65+ population with incomes below the poverty level is 9.7%, compared to almost 26% of older Philadelphians. The national ratio of 1.36 women to each male is different than the Philadelphia ratio of 1.61 women to each male, reflecting higher mortality among Philadelphia's males than the national average. Finally, the report states that in 1999 about 11% of Medicare enrollees received personal care from a paid or unpaid source, while in 2008 18% of Medicare enrollees age 65+ in Philadelphia received care from a paid or unpaid source.' The estimated number of annual users of our public computer center will be 5,000. In addition, please bear in mind that, in this proposal, we seek to serve seniors who speak/understand a number of languages. d. In general, our mission has been serving others for more than 125 years. More recently, we have been serving Philadelphia's seniors in a variety of ways since 1995. During this time, we have accumulated significant skills, talents and abilities in serving the needs of our senior population. Part and parcel thereto, an enormous element of expertise in our organization lies in our Information Technology Department. The Information Technology is vital to so many things we do. With this in mind, our focus will be to put all of this acumen to work in a dynamic way to ensure the delivery and success, of this program. Specifically, our primary training program will use two methodologies: instructor led courses and one on one tutoring. Instructor led courses will include train the trainer sessions to develop senior and community based tutors as well as classes in specific computer skills and applications. Teaching methods will be selected keeping in mind the seniors' reasons for learning, abilities and previous experience. Meetings with seniors interested in the development of computer offerings will be held to discuss what they are interested in learning. This will help identify seniors with computer knowledge who may be interested in becoming a trainer especially for elementary computer skills. Instructor led courses will include: ' Computer Basics; An introduction in the use of computer including using a mouse and keyboard and Windows basic. Elementary use is required before going to more formal classes. Elementary skills can be taught by classes and supplemented by one to one tutors. ' The Internet: designed to teach beginners how to use the Internet effectively to find information and communicate. It will cover search engines and how to follow links. Student will also learn to use e-mail. e. The $498,000 spent on this project will
create approximately 5 job-years, with two thirds of those job years split between direct (2 job-years) and indirect effects (2 job-years) and one third induced effects (1 job-year). The overall cost of the project is $498,422.5 of which $364,122.5 is requested from the federal government and $134,300 will be provided by the applicant, NewCourtland, through cash and in-kind services.