A. Problem Statement: Access to technology is imperative if the next generation is to have economic success and prosperity. According to a report by Minnesota Planning, soon about 75% of all transactions between individuals and the government will be electronic. It also reports that about 69% of jobs require technical skills, and computer users earn about 43% more than other workers. The causes of the digital divide seem to center on three issues - race/ethnicity, income and language. Limited English proficient (LEP) members have difficulties in accessing information, since 87% of documents on the Internet are in English. Yet, according to Pew Research, at least 32 million Americans speak a language other than English as their primary language. In addition, online content has been primarily designed for audiences that read at an average or advanced literacy level. Yet 44 million Americans (22%) read at a level below average or are illiterate. Although Minnesota has one of the highest percentages of residents who are Internet users, between 60.7 and 66.2 percent, there is a significant disparity between those users by race and income, particularly in North Minneapolis, which has the highest concentration of poverty and minority populations, specifically Southeast Asian refugees. Additional to the digital divide, many of these populations face multiple barriers to achieving self-sufficiency, including limited or no English language skills, little or no formal education, and, non-transferable job skills. Furthermore, researchers believe that family problems are a result of the acculturation gap between parents and their adolescents which seems to widen further as the child becomes more Americanized. Southeast Asian refugee parents tended to be culturally and linguistically unprepared to provide psychological, social and academic assistance to their children. Consequently, available data indicates increasing rates of problem behaviors in AAPI youth, such as substance abuse, mental health problems, violence and antisocial behaviors. Dysfunction in Southeast Asian families can result in children running away, failing to attend school, engaging in unplanned sexual activity, committing suicide and criminal activities such as using drugs and joining gangs at early ages. With a combination of the above risk factors, refugee, limited English, low-income, Southeast Asian refugees and other limited English proficient (LEP) Asian American & Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) have demonstrated unique needs that have to be addressed at the grass-roots level and in culturally/linguistically appropriate ways to close the digital divide.

B. Overall Approach. The proposed 2-year project - Asian Pacific American Community Network (APA ComMNet), will support LEP AAPI members, many of whom are refugees, to utilize broadband services that will improve their lives. The Initiative is divided into following purposes and levels: 1) As a VIRTUAL LIBRARY PROBLEM: LEP AAPIs have no access to locally relevant culturally and linguistically appropriated business, health and civics information. SOLUTION - 17 Community Training Sites and the APA ComMNet website: Projects are primarily designed to provide training and access to
content in native languages produced by community organizations' constituents. 2) As a CITIZENS OPEN LAB PROBLEM: LEP AAPIs lack ability, motivation and/or resources to engage in broadband activities. SOLUTION - 3 Public Computer Centers at designed locations: Citizens active participants in broadband learning and activities generate community information, giving voice to new perspectives. 3) As a CIVIC ENGAGEMENT CATALYST PROBLEM: LEP AAPIs lack civic engagement and job training to best support needed advocacy and economic development opportunities. SOLUTION - 24/7 RadioASIA, Computer Giveaway and Subscription Subsidizing: Citizens, as social change maker, can access broadband 24/7 and are aware of and engaged in community issues not only for civic engagement but also for employment. 4) As a PROFESSIONAL INCUBATOR PROBLEM: AAPI youth lack opportunities to learn advanced technologies and mentorship to reduce at risk behaviors and advance their job prospects. SOLUTION - 1 Advanced Multimedia/Technology Mobile Lab and Youth In Charge website at designed locations: Youth are active participants in broadband learning and activities to publish audio/video content from multiple sources, and facilitate online discussions. C. Area(s)/Population, Including Demographic Information; and # of Potential Users. APA ComMNet has researched the Asian American & Pacific islanders (AAPIs) in North Minneapolis, including household number, concentration area, income level, and the their correlation with North Minneapolis' internet access points and hot spots. North Minneapolis is a combination of the Near North and Camden communities comprised of 13 individual neighborhoods. Camden's population totals 31,651, with neighborhoods including: Cleveland, Folwell, Lind-Bohanon, McKinley, Single Creek, Victory, and Webber-Camden. Near North has a population of 37,491, with neighborhoods including: Harrison, Hawthorne, Jordan, Near North, Summer-Glenwood, and Willard Hay. Near North is federal designed as an Empowerment Zone. The total North Minneapolis population is 69,142, with approximately 11,754 identified as AAPIs. Please refer to the following North Minneapolis GIS Map [Appendix 1-8 (1 - EZ Map; 2 - Network Coverage; 3 - Internet Access Points; 4 - Public Safety Facilities/Address; 5 - Hanging Access; 6 - # of Asian Household/income level in N Mpls; 7 - Community Technology Centers' Location; 8 - Hmong Speaking Population Map)]. APA ComMNet has overlapped the GIS maps and identified federal designed Empowerment Zone neighborhoods that have highest AAPIs and low-income households, with lowest number of CTCs and access points (Please refer to Appendix 9). These areas are the most effected by the digital divide, and since language is a barrier to access, Map 8 also shows communities that have a higher concentration of non-English speakers, particularly Hmong refugees. APA ComMNet has strategically place our public computer centers in the center of those critical locations. D. Qualifications Of The Applicant. AMA has a long history of managing government and private sector grants. Our financial team has developed a system of isolating contracts in the agency's accounting software to accurately record and report contract financial activity. AMA had successfully completed many projects for the NEA, NEH, HHS, and SAMHSA, MN Department of Education, MN Department of Human Services, Department of Public Safety and the University of Minnesota Extension Services, among others. The financial accounting adopts GAAP and conforms to the guidelines of FASB. The CPA firm of Carpenter & Evert audits AMA's financial statements annually. AMA operates using best practices for supervision, monitoring programs, collecting data and reporting results. Our management team has extensive experience in serving immigrant and refugee clients and demonstrates a commitment to the value of a diverse workplace and community. E. Jobs To Be Saved Or Created. Our project will create a total of 40 interns, 17 training sites with 2 instructors per site, and 3 computer centers with 12 instructors, with the addition of 1 new project director, 1 P/T mobile lab
coordinator and 1 P/T outreach coordinator, totaling 113 new jobs created. The jobs will include instructors, broadband support staff, outreach staff, web designers, and higher education interns. Following the implementation period, those positions necessary to sustain an ongoing digital fluency requirement will be supported with partner agencies' operational funding and private funds. The partners have endorsed these projects and will strive to maintain the jobs created. Proposal participants intend to sustain and leverage the opportunity that Federal stimulus funding provides.

F. Overall Cost Of The Proposed Project. The total cost of the project is $1.2 million, including the applicant's 33% match. The total Federal request is $804,000, which will reach the following number constituents: ' Training Site: 17 x 15 clients x 20 months = 5,100 ' Public Computer Center: 3 centers, total (750 clients + 600 clients + 300 clients)/per month x 18 months = 29,700 ' Mobile Lab: 1 x 50 clients daily x 120 days/per year x 2 years = 6,000 ' Web support: 2 webs x 1000 hits x 18 months = 36,000 TOTAL: 76,800 clients Federal funding of $804,000 divided by 76,800 equates to $10.47/per participant.