Able-Disabled Advocacy Final Report for
The California Emerging Technology Fund

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Name of Project: San Diego CONNECTS
Grant Number: 8020251
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I.   Financial Summary

- Total Project Budget Spent: (Attachment B contains the detail.) $2,839,825
- CETF Grant Amount: $525,000
- Number of First-Time Adoptions Achieved 2,602 (2,939 Total)
- Percentage of Match and In-Kind Funds Raised 82% of Total Budget = $2,314,825
- Cost Per Unit of Outcomes: (Total Adoptions/Total Budget) $ 178.62

II.   Project Description, Goals and Objectives, and Outcomes

Project Description
A-DA's project was designed to fully address the 5 A's identified by the CETF as obstacles to broadband adoption – Access, Applications, Affordability, Accessibility and Assistance. Furthermore, we proposed to add a sixth A for "Accountability" by including employment as an outcome and the optimal means by which to sustain broadband over time. For a majority of individuals with significant disabilities, accessing self-directed electronic one-stop services for employment has not been successful, due to their lack of digital proficiency and knowledge of the labor market.

Over the three-year period, San Diego CONNECTS provided Digital Literacy training curriculum for over 5,000 families. This goal was accomplished with our partner, Computers 2 San Diego Kids (C2SDK), who installed our curriculum on every computer sold at Internet Adoption Events. As an integral component of our CETF project, we developed Veteran-specific training curricula. Also, we were tasked to train and credential 50 Veterans in Information Technology occupations i.e. Microsoft Office Specialists, Support Technicians (A+), Network Administrators, Security Specialists, Project Managers and various Health Information Technicians. During the grant period, 10 Paid Internships with industry employers followed training and successful certification attainment. We plan on utilizing this successful model for all upcoming Veteran-serving funding opportunities.

Goals and Objectives Summary
Our original Adoption goal was 2,500. When that goal was achieved ahead of schedule, the Adoption goal was increased to 2,900. This was again accomplished within the target date. All CETF goals were met and a detail of the goals/actuals can be found below.

Project Outcomes Summary

Outcome Description	Actual	Goal	Percent Completed
Number of Adoptions for First-Time Subscribers	2,602	2,320	103%
Number of Adoptions for Reconnecting Subscribers	337	580	58%

III.   Accomplishments and Challenges

Summary of Accomplishments and Impacts of Project

Accomplishments

Deliverables	Actual	Goal
Veterans Trained in ICT Topics	165	48
Veterans with Advanced ICT Certifications	52	40
Veterans Placed in Jobs	98	35
Curriculum for Health Topics in Digital Literacy	20	0
Adoptions Documented:	44	30

Delineation of Deliverables and Outcomes Not Achieved and Explanation
All Deliverables and Outcomes were achieved or substantially exceeded.

Discussion of Other Positive Impacts and Results from Project
The most positive impact and result from the CETF grant was our establishment of partnerships with Cox Communication's Connect-to-Compete (C2C) program and C2SDK. The C2C program provides low-cost Internet access to low-income families who have a child in the Federal Free Lunch School Program. C2SDK provides low-cost computers to low-income families. This successful partnership resulted in our participation in 55 "Adoption Events" throughout San Diego County schools and school Districts. We hope to continue this partnership to the benefit of low-income families and will pursue other funding sources that will assist in providing low-cost alternatives to bridging the "digital divide."

Photos of events are attached.

Through this program we have also trained over 165 Veterans in IT Topics with 52 receiving advanced certifications. In addition to adoption, we have placed almost 100 Veterans into sustainable-wage employment.

Overview of Major Challenges to Achieving Planned Results

Major Challenges to Successful Implementation
One major challenge has been the establishment of solid, sustainable partnerships with schools and/or school districts that are willing to participate in Internet "Adoption Events." Most schools are only willing to distribute information to their low-income families about low-cost Internet. It was very difficult to find schools that wanted to participate in the actual staging of Adoption events. Another challenge has been securing low-cost computers for low-income families in order to have Internet access.

Efforts to Address Challenges and Resolve Problems
A partnership with school districts or an entity that has connections with the various school districts is essential. Our partnerships with Cox's C2C and C2SDK resolved the challenge of school/school district participation in events. By providing low-cost Internet (Cox) and low-cost computers (C2SDK) to families, we could provide a One-Stop experience for families where they could attain a computer but also schedule an installation date for the Internet. For those families who could not afford the low-cost computer, we were able to provide a free computer through CETF funds.

IV.   Lessons and Recommendations

Summary of Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned (2-6)

Lesson 1:

Solid partnerships with other Community Services organizations are crucial in outreaching to low-incomes families in need of the Internet. These include schools/school districts, low-income housing projects/commissions, libraries, community centers and churches.

Lesson 2:

Internet adoption incentives were successful in assisting low-income families. These incentives included free desktop computers and raffles for printers and laptops for first-time adopters. Our partner Cox Communication also offered low-cost Internet through their C2C program that included a guaranteed 2-year subscription and free modem installation and wireless upgrade.

Lesson 3:

Through our partnership with C2SDK, we were able to install our Fundamental Digital Literacy curriculum on all computers that were distributed at Adoption Events. Through this innovative concept, our curriculum has been installed on over 5,000 desktop computers and laptops distributed in San Diego County. Even after our CETF grant is completed, our Digital Literacy curriculum will be included on all C2SDK computers sold or distributed.

Lesson 4:

Another innovation developed for the CETF grant was the inclusion of access to courses of higher computer certifications for those interested in advancing their computer skills. Included in the Digital Literacy curriculum was a link to our A-DA website that offers access to A-DA programs that offer certifications in A+, Security+ and other certifications. If the participant was eligible, they were enrolled into an A-DA program. As a Microsoft Certiport Center, A-DA trained, tested and certified participants.

Summary of Recommendations

Recommendations for Expanding the Project in Region or Scaling Up Statewide (2-4)

Recommendation 1:
Cox Communications C2C Program is a national program to assist low-income families who have children in the Federal Free Lunch program. Agencies state-wide should contact their local Cox C2C representative and form a partnership.

Recommendation 2:

Other service providers should offer low-cost Internet access to low-income families.

Recommendations to Close The Digital Divide Based On Your Experience

Recommendation 1:

Although the C2C Program assists Free Lunch families, they have no other programs that can assist others who are in need of Internet access. To date, Cox has no programs to assist Veterans, seniors, low-income families who do not have a child in the Free Lunch program or the disabled. Until there are programs that can assist these special populations, there will always be a "Digital Divide."

Recommendation 2:

Internet access is no longer a luxury but is essential for all aspects of day-to-day life including education, economic development, and health. Legislation should require every provider to have a "Lifeline" program were all low-income families can have Internet access for less than $10 per month.

Recommendations to CETF Regarding Grants Management

Recommendation 1:

The CETF Grant Management was exceptional. The CETF staff were always available for assistance and recommendations. The Quarterly Workshops were beneficial in not only connecting with CETF partners but the exchange of ideas and strategies. A-DA implemented many ideas that were shared at these meetings and contributed to the success of our grant.

V.   Grant Agreement Requirements

Purchased Equipment

All equipment i.e. Desktop & Laptop Computers, Modems, were given as incentives for First Time Internet Adopters, as specified in the grant. No equipment remains.

Unspent CETF Grant Funds

There were no unspent CETF funds.