The Hardeman County After School Computer Clubhouse Program will establish a comprehensive after-school technology program that will encourage young people to work as designers, inventors, and creators on projects related to their own interests. This will occur in a creative and safe after-school learning environment where young people can work with adult mentors to develop skills, build confidence, and explore their own ideas through the use of technology. Projects will include creating computer-generated art, music, and animations; designing their own science simulations; writing and illustrating interactive poetry and stories; building kinetic sculptures and robotic constructions; and designing their own web pages. In experiencing and developing these new skills, students will become excited about learning and becoming fluent with new technologies. This translates into higher student motivation toward education and achieving life dreams. The minority community will have new ways to take responsibility for their children's education and an appreciation for broadband and technology as a key to educational and future economic well-being. Our program will be part of the Intel Computer Clubhouse program, which has been established in over 100 locations worldwide with documented success. The cost of this program is $657,367 which will include $204,296 local matching funds and $453,071 federal grant dollars. It will directly create 3 job-years. Our program will serve a population of approximately 2,760 primary and secondary grade students ages 10-18 years old (5th - 12th grades) in a disadvantaged west Tennessee school district in rural west Tennessee. Of the total 4,057 students in Hardeman County's school district, 54% are African-American, 83% are economically disadvantaged, 64% are eligible for Title 1 assistance, and 16% have disabilities. The composite ACT average for the school district is 18.6 - well below the national composite ACT average of 21.1 (http://bit.ly/bltExt). The lack of home access to the Internet outside the school day creates a significant educational and opportunity disparity for the already disadvantaged students and their families. According to Connected Tennessee broadband mapping statistics, only 21% of Hardeman County households have adopted broadband and only 50% have a computer. Large swaths of the county are without broadband infrastructure, leaving many K-12 students without access to online educational resources or exposure to the online world. Economically, the TN Department of Labor reports Hardeman County's unemployment rate at 14.7% - a .6% increase from December. The county has a disproportionate employment reliance on traditional rural manufacturing, industrial processing, and state-funded institutions such as prisons, education, and state healthcare. Few knowledge & technology-based businesses exist and there is a great gap in community awareness among citizens and stakeholders of what the technology economy looks like or what advantages it could bring to the county and to the future of their children. When combining the educational, broadband, and economic factors together
with the high levels of minority students, the youth of Hardeman County are clearly at-risk of being left behind and left out of the 21st century world. This is far beyond a simple Digital Divide issue. After-school programs have been identified by the Wallace Foundation as an innovative method of meeting multiple community goals (http://bit.ly/dkffgP). We believe this is even more critical for minority communities where the after-school life is, in many cases, retrograde to life progress. Our Models The Hardeman County After School Computer Club House Program has two basic components: The "Mothership" Clubhouse and the smaller "Fleetship" Clubhouse After School Computer Centers in the county. 1. The Mothership Clubhouse: The Bolivar, Tennessee-based "Mothership" Computer Clubhouse will be part of the Boston-based Intel Computer Clubhouse Network (http://www.computerclubhouse.org). Belonging to the Intel Clubhouse Network will provide extensive support to our local "Mothership" Computer Clubhouse in a variety of ways, including: a) Strong oversight in the formation process including proof of upfront funding and an achievable sustainability model; b) Access to the Intel Computer Clubhouse learning model- created, tested, and refined over the last 17 years based on research at the MIT Media Lab and The Museum of Science; c) Training for the new members of our staff and mentors, including a week-long orientation program in Boston at the "Flagship" Intel Computer Clubhouse, as well as a multi-day annual conference with the entire Network; d) Intel Computer Clubhouse training resources and materials and on-site support provided by experienced Intel Network staff; e) Access to new ideas and innovations from the 'Flagship' Intel Clubhouse in Boston, as well as collaborative ideas from the MIT Media Lab and others; f) Marketing, public relations, and fund-raising support; g) Access to Web-based activities for Clubhouse members, mentors, and staff at different Clubhouses. In addition, the Intel Network sponsors programs such as the bi-annual Teen Summit (which brings young people together from around the world), college scholarship opportunities for Clubhouse Network youth, and more. Once accepted, Hardeman County will become one of the over 100 Clubhouses located around the world and its students will enjoy technology links into MIT and other distinguished institutions. The "Mothership" Clubhouse in Bolivar will provide a catalyst point for all 10-18 year olds in the county where they can use technology for creative self-expression. It is the "window to the world". 2. The Fleetship Clubhouse: The major component of the program is a network of small, simple, county-based After School Computer Centers which will provide a safe haven for remote rural students to have access to computers and the Internet. These "Fleetships" in the Hardeman County Computer Clubhouse Network will bring great opportunity to these students by: a) Providing 10-20 computers and broadband access in a village or town-based site in the county (local Community Centers, Churches, etc.); b) Operating after school, staffed by local volunteers and mentors in the community; c) Providing a safe haven, healthy snacks, and mentoring for the completion of school work; d) Being self-funded by local donations within the smaller communities; e) Being supported by the Tennessee Technology Center IT interns at Whiteville, TN for connectivity, wiring, filtering, etc; f) Being aided and promoted by Connected Tennessee and its 'Computers for Kids' Program. African-American churches in particular have expressed a direct interest in this model. St. John's Missionary Baptist Church, an African-American church near Bolivar, is already successfully participating in a similar model. The cost to operate and sustain this type of facility is easily affordable and the local community is directly involved. (Watch to see how it works http://bit.ly/beX7jF) Grassroots funding and implementation of this type of technology program, in the African-American community in particular, is innovative and will have a deep impact on minority attitudes toward
technology and the Internet. We expect each of these centers to take on its own local 'personality'! The Intel Clubhouse program fits directly into the purposes of the new "Tennessee STEM Innovation Network" which will link P-20 young people across the state. The Intel Clubhouse program also exemplifies the President’s call for 'Innovation in Education'. (http://bit.ly/bGBvNM) We believe directly linking rural TN communities with Tennessee and MIT-based educators and technology companies will have a profound affect on STEM career trajectories for our rural primary and secondary students.

Implementation & Qualifications The Southwest Tennessee Development District (SWTDD) is the key partner in implementing this program. SWTDD is an EDA-chartered organization whose mission is to assist its eight rural counties in actualizing programs that impact economic development, job creation, infrastructure, and education. The SWTDD has an extensive, full-time staff and is well-known for its innovative regional programs in education, broadband, and 21st century economic development models. Its staff has years of experience in providing fiduciary management, compliance, launch, and oversight of this type of program. SWTDD has contracted with cTechnology, Inc., a Nashville-based company that is dedicated to program creation and formation at the intersection of education, the Internet, and economic development. cTechnology is a trusted partner within state and federal agencies in Tennessee and is well-known for cutting edge programs in rural development.