Proposal: Marana Health Center (MHC), a rural community health center, is proposing a public computer center to provide general computer training and broadband access. The MHC Computer Center will also provide programs on health literacy and disease management, and offer educational programs and workforce development. The center will be accessible to the public during extended night and weekend hours, and will also be available for disaster preparedness and crisis management. Problem: Marana faces challenges of computer literacy and a lack of access to public computer facilities. In the proposed service area, there is only a limited, rural public transportation system and little in the way of public facilities and programs. Marana Unified School District (MUSD) provides small computer labs, not available to the general public, which are only available for students during the school year and during school hours. The local library has only seven workstations and the local senior center has ten computers available for seniors, both with limited hours of operation. There is no facility available to the general public that can be used as a classroom setting for computer training or online education and workforce programs. In order for local schools to provide teacher training with technology, they must displace students from use of school computer labs. Approach: MHC proposes a 40 workstation computer center to be used for tutoring, self-study, online distance learning, as well as a variety of in-room education and training programs. MHC will partner with local government and education institutions to provide general computer access, health literacy, computer training, education opportunities, and workforce development. The computer center will also be available for disaster preparedness and crisis management, since MHC has been identified for such by the Department of Homeland Security. MHC specializes in serving disadvantaged and vulnerable populations through its own health care clinic and has leased space to other programs which provide services to disadvantaged populations. By locating the computer center within the health center, vulnerable populations including children, seniors, Native Americans, economically disadvantaged, and the unemployed will have particular access to broadband and other programs in a safe and non-threatening environment. The computer center will increase access both during and after school for students and teachers at local elementary and middle schools. Local businesses will be able to use the computer center to provide job training workshops. Area to be served: The greater Marana area has close to 35,000 people, with a Hispanic population of 20%. However, the service area for the computer center is around 7,000 people and is a rural, farming community separated by geography as well as cultural and community norms. The estimated number of users is around 770 people per week. This assumes organized workshops and classes, as well as general broadband access. Qualifications: MHC is an anchor institution, experienced in outreach and service to all segments of the community. As a designated healthcare safety-net provider,
MHC administers and manages federal grants and other funds in the most constructive way to provide as much care for the community, especially the uninsured. In addition, MHC is exceptionally qualified to provide services to disadvantaged and vulnerable populations, as noted above. MHC recently migrated to electronic medical records, a difficult and complicated project. As a result of this project, MHC gained experience in running large, technological projects and has the network experience necessary since operation of the health clinic requires a wide-area-network of over 350 nodes, 200 concurrent users, 35 servers, 10 major software applications, and 20 WAN connections. Providers and staff have the technological knowledge necessary to operate a computer center and to interact with patients through such a center. As a long-term anchor institution in Marana, MHC is positioned to allow for wide use of the public computer center by residents, especially vulnerable populations. MHC has the technological, community leadership, management experience and fiscal responsibility required to manage and implement a public computer center. Jobs saved/created: The permanent jobs directly created by the computer center include two full-time positions to operate the center. The educational opportunities and workforce development programs will also create or improve jobs in both the short and long-term.

Cost: BTOP grant funds will be used to purchase computer equipment, software, and workstations and to provide operational funds for two years while the computer center is established. Without the funds provided by this grant, MHC will not be able to establish or operate a public computer center. Currently, MHC funds are tied up in a large construction project, which is providing the space necessary to open a computer center, but also prohibiting the independent establishment of a computer center. The grant proposal asks for a total of $1,078,834. This is composed of: $145,880 for computer hardware, $93,194 for software, $92,500 for workstation and administrative furniture and $149,760 for staffing of two FTE for two years. MHC is providing direct, identifiable matching funds through payment of the costs for the personnel required to manage and promote the facility totaling $100,000. MHC is also making an in-kind contribution with the designation of the space for a public computer center instead of utilizing the space for another function. The space that will be set-aside for the computer center could otherwise be rented for $20 per sq.ft. This is an in-kind contribution from MHC as the space could otherwise be rented or used, but instead will be designated for a public computer center if this grant is approved. The majority of the costs for the computer center is in the original purchase of computer equipment, software, and workstations. Once the computer center is established, ongoing costs will be significantly less and readily sustainable. Outreach activities will work to promote utilization. Grant funding for computer center staff for the first two years will provide the time necessary for MHC to establish the center, develop partnerships, schedule programs, and outreach to the community. These activities are necessary to promote sufficient utilization of the computer center for it to become sustainable. At the end of the grant period, the computer center is expected to be fully sustainable, covering future operating costs of occupancy, broadband services, and personnel costs. Sustainability will derive from the generation of revenue through the creation of long-term partnerships and utilization by community partners, business users, and education organizations. Solution: The proposed MHC Computer Center will bring general computer use, broadband access, health literacy, education opportunities and workforce development to a community in need of these services. It aligns with the purpose of this grant to increase access to broadband, while enhancing services for health literacy, education and children. The MHC Computer Center can become a model of how to make broadband programs accessible, especially for vulnerable populations. Use of the federal stimulus funds for the MHC
Computer Center will have lasting impact, improving the economy and providing education and other opportunities for this community, state and the country. With this public computer center, the strides in health literacy and disease management are incalculable. The opportunities for education of children, seniors, and workers are numerous. Co-locating a public computer center in a community health center, as proposed in the grant, will enhance services in the community and positively affect the economy. The purpose of the ARRA funds to invest in infrastructure and community projects in an effort to stimulate the economy and create jobs is met by the MHC Computer Center. This proposal meets a critical need in the community; creates jobs; expands computer and broadband access; promotes health literacy and disease management; and has long-lasting impact through its educational and workforce development programs.