Oakland Technology Exchange – West Final Report
September 2011

Name of Fiscal Agent: Alicia Dixon
Name of Project Manager: Bruce Buckelew
Manager Phone Number: 510.469.4164
Manager Email: bruce@otxwest.org
Name of Project: Digital Inclusion: Oakland
Grant Number: 1986628
Start Date: April 1, 2008   **End Date:** September 30, 2011

I.   Financial Summary

- Total Project Budget Spent: $1,200,000
- CETF Grant Amount: $300,000
- Percentage of Match Funds Raised against Goal $750,000:   100%
- Cost Per Unit of Outcomes: (Total Outcomes/Total Budget) $73

II.   Project Description, Goals and Objectives, and Outcomes

Project Description

Oakland Technology Exchange – West (OTX-West) is committed to eliminating the Digital Divide in Oakland California and is a very cost effective computer refurbisher. It is one of the only organizations in the country that offers the complete package of: a computer with applications, training, assistance with broadband access and technical support.

The purpose of the OTX-West Digital Inclusion: Oakland project provided free or low-cost computers, broadband access, training, and technical support to all in Oakland who need it (in homes and community centers) over the course of the three year grant period. Recipients are low-income Oakland residents in the African-American community, the Spanish speaking community, new immigrants, and students. The project targeted underserved adults obtaining GEDs and seeking technical skills, former prisoners, college students, and seniors to provide extensive opportunities to increase technical skills.

Goals and Objectives Summary

OTX-West had seven major goals and met or exceeded 5 of the goals. Each goal had several objectives which OTX West accomplished in part or in total. The primary goals and objectives focused on training and providing refurbished computers to low-income households in Oakland. OTX-West exceeded all of these goals.

Project Outcomes Summary

Outcome Description	Actual	Goal	Percent Completed
Digital Literacy - Youth (Basic)	2,641	2,000	132%
Digital Literacy - Parent Involvement	2,639	2,000	132%
Digital Literacy - Adult (Basic)	3,083	4,000	77%
Refurbished Systems Donated	7,747	6,000	129%
Households Adopting the Internet	290	120	242%
Accessibility Training Completed by Grantee	2	2	100%
Complete Accessibility Plan	1	1	100%
Disability Clients Served	54	0	100%

IV.   Accomplishments and Challenges

Summary of Accomplishments and Impacts of Project

Assessment of Outcomes Achieved in Comparison to Grant Agreement

- OTX-West met or exceeded the goals in all areas. OTX-West greatly exceeded the goal of providing computers to families and computers to schools and non-profits, including building 36 new CTCs (against the goal of 15 CTCs) that provide free Internet access to Oakland residents.

- OTX-West organized Oakland technology service providers (TSPs) into a cohesive collaboration with over 20 partners under the banner of GetConnectedOakland and held the first Digital Inclusion Summit with Mayor Dellums and another Summit with Mayor Quan.

- OTX-West built 36 Computer Technology Centers (CTCs) against a target of 15 exceeding the goal by 133%.

Delineation of Deliverables and Outcomes Not Achieved and Explanation

- OTX-West only trained 77% of the adults it had planned to train, but trained additional parents and students.

Discussion of Other Positive Results from Project

- The reputation of OTXWest continues to grow as the go to organization in Oakland for high quality refurbished computers for homes, schools and non-profits.

- OTX-West received a lot of positive publicity over the past three years, particularly with the launch of GetConnectedOakland. See http://getconnectedoakland.org/media.html for some examples.

- In the first months of Mayor Quan's term, OTX-West had a very successful kickoff and positive news coverage of the GetConnectedOakland campaign. OTX-West is well positioned to continue the organization's success with new collaborations.

Overview of Major Challenges to Achieving Planned Results

Identify Major Challenges to Successful Implementation

The major challenge remains raising enough money to stay in business. OTX-West continues intense fundraising efforts. Other challenges are:

- Many corporations and government agencies continue to give surplus computers to e-waste companies rather than refurbishers. These computers are either dismantled or sold overseas rather than refurbished.

- Another challenge was in finding and maintaining low-cost Internet options for customers. It is particularly disappointing that the carriers (particularly AT&T and Comcast) only have market rate offerings. Credit checks make access even more difficult for low-income families. OTX-West did have success with the One Economy program with AT&T (AccessAll), but AT&T withdrew the low-cost offer with the switch to U-verse.

- OTX-West double books training classes and regularly conducts follow-up phone calls to ensure full classes.

Discuss Efforts to Address Challenges and Resolve Problems

- OTX-West hoped that the GetConnectedOakland campaign, sponsored by the Mayor, would aid in attracting high quality, refurbished computer donations. Most organizations don't understand the difference between reuse and recycle.

- As a partial solution, OTX-West launched a second social enterprise to partner with the organization's current social enterprise. Currently OTX-West charges schools and CTC a fee for computers. In addition to the free computer program to low income families, OTX-West is selling upgraded computers to the general public.

- OTX-West is constantly challenged to convince families that their lives (and those of their children) will be better with an Internet connection and to take the training needed to be successful users. This is a one-on-one effort and requires a lot of work.

- OTX-West is re-assessing fundraising strategies to include the pursuit of more long term partners/donors. OTX-West is also ramping up the newly implemented social enterprise of selling directly to the public and hopes to increase the fee for service revenue stream.

V.   Lessons and Recommendations

Summary of Lessons Learned

Lesson #1. OTX-West always set very high goals so that the organization will stretch. In the future, when applying for grants, the organization plans to keep the stated goal (although still ambitious) more modest to ensure success.

Lesson #2. Although the OTX-West grant is finished, the organization is still very involved in two initiatives that are critical to CETF. OTX-West has been running its own school to home program for the past 10 years. CETF has never shared its School2Home program's key features nor asked for help from practitioners (as far as I know). OTX-West would like to both learn and contribute.

Lesson #3. OTX-West is very good at delivering against goals in a very cost effective manner. OTX-West needs to spend more time raising money.

Recommendations

Recommendations for Expanding the Project in Region or Scaling Up Statewide

Recommendation #1: As OTX-West has said many times, the organization has LOTS of experience with its own school to home program and would like to share it with (and learn from) the CETF School2Home program.

Recommendation #2: The GetConnectedOakland Initiative is also a model that can be replicated.

Recommendation #3: OTX-West must stay connected with the school community. The main vision is to use technology to meet the educational needs of students, particularly in elementary school.

Recommendations to CETF Regarding Grants Management

Recommendation #1: CETF started the process of grant making better than any funder with which OTX-West has had experience. CETF involved successful practitioners from the beginning. The twice yearly Learning Community meetings were very smart and productive, and should continue. CETF really helped a lot of organizations scale up and keep delivering. CETF also provided a great forum for organizations to share.

Recommendation #2: In my opinion, where CETF fell down (and continue to falls down) is in the projects that it runs. School2Home and GetConnected (Los Angeles) are using too many resources where these resources could better be used funding those already on-the-ground providing services. If the other programs are good, they should share the strategies, and also ask for (and listen) to feedback from those that are doing the same projects without the CETF umbrella.

VI.   Grant Agreement Requirements

Purchased Equipment

We did not purchase equipment with our grant funds.