Broadband USA Applications Database

**Applicant Name:** MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

**Project Title:** Miami-Dade Community Broadband Initiative

**Project Type:** Sustainable Broadband Adoption

_______________________ Executive Summary _______________________

a) An estimated 26% of the U.S. population had internet broadband connections as of June 2009 (Internetworldstats.com). The most common barriers to broadband adoption include internet connection or equipment affordability, lack of digital literacy, and personal irrelevance towards technology (FCC 2010). 27.9% of Miami-Dade families are living in poverty (census.gov) and an unemployment rate of 11.3% which is 1.6% higher than the national rate (U.S. Bureau Labor Statistics Dec. 2009). With increasingly more community and government services being offered online, residents without internet access are at a significant disadvantage. Internet access has become a vital tool for obtaining essential information about community life, events, and resources that improve the quality of life. Miami-Dade County (County) government budget cuts for traditional forms of marketing are causing the County to rely heavily on its online services to communicate and disseminate information to the public. Without convenient public access to broadband services, many residents will remain misinformed, unconnected, and further disadvantaged. b) Providing the broadband access, equipment, and computer training to low-income residents and non-profits serving the county's most vulnerable residents is a viable solution to break through these common barriers to broadband adoption. The project aims to improve the quality of life of low-income, unemployed, aged, and otherwise vulnerable populations within Miami-Dade County. If funded, the project will: 1) Create 32 free WiFi enabled public computer centers and deploy a total 186 computers at Miami-Dade Public Housing Agency community centers while piloting an innovative Virtual Desktop Technology; 2) Enhance and expand computer training programs offered by the Community Action Agency’s Self-Help Institute by creating three (3) new computer training centers and deploying 67 new public computers at eight (8) community service centers; 3) Establish a project operated computer re-granting program for 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations proposing to further the BTOP goals; and 4) Enable free WiFi services to the public at four (4) county park sites ' includes one new site within a Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA). c) The proposed project is intended to serve low-income residents and non-profit organizations throughout the entire area of metropolitan Miami-Dade County spanning 5,040 square kilometers. Located in the southeastern part of the state of Florida, its diverse socioeconomic population is estimated at 2.4 million residents - making it the most populous county in Florida and the eighth most populous county in the nation. Its immigrant population is among the highest in the nation. The population’s demographic makeup is comprised of: 61.4% Hispanic or Latino; 18.1% African American; 18.0% White; 1.4% Asian; .1% American Indian or Alaskan Natives; .6% Two or More Races; and .4% Some Other Race. It has an elderly population of 14.2% (ages 65 or over); a per capita income of $23,125 (U.S. Census Bureau 2007). It is part of the seventh largest MSA (metropolitan statistical area) in the
nation and comprises 35 incorporated cities and a vast unincorporated area spanning a total area of 2,431 sq. miles. The proposed project has the potential to reach over 7,775 low-income broadband subscribers. d) The project is a collaborative among various Miami-Dade County departments and community-based organizations including: the Community Action Agency (CAA), Miami-Dade Public Housing Agency (MDPHA), Enterprise Technology Services Department (ETSD), Office of Grants Coordination (OGC), General Services Administration (GSA), and Miami-Dade Public Library System (MDPLS). They bring to the project a diverse range of skills sets, experience within their respective fields, and deep rooted relationships with our target low-income population' all will play a pivotal role in enabling the project to reach its goals. Since 1987, CAA's Computer Training Program has successfully provided training and employment preparation assistance to more than 2,000 low-income individuals to obtain self sufficiency. MDPHA is the nation's sixth largest housing agency, responsible for housing over 30,000 residents and administering an array of specialized housing opportunities for special populations and the homeless. ETSD is the County's central technology provider for County government and provides services in areas of applications development and support, enterprise solutions, technology infrastructure and integration, IT security, geographic information systems, and computer/telecommunications. OGC manages over $50 million dollars (federal, state and local) annually and is responsible for distributing and monitoring Community-based Organization (CBO) grant contracts to over 300 local nonprofits operating more than 500 distinct social service programs. GSA operates the County Store which retails all County-owned surplus computers to the public. MDPLS operates 49 branches and 1,577 internet based patron workstations (laptops and PCs) which are replaced every 4.5 years, as budget avails. e) A total of six (6) jobs will be saved and/or created as a result of this initiative. They include three (3) Computer Training Specialists; one (1) Job Developer; one (1) Telecommunications Technician; and one (1) Project Director. f) A total amount of $2,252,101 is requested to implement the proposed project. A match contribution in the amount of $1,046,063 has been committed to this project for a total project cost of $3,298,164.