The Broadband Adoption Program (BAP) proposed by TCU Community Partnership, Inc. (TCU) will provide access and awareness of broadband services as well as innovative access to medical education, treatment, and support through broadband. Services will be offered to seniors, displaced workers, and small businesses within the targeted rural areas. The problems to be addressed by BAP:(1) Inadequate access to computers with high-speed broadband (currently at 10 down speed and 1 up speed). Improved broadband adoption rates to turbo-speed will increase usage. 2) Limited awareness and access of broadband services; and 3) Limited opportunities in the area that spur broadband adoption, telehealth, economic growth. APPROACH: TCU and partnering agencies with expertise in health services and education, marketing and public relations, and broadband services have collaborated to create the proposed BAP project. BAP will sustain TCU's proposed Public Computer Center services among residents within targeted communities, strengthen the demand for broadband access, and increase education and awareness of healthcare delivery options. The marketing, educational outreach, and program services will engage residents from the underserved communities of Banning, Beaumont, Cabazon, Desert Hot Springs, Desert Edge, Idyllwild, Sky Valley, and White Water, which collectively cover a total area of 460.6 square miles. Within this area, an estimated 30% of the communities are designated as rural. To address the problems, TCU identified four (4) strategies in carrying out BAP and in supporting increased access and subscription to high speed broadband. These strategies include: (1) providing access to over 100 refurbished computers and upgraded existing CPU units; (2) Providing subsidized broadband subscriptions leading to new and existing household with broadband in the area increasing from 9,741 to over 13,150 households (increase of 35%) subscribing to quality services; (3) Engaging health technology and education companies for inclusion in ERTC's Cabazon Rural Health Innovative Technology Coalition and PCC sites that will engage at least 8,000 seniors, displaced workers, and small business owners in accessing quality health education, treatment, support, and strategies for affording broadband via financial literacy; (4) Providing access through advocacy and support of programs that benefit underserved residents and promote usage. AREA DEMOGRAPHICS: The targeted area population is 78,590, with 7,073 small business owners. 56,810 (72.3%) are over the age of 18 and 15,389, (19.6%) are 65 or older. The ethnic breakdown is 57.3% White; 5.2% African American; 31.3% Hispanic; 2.2% Asian; 3.0% Native American; and 1.0% Other. The economic stability for the area is well below the statewide average. Moreover, the average poverty rate for the area is 21.9% (the State's is 13%). The median household income for the area is $29,324 (the State's is $58,361). Of the 15,389 Seniors, only 385 live in area 'assisted living' facilities, 90% are on fixed income, and over 80% require ongoing care. There are approximately 800 small businesses and 7,073 (9% of the total population) are
entrepreneurs. Further, within the targeted counties there are approximately 465,082 displaced workers, largely due to the severe economic downturn. The unemployment rate is 48.8% for the area. Some of the targeted cities' unemployment rate has reached as high as 62%. There are an estimated 31,424 households, but only 9,741 current broadband users. As such, there is the potential for 21,684 broadband users/subscribers. There are an estimated 9,741 broadband users creating 14,611 potential users in the target area. TCU anticipates a 35% increase in subscription of broadband use as a result of its program outreach, education and sustainability efforts. TCU QUALIFICATIONS: TCU's mission is to empower underserved individuals in their pursuits for better quality of life. TCU has been serving underserved residents in the cities of Adelanto, Banning, Beaumont, Cabazon, Colton, San Bernardino, and Riverside, California with community and economic development programs for nearly 10 years. TCU has demonstrated success in providing educational support to rural area residents by successfully implementing and managing over 14 grant-funded projects. TCU's founders, benefactors and staff give the non-profit 60 years of experience in subsidizing agency programs on various aspects. JOBS CREATED- TCU and partnering agency Avisio Inc. will create over 225 jobs in three (3) years through TCU's PCC sites that will engage an 'Innovative Energy and Technologies Business' platform that promotes a web based platform for marketing innovative technology products. This platform of creating jobs is dependent on BAP impact in increasing access to broadband as 80% of activities related to expansion of rural area based small businesses is dependent upon sustainable/reliable broadband. OVERALL COST: The total cost of the project is $545,745. TCU offers a combined in-kind and cash match of $139,855.