



California State University, Fresno Foundation Final Report for the California Emerging Technology Fund June 2017

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Name of Project: *Get Connected!* San Joaquin Valley
Grant Number: 8007995
Start Date: July 2013 **End Date:** June 2017

I. Financial Summary

- Total Project Budget Spent: \$2,400,000
- CETF Grant Amount: \$600,000
- Number of First-Time Adoptions Achieved 5,122
- Number of Reconnects (Adoptions) Achieved ~2,500 *
- Percentage of Match Funds Raised against Goal (\$1,800,000): 100%
- Cost Per Unit of Outcomes: (Total Outcomes/Total Budget) \$469

* Estimated number of adoptions from people switching from some other vendor to Comcast to take advantage of Internet Essentials. A small number reconnected after a few months of not being able to afford Internet at all.

II. Project Description, Goals and Objectives, and Outcomes

Project Description

Our project facilitated household broadband adoption among primarily rural underserved populations in the target 8-county (Fresno, Kern, Kings, Merced, Madera, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Tulare) region of the San Joaquin Valley with the majority being served in Fresno, Tulare, Merced and Stanislaus. The goal was, and continues to be, to equip our region’s most digitally disenfranchised residents with basic digital literacy skills and access to the Internet at home to enhance the region’s overall quality of life and global economic competitiveness. Our approach is three-fold with activities focused on information dissemination, digital literacy training and technical assistance.

Goals and Objectives Summary

All project goals have been met and objectives have been completed. We exceeded targeted outcome levels for Information Dissemination (140%), Digital Literacy Trainings (103%) and Technical Assistance (205%). The projected attendance of the Digital Literacy Trainings were lower than anticipated (68%). We also only distributed 83 of the projected 160 refurbished computers (52%) and there were no incentives actually given (0%).

Project Outcomes Summary

Outcome Description	Actual	Goal	Percent Completed
Number of Adoptions for First-Time Subscribers	5,122	5,000	102%
Number of Adoptions for Reconnecting Subscribers	2,500	N/A	N/A

III. Accomplishments and Challenges

Summary of Accomplishments and Impacts of Project

The Office of Community and Economic Development at Fresno State exceeded goals on all three targeted activities.

Assessment of Outcomes Achieved in Comparison to Grant Agreement

- Information was disseminated to over 40,000 via fliers distributed at schools, farmer's markets and other community events and to countless thousands of others via various local media outlets such as Univision and ABC30. A total of 369 digital literacy trainings were provided to over 3,000 participants. In addition, technical assistance was provided to over 2,000 individuals to assist them with connecting to the Internet to take advantage of low cost offers available in their area.

Delineation of Deliverables and Outcomes Not Achieved and Explanation

- While there were over 3,000 participants in the digital literacy trainings, over 4,000 were projected. Some communities had double, triple or higher the number of anticipated participants, but some had half. Many, in the last year, started out high, but had high drop-out rates due to early/late session starts which conflicted with seasonal work schedules.
- No incentives were provided due to the partners that had anticipated providing them either not joining the project or leaving early.
- The number of refurbished computers also did not meet projected levels due to withdrawal of partners that had that as part of their commitment. Attempts were made to find alternative sources, however donations received did not meet minimum standards determined by our office to be serviceable to our participants.

Discussion of Other Positive Results from Project

1. Digital literacy trainings continue to evolve to include topics such as financial literacy and citizenship to address felt needs of the rural communities.
2. A model for refurbishing as a career pathway is being developed with local high schools using donated equipment that is sub-standard for use, but still useful as a learning device.

Impacts of the Project

The greatest impact is the empowerment of people who have historically been marginalized either because of poverty and/or language barriers. Those who participate in digital literacy classes gain confidence to pursue learning new things, further their education or start a business. Here are some of the things we have heard through the years:

"In the past I didn't know anything about computers, but now, I am confident that I can use the computer and not break it. My kids will even allow me to use their computer" – parent in digital literacy workshops in Firebaugh.

"I am happy to be able to learn how to put a picture on an email so I can communicate with my family in Mexico." – parent in digital literacy workshops in Coalinga.

"This is the first time I have finished anything in my life. I am encouraged to get my GED now." - parent in digital literacy workshops in Malaga.

"I can save money by buying things on the Internet and I can learn whatever I need now that I am able to use the computer." - parent in digital literacy workshops in Delhi.

"I save money by buying auto parts online and I can learn how to fix cars and other things using you tube. It helps me and helps me in my business." - parent in digital literacy workshops in Orosi.

“My kids aren’t patient to teach me, but because of the computer classes, I can look things up myself and learn English better.” – parent in digital literacy workshops in Riverdale.

“My youngest daughter is graduating from 8th grade and my oldest from 12th grade, now I am graduating from something too.” - parent in digital literacy workshops in Kingsburg.

Overview of Major Challenges to Achieving Planned Results

Identify Major Challenges to Successful Implementation

Fresno State faced two major challenges during the grant period; one was the loss of partner organizations to assist with the implementation of the work plan and the other was poor customer service on the part of a major provider of low cost Internet.

Discuss Efforts to Address Challenges and Resolve Problems

- Alternative partners were identified to assist with the implementation, however much of the work was ultimately accomplished by Fresno State.
- Fresno State developed a good working relationship with the major Internet provider in an effort to provide seamless assistance with connecting with the Internet.

IV. Lessons and Recommendations

Summary of Lessons Learned

Lesson 1: Increasing adoption is not just about information dissemination, but also about availability. While it is easy to broadcast the necessity over television, radio and with hand-outs, the majority of those who responded are still waiting for access. There is a great need for affordable, reliable access in the rural areas, but there continues to be a lack of infrastructure.

Lesson 2: Increasing adoption is not just an issue for individual households, but for schools and businesses in the rural communities as well. Infrastructure has not kept pace with technological advances putting not only the students behind, but the farms and other businesses. In addition, having Internet on the phone is the only access many have, but Internet access on the phone does not provide the capacity needed for college or job applications, social services, Ag Tech applications or homework.

Lesson 3: Increasing adoption is not the end game. People need assistance learning about how to use the computer and how to operate in the technological world. Once access is achieved, then we have to be ready to mobilize to provide the training necessary.

Summary of Recommendations

Recommendations for Expanding the Project in Region or Scaling Up Statewide

Recommendation 1: It is essential to continue to advocate for the expansion of infrastructure to the rural areas. The lack of infrastructure is not just about additional funding, but change in policy. The Office of Community and Economic Development at Fresno State is committed to continue to support efforts to expand infrastructure, and thereby access, in the rural areas in spite of the obstacles presented by the large Internet providers.

Recommendations to Close The Digital Divide Based On Your Experience

Recommendation 1: Continue to develop relationships with charitable foundations to expand funding sources for digital literacy training.

Recommendation 2: Continue to develop relationships with charitable foundations to expand funding sources for offering low or no-cost devices to participants in digital literacy training.

Recommendations to CETF Regarding Grants Management

The Office of Community and Economic Development has no recommendations for grants management. While the reporting was complex, it can be assumed that the complexity was necessary due to the reporting requirements that CETF has. It was not overly burdensome and our Program Officer, first Luis and then Gladys, was very supportive and accessible.

V. Grant Agreement Requirements

Purchased Equipment

The project purchased two iPads (\$1,467.41) which will continue to be used for Digital Literacy trainings in rural school districts that have distributed iPads to students in lieu of text books.

Date	Description	Purpose	Amount	How it will be used.
09/24/14	iPad	Digital Literacy Training	\$1,467.14	Instructor device for Digital Literacy training sites.

Unspent CETF Grant Funds

All of the CETF grants funds were expended.