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**AT&T CONTRIBUTION MADE TO CLOSE DIGITAL DIVIDE IN CALIFORNIA
Digital Navigators with Proven Track Record to Assist Households Across California**

Los Angeles and Sacramento, California – October 4, 2023. AT&T and the California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF) today announced a new collaborative effort to help 100 low-income households get connected to the Internet and become digitally skilled to help close the Digital Divide in Los Angeles, San Joaquin Valley, Silicon Valley, and Sacramento regions by connecting them with computing devices, Internet access, and Digital Literacy training with support by Digital Navigators made possible through an AT&T grant of \$50,000 to CETF.

“We are helping to close the Digital Divide through the AT&T Connected Learning program and our focus is to empower learners everywhere to reach their highest potential,” said Lupita Sanchez-Cornejo, AT&T Regional Vice President, External and Legislative Affairs. “The key to this collaboration is the use of Digital Navigators, who are community members and trusted messengers assisting with Internet adoption and provide support in the use of computing devices,” said Sanchez-Cornejo.

This AT&T contribution will not only help 100 low-income families learn how to navigate the internet, but it also will generate data from 4 communities across the state to compare and contrast results to measure and validate the effectiveness to the Digital Literacy training.

AT&T’s contribution will also complement the work of CETF in enrolling low-income households in the federal Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) authorized in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), which provides a \$30 monthly subsidy for Internet services to eligible households (\$75 monthly for eligible residents on Tribal Lands).

“In California more than 5.8 million households are eligible for ACP, and more than 2.5 million households have enrolled as of September 25th,” said Sunne Wright McPeak, CETF President and CEO. “Further, a survey of 412 participants in 75 ACP Enrollment Events throughout California in the last year showed that 56% categorize themselves as “beginners” for computing skills and 65% want more Digital Literacy training. This partnership with AT&T is directly addressing a need identified by our most digitally-disadvantaged residents.”

With more than 15 years of experience, CETF continues to close the Digital Divide, promote Digital Inclusion, and achieve Digital Equity by accelerating broadband deployment and adoption. Since 2008 CETF and its partners have provided Digital Literacy training to nearly 1 million people.

“The Digital Divide is simply another manifestation of the Economic Divide,” said Barbara O’Connor, CETF Board President, “and CETF adopts the belief proffered by the late Honorable Congressman Lewis that ‘Access to the Internet is the Civil Rights Issue of the 21st Century.’”

CETF is honored to work with AT&T and to demonstrate the effectiveness of a corporate citizen joining forces with a statewide non-profit to address Digital Equity in a manner that brings low-income communities the awareness, support and resources needed to participate in a 21st Century Digital society.

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About California Emerging Technology Fund

CETF is a statewide non-profit foundation with the mission to close the Digital Divide in California. CETF provides grants to non-profit community-based organizations (CBOs) to assist low-income households adopt broadband and become digitally proficient, and leads and manages School2Home to successfully integrate technology into teaching and learning with deep parent engagement to close the Achievement Gap in middle schools in low-income neighborhoods, and promotes Digital Inclusion in public policy to achieve Digital Equity. Through collaborative efforts with government, industry, and community partners, CETF works to create inclusive digital ecosystems that empower individuals and communities to thrive in the Digital Age. For more information, please visit www.cetfund.org.