



Southeast Community Development Corporation Final Report for the California Emerging Technology Fund June 2012

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Name of Project: Southeast Technology Collaborative Project
Grant Number: 2508623
Start Date: July 2008 **End Date: April 2012**

I. Financial Summary

- Total Project Budget Spent: (Attachment B contains the detail.) \$1,900,287
- CETF Grant Amount: \$476,000
- Percentage of Match Funds Raised against Goal (\$750,000): 114%
- Cost Per Unit of Outcomes: (Total Outcomes/Total Budget) \$349

II. Project Description, Goals and Objectives, and Outcomes

Project Description

The Southeast Cities Technology Collaborative, under the management of the Southeast Community Development Corporation, will conduct a three-year technology initiative to develop strong pathways for improving educational and health outcomes by expanding community broadband access, implementing a comprehensive computer literacy program, and enhancing existing community service programs throughout the Southeast region of Los Angeles County. The target populations are low-income children, youth, and adults residing in the cities of Bell, Bell Gardens, Cudahy, Walnut Park/Florence-Firestone, Huntington Park, Maywood, and Vernon.

The Collaborative will develop eight Regional Technology Centers in eight communities by strategically locating 80 computers workstations in community facilities (e.g., youth centers, community centers, after schools programs, and other publicly accessible locations). The Collaborative will provide space and staff members to enhance early learning skills for children, math and science skills for youth, career and workforce development, and financial literacy skills for adults. A Master IT Coordinator and four IT Interns will provide computer literacy training courses and technical support at each Regional Technology Center. The centers will be open days, nights and weekends. A total of 500 adult students that successfully complete a three-month computer literacy class will receive a free refurbished computer and two years of free AT&T DSL service.

A mobile computer lab with 20 laptops and a projector will be established to provide life-skills, health awareness, and job development classes at on-site locations (e.g. community based organizations, major businesses, and local community events) that want classes yet cannot accommodate a learning center. The Collaborative will partner with East Los Angeles Community College (South Gate Branch), Southwest Community College, and Huntington Park-Bell Adult School and will refer students for advanced classes.

In addition, a bilingual public awareness campaign will inform target population about the benefits of broadband as well as the technology resources available in their community. The Collaborative will design a customized website to help computer users easily navigate and find local social service programs, especially employment, health, and educational resources.

This project will serve at least 1,700 residents, 500 students with the adult education training programs, and 1,000 children/youth over a three-year period. In total, this initiative will serve a minimum of 3,200 community residents.

Goals and Objectives Summary

All goals and objectives have been completed. SCDC did request two extensions to meet the most difficult goals of distributing 500 computers and broadband services.

Project Outcomes Summary

Outcome Description	Actual	Goal	Percent Completed
Number of youth who completed a basic Digital Literacy Course	1,304	1,000	130%
Number of adults who completed a basic Digital Literacy Course	1,380	1,200	115%
Number of adults who completed multiple Digital Literacy Courses	1,530	1,000	153%
Number Of Computers Distributed To Low-Income Households	580	500	116%
Numbers Of New Subscribers To Broadband At Home	643	500	128%
SCDC completed Accessibility Training	1	1	100%
SCDC developed and received approval for Accessibility Plan	1	1	100%

III. Accomplishments and Challenges

Summary of Accomplishments and Impacts of Project

SCDC had 7 outcomes and achieved over 100% of 5 of the outcomes. SCDC reached 100% of two outcomes list above.

Assessment of Outcomes Achieved in Comparison to Grant Agreement

- This program did achieve its goals of training 1,304 youth and 2,910 adults in Digital Literacy courses. SCDC and collaborative partners provided the training to adults and youth in English and Spanish.
- SCDC and its collaborative partners surpassed the goals of this program over the three-year period of this grant per the requirements of the CEFT Grant Agreement.

Delineation of Deliverables and Outcomes Not Achieved and Explanation

Not applicable

Discussion of Other Positive Results from Project

There are several positive results from the Southeast Technology Collaborative Project. First, SCDC increased and expanded the available technological resources in the Southeast area by establishing 10 Regional Computer Centers. These centers are open free to the public at nonprofit agencies, community centers, employment centers, schools, youth centers, and other community facilities. Before the start of this project, the Southeast area had limited number of computer centers available to the public.

Second, in conjunction with its collaborative partners, SCDC has trained over 1,304 youth and 2,910 adults in digital literacy courses over three years. Through funding from the NTIA, CPUC, and other grant programs, SCDC will continue to train thousands of additional youth and adults in computer literacy, financial literacy, health/wellness classes, and job development training. SCDC has established a youth development program focused on improving the academic and life skills of youth. SCDC has also established a train-the-trainer program to continue training basic computer literacy classes for other adults and an employment center for adults to search for employment opportunities. SCDC will continue to use technology as a tool to improve the life of a child and adult.

Third, through the Get Connected Public Awareness Campaign developed by CETF, SCDC was able to educate thousands of adults about the importance and benefits of broadband in English and Spanish. SCDC used broadband adoption marketing materials developed by CEFT, Dewey Square Group and other partners to

educate residents about broadband services (email, instant messaging, Skype) and useful websites relating to health, education, and employment.

Fourth, with the help of the CETF grant, the City of Vernon donated over \$446,000 to SCDC to establish the Mobile Technology Center. This vehicle is a custom-built mobile classroom with 15 computer workstations with a multifunction printer, interactive whiteboard, and satellite Internet access. SCDC uses this mobile classroom to offer free courses and workshops in computer literacy, financial literacy, job development, health education, and environmental awareness education in English and Spanish. These classes are offered at community centers (without computers), shopping centers, neighborhood parks, and at community events. This vehicle has been a valuable resource to the Southeast area.

Overview of Major Challenges to Achieving Planned Results

Identify Major Challenges to Successful Implementation

- SCDC faced two major challenges during the grant period. The first major challenging outcome for this project was achieving the distribution of 500 computers to students. After two grant extensions, this deliverable was achieved in April 2012.

First, SCDC partnered with the Huntington Park-Bell Adult School to refurbish 200 computers to students. However, these computers were too old and slow to run Windows XP or Office 2007. As a result, SCDC recycled these computers at a regional Certified Computer Recycling Center in Commerce.

Next, SCDC partnered with Computers for Youth (CFY) to distribute 580 desktop computers to 6th students throughout Los Angeles County. SCDC supported the grant proposal of CFY to the BTOP program. Once CFY secured funding, SCDC coordinated with them to distribute Get Connected information and educate students and their parents about broadband services for their new computer.

- The second major challenging outcome was distributing the 500 AT&T DSL service to students. SCDC distributed the AT&T DSL application to students but many students were disqualified from the program. AT&T discontinued the program in 2009.

SCDC focused on assist CETF with developing and distributing Get Connected Campaign information to its students. SCDC conducted broadband workshops at regional computer centers and at community events. Over three year, 643 students indicated during written, online, or phone surveys that they establish broadband service during and after their computer-training course with SCDC and its collaborative partners.

- Other minor challenges include curriculum development in Spanish for adults. SCDC Computer Instructors had difficulties finding appropriate curriculum for Spanish speaking students. As a result, SCDC designed and developed its own Spanish Computer Literacy curriculum.

Discuss Efforts to Address Challenges and Resolve Problems

- SCDC continues to address the challenge of educating and encouraging residents to sign up to broadband service. The major problem to broadband adoption is the cost of service and realizing the importance of such a service. The cost of Internet service, which may range from \$9.95 to \$49.95, is a barrier for many low-income households in the Southeast area. SCDC's challenge is to educate resident why Internet is important and how to connect Internet service at home. SCDC, with the help of the *Get Connected!* Campaign, has educated residents about these issues.
- Another ongoing challenge for SCDC is curriculum development. As students progress in their computer training in Spanish, SCDC Computer Instructors are constantly searching and developing educational materials. Curriculum development is time consuming and needs to be tested and evaluated.

IV. Lessons and Recommendations

Summary of Lessons Learned

Lesson 1. Determine level of computer literacy education. During the first year of the program, the level of computer literacy education of students surprised SCDC Computer Instructors. Many students had no knowledge of what's a computer or its functions. Our first series of classes were canceled and redesigned to start with the basics of computers. About 80 percent of our student population never worked on a computer before starting one of our classes. The lesson learned is knowing your student population before designing a curriculum.

Lesson 2. MOUs with partners. It is very important that agencies have MOUs establish before the start of services. During the first year and with the eagerness to start providing classes, SCDC began services while drafting MOUs with partners and never signed them until a problem developed. SCDC learned thereafter to never start services until an MOU is developed, agreed upon, and signed.

Lesson 3. Scheduling of youth and adult classes. Throughout the three years, scheduling of classes and curriculum development were always a minor challenge. Due to student feedback, SCDC constantly changed the curriculum and schedule of classes to meet the needs of its students. The demand for more classes always was a challenge for SCDC to fulfill within its limited staff and computer resources. Every class had at least 20 students on a waiting list.

Recommendations

Recommendations for Expanding the Project in Region or Scaling Up Statewide

Recommendation 1: Commitment from Government. SCDC recommends that government stability and commitment should be established before entering into a MOU for computer training services at a city facility. For project expansion, it is critical that a service provider has the support from city government to provide services to their residents. Throughout the three years, SCDC experience turmoil with local governments of Maywood, Vernon, Huntington Park, and Bell due to changes in city administration.

Recommendation 2: Provide Sufficient Staff Support to Instructor. In order to expand this project to other communities, SCDC recommends that there is sufficient staff support for the computer instructor. Throughout the three years, our instructors had an average of 20 students in their classes. More resources, such as Assistant Instructors, are needed to help support quality service delivery and instruction. SCDC was blessed to have dedicated and committed instructors willing to go beyond the call of duty to educate and serve our student population.

Recommendations to CETF Regarding Grants Management

Recommendation 1: Simplify reporting requirements needed for a grant project. CEFT reporting was sometimes duplicative and unnecessary. For instance, outcomes were routinely reported on an Outcome Tracker and a Progress report form for the CETF grant.

Recommendation 2: CETF should fund and promote a strong program evaluation system. CETF should provide guidelines and technical support on developing and maintain a program evaluation system.

Recommendation 3: SCDC recommends that CETF grantees build and maintain a respectful and trusting relationship with their investment officer. Raquel Cinat has been a tremendous assistance to SCDC and to this project. She understands our mission and goals and our challenges. It is important to maintain the trust and open communication with CETF staff, in order, to gain the technical assistance and support needed to make a program successful. Our investment officer quickly responded to our questions and issues throughout the three years of our grant program and has personally met our students in class.

V. Grant Agreement Requirements

Purchased Equipment

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Date	Description	Purpose	Amount	How it will be used.
11/20/2009	10 Desktop Computers	Use at Arbor Worksource Center	\$3,060	Arbor will continue to use these computers for their employment center.
9/15/2009	1 Desktop Computer	Use at Florence-Firestone Chamber	150	Chamber will continue to use this computer for small business owners to conduct research
9/15/2009	4 Desktop Computers	Use at Southeast Service Center	\$400	Center will use these computers for their homeless clients.
9/11/2009	4 Desktop Computers	Use at Salvation Army Homeless Shelter	\$400	Shelter will use these computers for their homeless clients.
1/22/2010	15 Toshiba Laptops	Use at Bell Veterans Park	\$10,000	SCDC will use these laptops to serve youth at Veterans Park in Bell.
9/11/2009	4 Desktop Computers	Use at Bell Youth Center	\$400	SCDC will use these computers to serve youth at the Bell Tech Center.
10/19/2009	10 Desktop Computers	Use at Human Service Association	\$1,200	HSA will continue to use these computers for their childcare centers.
4/9/2009	10 Mac Minis Computers	Use at SCDC Office	\$9,573.11	SCDC will use these computers at the Employment Center.
11/21/2008	10 Computer tables and 20 chairs	Use at Oldtimers Computer Center	900.00	Oldtimers will use this furniture for their computer center.
10/19/2009	2 Desktop computers	Use at Bell Community Center	\$300	Community Center will continue to use these computers for their residents.
10/31/2008	4 laser printers	Use at SCDC Employment Office and Lugo Park Computer Center	1,200	SCDC will continue to use these printers for their clients.
10/19/2009	10 Computer Desktops	Use at Gage Middle School	\$1,500	SCDC will move these computers to Bell Tech Center for youth computer classes.
9/8/2008	1 Laptop for Project Director	Use at SCDC Office	\$1,000	SCDC will use this laptop for its computer classes.
12/16/2008	1 Laptop for Instructor	Use at SCDC Office	\$1,000	Sara Caughey will continue to use this laptop.
7/30/2008	1 Conference Phone	Use at SCDC Office	\$400	SCDC will continue to use this phone for conference meetings.
8/1/2008	1 Projector	Use at SCDC Office	\$1,300	SCDC will continue to use this projector for conference meetings.

Unspent CETF Grant Funds

The remaining balance of unspent CETF grant funds is \$229.92. This balance will be used to continue the Southeast Technology Project in the Southeast area of Los Angeles County.