



## DRAFT OCCUR 2012 Final Report for the California Emerging Technology Fund

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**Name of Project:** EBCTC – East Bay Community Technology Catalyst  
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**Start Date:** July 2008 **End Date:** September 2011

### I. Financial Summary

- |  |             |
|--|-------------|
| • Total Project Budget Spent:                                | \$1,043,750 |
| • CETF Grant Amount:   | \$600,000   |
| • Additional Grant:  | N/A         |
| • Percentage of Match Funds Raised against Goal (\$443,750): | 43%         |
| • Cost Per Unit of Outcomes: (Total Outcomes/Total Budget)   | \$841       |

### II. Project Description, Goals and Objectives, and Outcomes

#### Project Description

The OCCUR East Bay Community Technology Catalyst (EBCTC) project established technology training labs within low income neighborhoods/housing settings in East Oakland, CA.

- The project provided digital literacy and career preparation training for residents of 650 units.
- The project conducted technology needs surveys and provided classes and leadership training utilizing survey feedback.
- The project distributed refurbished computers within the community and provided training in their operation.

The OCCUR EBCTC project was inspired by the successful work of the Eastmont Technology Center (ETC) and the tremendous opportunity that created the California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF). CETF was a result of the advocacy, initiative, perseverance and creativity of a diverse cross section of participants from diverse sectors. OCCUR/ETC through David Glover, OCCUR Executive Director and Tony Fleming, ETC Director, were strong participants in the advocacy and planning that helped create CETF and were strongly bonded to historical efforts to help close the digital divide and work towards all levels of digital inclusion.

The program development, vision and goals/objectives for the EBCTC project were built between the Computer lab facilities that OCCUR operates at the Lion Creek Crossings housing development and the Eastmont Technology Center located adjacent to Foothill Family Homes. Both are low income housing projects located within low income communities in East Oakland, California. The primary goals of EBCTC are to provide digital literacy, career preparation, computer to home access and training in technology leadership.

- The project initiated the installation and adoption of broadband by all 650 housing units.
- The project incorporated input from various members and sectors of the community on issues relating to digital inclusion, technology leadership and enhanced technology training/utilization.

#### Goals and Objectives Summary

The OCCUR/EBCTC program was able to substantially accomplish its key goals and objectives. The program met:

- 91% of its adult workforce goal.
- Far exceeded its computer training goals for residents of the surrounding housing facilities and East Oakland community.

- Achieved a high percentage 95% of digital literacy training for youth.
- Over 100% of youth/participants attained some form of college prep through Internet research and limited aspects of distance learning.
- Nearly 65% of student/participants were able to benefit from the refurbished computer distribution program.
- Provided technical assistance for 100% clients seeking digital solutions to routine tasks and needs that were not being handled previously with computer technology.

**Project Outcomes Summary**

EBCTC has been a success in providing high levels of achievement for its students/program participants, many of whom were gaining their first substantial experience with structured training in technology and its multiple utilization benefits. It allowed the Eastmont Technology Center and Lion Creek Crossings lab to expand their footprints in reaching residents of the target community who would otherwise not be easily engaged or able to as readily access the hardware, training the interactive learning opportunities available through the program. Low-income youth, residents and families in the Lion Creek Crossings, Foothill Family Homes and surrounding neighborhoods have all significantly benefited from the EBCTC program either directly or indirectly. Direct Benefit outcomes include 30 placed in jobs, 100 who received A+ certification training through classes taught by the Stride Center, 409 who learned computer basics and digital literacy, 426 youth who received academic support classes in preparation for college, and 184 families who were able to receive refurbished computers for home use.

<b>Outcome Description</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Percent Completed</b>
Adults completing digital literacy training using the internet	409	350	117%
Number of jobs obtained by youth and adults	30	33	91%
Number of computers refurbished and donated	184	250	74%
Number of residents completing basic computer training	1,241	400	310%
Number of clients served as a result of increased accessibility	762	600	127%
Offer in partnership with StreetTech an A+ program	100	50	160%
Number of youth that completed coursework to increase their likelihood of college acceptance	307	200	154%
Number of youth completing basic program coursework	426	450	95%
Successfully close 360 tickets for Technical Assistance	400	360	111%
Helped secure free and/or low cost internet for initial participants	300	300	100%
Run a Digital Connector Program	20	20	100%

**IV. Accomplishments and Challenges**

**Summary of Accomplishments and Impacts of Project**

***Assessment of Outcomes Achieved in Comparison to Grant Agreement***

EBCTC was able to research and provide information on specific programs identified as best practices in the areas of digital literacy and CTC programs that emphasize neighborhood digital labs that serve low income communities and, in some cases, public housing projects (Please see attached as an appendix.) It should be noted that the long term existence of such programs, even successful ones, have been difficult to sustain because funding for digital inclusion and community technology effects have been scarce, which is why programs like CETF are so important.

EBCTC wrote and submitted a report on Leadership and the Implementation of Community Technology Programs (Please see attached as an appendix) that is designed to incorporate recommendations and effective strategies for incubating, nurturing and sustaining leadership at every level of the community technology culture. The key to this report is that every entry level student/participant in the program is immediately provided an orientation as an ambassador for digital inclusion and asked to remain involved with all stages of project operations after becoming more familiar with overall operations and their relationship with the community.

### ***Delineation of Deliverables and Outcomes Not Achieved and Explanation***

The main deliverables and outcomes not achieved in the original EBCTC program plan were related to Youth Preparation and Placement and Refurbished Computers.

**Youth Career Preparation & Placement** – Career preparation for youth was a challenge which resulted in a higher concentration on digital literacy, academic support and specific phases of Internet utilization and college preparation. While youth were a daily presence, consistent program participation mainly took place after school. Based on extensive feedback to survey and program questionnaires, EBCTC staff determined that the most effective youth training and literacy course support would be in the college prep, homework support and basic computer training. OCCUR/EBCTC focused much of its job placement energy on the adult population. Adult job placement/obtained overall was not as problematic as originally feared and actually came close to meeting the goal. There would not have been the opportunity to apply the same sustained level for youth because it would have been extremely challenging due to scheduling. There have been many decisions to maximize student participant support and services based on resident community feedback and the scheduling of training that best accommodates community opportunities to receive service, such as integrating technology training with a social networking class, providing courses concentrating on a summer schedule of classes.

**Refurbished Computers** – On the issue of refurbished computers, it is a prevailing truth that technology programs providing refurbished hardware for low-income households must first set a tone of confidence that the recipient will not be burdened with inoperative or obsolete equipment that will ultimately cause additional frustration. The strategy that was learned, over time, was to review more fully with all residents/participants how to affordably maintain a computer and take advantage of all the upkeep and tech support services that exist within our own network including ReliaTech and Oakland Technology Exchange (OTX), as well as to maintain recommended computer upkeep practices like not overloading memory and handling the hardware.

### ***Discussion of Other Positive Results from Project***

As a result of EBCTC, the community is much stronger in relationship to its capacity and ability to promote career opportunities. Due to the availability of free after school learning options, advanced computer training and certificate programs there has been enhanced recognition of lab facilities by local residents as a reliable location to access and participate in quality technology training as well as utilize broadband. EBCTC increased an opportunity for residents/participants to connect the computer to the home environment and make technology a family activity where all generations are engaged and motivated around their own reasons for utilization.

The EBCTC is positioned for long term success, due in part to the expansion of its program capacity which now includes a more experienced staff, a more complete curriculum based on the community survey responses, feedback and program outcomes. Thanks to CETF, EBCTC now offers more program options in response to the community feedback and input resulting in new programs. EBCTC will now promote a vigorous and innovative set of programs and services for 2012/2013 at both lab locations, and is frequently consulted by The City of Oakland, Oakland Housing Authority and County of Alameda regarding the strategic and appropriate implementation steps for community engagement, outreach, recruitment, lab design/configuration, accessing technology, course selection, hardware pricing and the various ways that services can be delivered to special populations of multi and inter generational residents. These activities include consistent focus on ethnic groups and those who are specifically identified as digitally/economically challenged both within the public housing community and surrounding neighborhoods.

The EBCTC program is now a staple for digital literacy and workforce training in the greater East Oakland community. The program operates in partnership with a solid network of community based, faith-based and non-profit organizations that share a commitment to digital inclusion, literacy and academic/career full service preparation. EBCTC's role going forward is the most visible, reliable and sustainable Community Technology Center (CTC) in the greater Oakland community. Its components include:

- Digital literacy for new participants/students
- Spanish digital literacy classes
- Digital skills for youth
- Workforce development/placement
- Digital media clubhouse for youth (music, video and art)
- Senior computer literacy and skill/retaining classes

## Overview of Major Challenges to Achieving Planned Results

### *Identify Major Challenges to Successful Implementation*

EBCTC positive experiences and outcomes notwithstanding, there were a number of challenges, difficulties and unexpected areas of slower performance within the various stages of program implementation. The most significant was several months into the program when its program director, Tony Fleming became severely ill and was unable to continue in his position. Although he was able to provide some consulting time and in-kind assistance, his skill, energy and innovative ideas were greatly missed at critical stages of the program's development. OCCUR/EBCTC made a series of operational and administrative adjustments to Tony Fleming's health crisis and involved several program staff and consultants in the delivery of services while stabilizing overall operations. EBCTC's collaboration and partnership with the neighborhood network's program tremendously assisted overall progress through this period. EBCTC was able to work closely with the East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation (EBALDC), the Oakland Housing Authority (OHA), and One Economy on the support network for Lion Creek Crossings residents to receive the full range of services we offered.

A listing of additional challenges and a brief narrative accompanying each are described below:

- **Distribution of 250 refurbished computers -**  
This process was initially slow and required several strategies in order to generate the appropriate levels of participant enthusiasm and receptivity. An unforeseen element in the distribution was the initial reluctance of some participants due to lack of information and confidence in computer maintenance, costs and impact on home/family members. One of the response points of orientation for all residents/participants to directly offset computer maintenance and upkeep concerns was to provide extensive information on free and low cost tech support, as well as to reinforce the fact that the refurbished computers were generally reliable and not prone to frequent maintenance problems. EBCTC, through its partnership with OTX and ReliaTech, was consistently able to provide upkeep and maintenance strategies for the prevention of problems. Some of these strategies include reviewing operations manuals, troubleshooting and proper equipment upkeep habits.
- **Slower than anticipated completion of program surveys –**  
EBCTC experienced some initially slow response to surveys seeking information from the Lion Creek Crossings (LCC) resident community regarding community technology needs and priorities. In some cases, potential respondents were not always sure that their responses did not require complex feedback. Once this was realized, EBCTC staff was able to aggressively convey its need for basic/user friendly feedback and information through follow-up interviews and reminder flyers. These actions significantly impacted increased program response. Additional incentive for some survey respondents included the potential to receive a refurbished computer through the EBCTC program, particularly after completely understanding how the program supported maintenance and upkeep anxieties.
- **Sustaining long-term broadband subsidies through AT&T "ACCESS ALL" program –**  
Although the ACCESS ALL program is at its conclusion, it is clear that there is not an identical program for low cost broadband that residents at Lion Creek Crossings (LCC) and Foothill family homes are eligible for. The broadband sustainability challenges that low-income communities face needs to be supported by affordability policies like Lifeline for Broadband immediately. Hopefully the California PUC Public Utilities Commission with strong urging from the community will be able to approve such a program.
- **Sustaining LCC classes and programs long-term after CETF -**  
The challenge of long-term sustainability and program staff support from sources other than CETF, is an extension of the ongoing matching funds challenge that OCCUR/EBCTC confronted. While the economy makes it very difficult to conventionally sustain digital inclusion programs on philanthropic support alone, EBCTC will build and sustain digital inclusion programs on the strength of its accomplishments and wide range of training components, curriculum and transformative potential for the community. EBCTC has built a modest yet growing funding base with a variety of foundations, corporate sponsors and individuals that will support the program after the CETF funds are expended. OCCUR/EBCTC is working to implement an aggressive three year fundraising strategy that identifies grant support on a project specific basis.

### ***Discuss Efforts to Address Challenges and Resolve Problems***

OCCUR/EBCTC will continue to work with its partners from the Neighborhood Networks program. The project is already working with a host of City of Oakland programs including the Office of the Mayor, the Office of Information Technology, Oakland Housing Authority, the Oakland Public Library, the Office of Parks and Recreation, the Department on Aging, the Workforce Development program, the Oakland Unified School District and various offices in the County of Alameda. Through these partnerships and collaborations, EBCTC will be able to provide the necessary elements of a strong digital training and inclusion grid that helps the overall mission while complimenting other programs and facilities that offer technology learning opportunities.

Through the City of Oakland and its administration of the HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) fund, funding support for EBCTC will be provided through June 2013.

The Oakland Housing Authority (OHA) will continue to identify technology needs among their units and developments. OCCUR/EBCTC and OHA have discussed the collaborative application for digital literacy funding.

OCCUR is currently working with the Oakland Private Industry Council and workforce development process to become an official referral component for several programs. In such cases EBCTC will be reimbursed by the State of California for each trainee.

OCCUR/EBCTC is already working to augment some of the adult training goals and objectives from the Oakland Unified School District. The district had to eliminate their Adult Education program in 2011 due to budget cuts.

OCCUR/EBCTC will continue to work with the Office of the Mayor and other City Departments such as libraries, park and recreation facilities and senior centers for outreach and engagement purposes. These facilities/organizations would provide recruitment and promotional support for EBCTC program activities.

## **V. Lessons and Recommendations**

The EBCTC achievement of outcomes has been at a high percentage of accomplishment, although there remains a clear need to examine the specific and long-term upward mobility patterns experienced by the EBCTC program participants in all categories of performance.

Lesson #1: As stated previously, the successes in career development, digital literacy, specific course training and certificates training and broadband awareness/adoption are great.

Lesson #2: Some of the more significant challenges were related to refurbished computer distribution and community participation in the scale of the lab to home objectives as they relate to enlisting enough community interest to pay a minimum \$50 to \$100 for a very good and serviceable refurbished desktop computer. It is mainly believed that there is no obvious resistance to seeking refurbished computers, but more a general concern for the responsibility of upkeep, maintenance and tech support that might burden the recipient in unforeseen ways.

Lesson #3: EBCTC has focused on being sensitive to issues that also have supported the perception that a computer in home generates more consumer activity through the internet, creating unwanted economic pressure on the household.

Lesson #4: EBCTC produced strong benefits through its Neighborhood Networks component which remained active for most of the program. Participants within this process included OCCUR/ETC, East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation (EBALDC), Oakland Housing Authority, One Economy, Boys and Girls Club, Lion Creek Crossings residents, Head Start, Tech Soup, Girls Inc., SparkPoint and other participating agencies that provide community and family services to EBCTC. Neighborhood Networks met monthly to review overall program support and delivery as well as the evolving roles that all agencies could share in establishing and meeting the ongoing goals of building strong communities through tech utilization. The benefits of collaborating are that the OCCUR/EBCTC and the Neighborhood Networks Program provide a multi-service model of support for the needs and services of Lion Creek Crossings in all categories:

- Head Start – Childcare
- One Economy – Bee Hive/Digital Connectors
- Girls Inc. – Mentoring/Youth Services
- Boys and Girls Club – After-school Recreation/Mentoring

- East Bay Asian Local Development Corp – Resident Management
- Oakland Housing Authority – Resident Services and Support
- SparkPoint – Financial Literacy

**Recommendations**

***Recommendations for Expanding the Project in Region or Scaling Up Statewide***

Recommendation #1: OCCUR/EBCTC should look at its replicable qualities and communication with housing authorities and CETF around the state and region to establish a suitable standard for support for more public and affordable housing with digital literacy and training programs.

Recommendation #2: OCCUR/EBCTC should seek to establish a regional faith-based digital inclusion network. This network could start with the 200 plus faith institutions that OCCUR serves in its Model Built on Faith program. Such a network could be critical in creating training opportunities, youth support and increased broadband adoption activity.

***Recommendations to CETF Regarding Grants Management***

Recommendation #1: OCCUR/EBCTC recommends that CETF leverage its assets to continue funding for digital inclusion, training literacy and workforce training.

Recommendation #2: CETF can also collaborate with other funders and advocate for the establishment of an ongoing “Digital Inclusion Fund” that would have the long term multiyear funding capability need to help not only sustain quality programs.

Recommendation #3: Although a steep matching fund opportunity is a good step for some eligible large efforts, a large number of organizations need a fund that will allow them to get established in the field. CETF can also be a great coach, mentor, and incubator for CTCs and other digital inclusion programs.

**VI. Grant Agreement Requirements**

**Purchased Equipment**

The OCCUR/EBCTC project purchased a total of \$42,650 in computers and related equipment to offer maximum classroom capacity, additional workstations in the lab and access for optimal service to the disable community.

<b>Description</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>How it will be used.</b>
Network Equipment	LCC & Foothill Family Homes Labs	\$13,500	It will continue to serve participants at both sites.
Refurbished Computers	LCC & Foothill Family Homes Labs	\$16,650	It will continue to serve participants at both sites.
Disability Technology Equipment	LCC & Foothill Family Homes	\$12,500	Disabled clients and those requiring assisted technology will continue to be served.

**CETF of Grant Funds** *(If there is a balance of CETF of grant funds please indicate the balance and the agreement reached with CETF as to the disposition of these remaining funds.)*

All of the CETF grants funds were expended.