Several major barriers to internet adoption exist in the 2010 American broadband landscape other than the cost of subscribing to broadband services. One of these barriers is a disconnection between the internet and its relevance to people’s lives. Another reason revolves around the lack of broadband availability. In a report from the Pew Internet & American Life Project titled Home Broadband Adoption 2009, 'relevance' was listed as the number one reason that dial-up and non-internet users cite for not having broadband at home, with 50% of responses falling in that category. 'Price' of broadband services was listed as the number two reason with 19% of responses while 17% of responses suggested that 'availability' was the major reason. The final 13% of responses listed the 'usability' of the internet as their number one reason for not having broadband at home. A separate study sponsored by NTIA and conducted by the Census Bureau in October of 2009 interviewed over 100,000 people in more than 50,000 households. The results showed that 38.1% of rural households and 37.7% of urban households cited 'Don't Need/Not Interested' as their main reason for not using high speed internet at home. In the same survey 22.3% (rural) and 27.6% (urban) said their main reason was that broadband services are 'too expensive.' At the same time, only 2.3% (rural) and 3.2% (urban) suggested that their 'lack of skill' was the main reason they did not have broadband at home. Other reasons included 16.3% (rural) and 19.0% (urban) saying they have 'no computer or inadequate computer,' and 11.1% (rural) and 1.1% (urban) said that broadband service is 'not available.' It seems obvious that people need a reason to subscribe to broadband services. If they do not see a need for easy access to the internet then they will be reluctant to pay to have it in their home. Both studies show that this is the primary reason for a lack of internet adoption. Rather than offering direct training on the most basic of computer and internet skills or try to somehow lower the cost burden to drive adoption, this project intends to help people realize why the internet could or should be relevant to their lives. Health care is relevant in some way or another to everyone's lives. Louisiana's health care indicators are some of the lowest in the country and there is a correlation between Louisiana's health care quality and the state's low adoption of broadband internet services. 57.1% of Louisiana's citizens live without broadband internet access in their home compared to the estimated 37% of U.S. households that reported having no broadband or high-speed access to the internet. This project aims at reducing the 'not relevant' and 'no need' barriers to internet adoption by using health care literacy and knowledge acquisition as a means to teach computer and internet literacy and relevance. The project will create up to 500 minutes of unique, web-based training programs that teach vulnerable populations how to utilize health-related resources on the internet, privacy and security issues associated with being online and online health information, how to navigate the web for credible health information, and how to use that information to improve their own health.
literacy and knowledge. The outreach and awareness campaigns will primarily target senior citizen and low income populations, however training modules will be free to view and access regardless of demographics or socioeconomic status. This creative approach will lead to increased broadband adoption as well as positive results within health care. Health care benefits specific to this grant project include: 1) Education of consumers on electronic health records and the Louisiana health information exchange, including information on the privacy and security of health information; 2) Education of consumers on how to access health insurance benefit information, including preferred provider lists, from local health insurance companies' websites; 3) Education of consumers on the utilization of various web sources to learn more about health and health conditions, including information on evaluating the site to ensure reputability; and 4) Education of consumers on how to utilize published health care quality measures in health care decision making. This project will also include an awareness campaign that is designed to educate the public about the State Library's Public Computing Centers (PCCs) and other public access computer labs, training programs at Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS) locations, and computer access at the Louisiana Council on Aging sites and Louisiana Workforce Commission’s (LWC) Business and Career Solution Centers in each Parish. Included in this will be information about computer literacy and basic training courses that will be provided by the State Library as well as the health-specific trainings that will be developed through this grant. The awareness campaign will also include the dissemination of information through our partner organizations for the grant, LHCQF stakeholder organizations, and others. Through combined efforts, the project will promote computer access, training, and awareness to low income and senior citizen populations around the state. Since the State Library, LCTCS, Council on Aging, and LWC have coverage throughout the entire state, this program's web-based training modules will be available to everyone in the state who wishes to have access. Last year the State Library public access computer labs had over 6 million uses. This year, with the help of $8.9 million in funding from the first round of BTOP Public Computing Center grants, the State Library will add over 7,000 new computers and target at least 42,000 new individual users in their PCCs. These new users will be prime candidates for the training modules this program will develop, produce, and offer to the public. In addition to all State Library PCC users, LHCQF is partnering with LCTCS to use their computer labs at seventeen community and technical college campuses in order to have additional locations to offer the trainings. The free access to the web-based training modules will also be available at any time, on any computer, to individuals who would like to use them outside of computing centers. The content of the web-based training programs will be created under the supervision of the Louisiana Health Care Quality Forum (LHCQF). LHCQF is governed by a 15 member volunteer Board of Directors representing a state-wide cross section of public and private healthcare leaders, major health care purchasers, health plans, providers, and consumer advocacy groups. The organization is working collaboratively with key provider groups including the major physician, nursing and hospital associations. LHCQF is not a regulatory body, but rather a 'learning system' that works collaboratively with stakeholder partners to monitor population health measures across provider and payer systems and actively engage with health care organizations to implement quality improvements, increase cost-effectiveness, and achieve better outcomes statewide. LHCQF also maintains collaborative relationships with top professionals in a range of disciplines to provide specialized expertise where needed. LHCQF staff support the work of the organization with expertise in executive management, program development, project management, grant writing, strategic planning, policy research and
analysis, report writing and other functions. All of these functions will work together to implement this grant successfully and achieve its intended result. This project will create 4 direct job-years, 9.8 indirect job-years, and 7.8 induced job-years, for a total of 21.6 job-years over the grant period, according to the methodology suggested by the Council of Economic Advisors. The four direct job-years will require a Project Manager to join LHCQF staff to provide oversight of this project and a Marketing Coordinator to assist the Project Manager with the outreach and awareness campaign over the grant period. The overall project budget is $1,984,597.95. Of this, $1,385,095.95 will come from NTIA while $599,502.00, or 30.2%, will come from matching funds. The major portions of the budget will be for developing, producing, and hosting the online training modules ($410,525.00) and the overall outreach and awareness campaign ($359,332.00). The project anticipates at least 52,500 people accessing its online training modules. With a request of $1,385,095.95 from NTIA, it is estimated that the unit cost per new subscriber or end-user will be about $26.38.