



## Meeting Notes, January 19, 2022

### Present:

- Ann Battaglia; Chief Executive Officer; Healthy Community Alliance
- Brice Bible; Vice President and Chief Information Officer; University at Buffalo
- Rachel Bonsignore; Director; Liftoff WNY
- Christine Carr-Barmasse; Executive Director; Mission:Ignite
- Jessi Donner; Director of Technology; Tonawanda City School District
- Jim Finn; Administrative Vice President; M&T Bank
- Justin Foster; Website and Communications Manager; Healthy Community Alliance
- Matt Giordano; President; Villa Maria College
- Regina Groundwater; Specialist, Health Management Program Development; Highmark Western and Northeastern New York
- Anne Haberer; Executive Assistant; Center for Self Advocacy
- Jeffery Hazel; Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Technology; Niagara-Wheatfield Central School District
- Steve Heist; Director of Network and Communication Services; University at Buffalo
- Kimberly Herrington; Founder, Western New York WiFi Warriors
- Heather La Forme-Maldonado; Bureau of Native American Services; Office of Children and Family Services
- Ba Zan Lin; Associate Vice President, Community Impact; Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo
- Don Matteson; Chief Program Officer; Peter & Elizabeth Tower Foundation
- Sam Mattle; Executive Director; Center for Self-Advocacy
- Amy Mazur; Director of Operations; Literacy Buffalo
- Alan Meyers; Fatherhood Connection Facilitator; Cattaraugus Community Action
- Amy Miranti; Administrative & Communications Associate; Liftoff & WNY Nonprofit Support Group
- Tanvier Peart; Just Recovery Coordinator; Partnership for the Public Good
- Lauren Picone; Government Affairs Manager; Feedmore WNY
- Katie Pieri; Executive Director; WNY Nonprofit Support Group
- Michael Prutsman; Executive Director; Council on Addiction Recovery Services
- Curtis Robbins; Director of Strategy, Research, and Evaluation; John R. Oishei Foundation
- Jeff Sanderson; Vice President of Affiliations; People Inc.
- Tara Schafer; Executive Director; Literacy Buffalo
- Adrianna Seewaldt; Executive Community Relations Coordinator; Literacy West

- Andy Strohmeier; Integrating Special Populations Coordinator; Clinical and Translational Research Center; University at Buffalo
- Kaylyn Townsend; Project Director, Niagara University Rose Bente Lee Ostapenko Center for Race, Equality & Mission
- Heidi Ziemer; Outreach & Digital Services Coordinator; Western New York Library Resources Council
- Richard Zink; Executive Director; Southern Tier West Regional Planning and Development Board

### **Miscellaneous Announcements and Updates**

- Kim reminded everyone to request their free COVID-19 home test kits through USPS.
- There are still opportunities to get involved with various Coalition committees. There's plenty of room on both the Broadband & Equipment and Providers & Infrastructure committees. Digital Literacy & Technical Support is pretty full, and Policy, Advocacy, & Funding is pretty well set at this point.

### **Committee Updates**

#### ***Policy, Advocacy, & Funding***

- Heidi Ziemer has joined the Policy, Advocacy, and Funding Committee.
- We're looking for a preliminary report from City of Buffalo about the citywide broadband survey that ECC Technologies conducted. Jim Finn shared that there's a draft circulating, and the final report should be coming out in the next 30 days.
- Heidi did share that ECC Technologies was reporting a disappointingly low response rate. ECC did not do much by way of outreach, depending heavily on local government and nonprofit agencies to manage that outreach. This could be a role that the Coalition could play. (The survey can be accessed at <https://empirestatebroadband.com>)
- Christine noted that it would be great to see representation from Erie and other counties on these coalition calls.

#### ***Digital Literacy & Technical Support***

- This committee did not meet last month on account fo the holidays.

#### ***Data & Landscape (Data Dashboard)***

- This workgroup was unable to meet in December or January. This project is in a bit of a holding pattern until we're able to regroup and meet again in February.

#### ***Providers & Infrastructure***

- Don has gotten meeting dates from the committee members so he'll be able to begin scheduling those meetings into the future.

#### ***Broadband & Equipment***

- As with Providers & Infrastructure, Don has gotten meeting dates from the committee members. These meetings will begin in the next month or so.

### *Steering Committee*

- Not yet populated; but getting closer once these last two committees become active.

### *Miscellaneous Comments Regarding Committees and Coalition Membership*

- In addition to representatives from county governments, we would do well to get representatives from the Regional Economic Development Councils.
- We could also stand to add someone from Media. Nate Benson's name has come up several times. He is the Coalition's sole Twitter follower.

### *Regranting Debrief*

- Don provided a high-level recap of the process. Highlights include:
  - There were ten requests totaling a little bit over \$97,000.
  - The Coalition had \$50,000 to regrant, but we had a budget modification request pending with Moving Forward Together to reallocate \$45,000 to augment the regranting budget. The regranting review committee made decisions based on the \$50,000 amount, with additional discussion of how to apportion any additional dollars available if the budget modification was approved. It was subsequently approved.
  - The ten applicant organizations and their final awards were:
    - Center for Self Advocacy (\$12,500)
    - Mission: Ignite (\$12,500)
    - United Way of Orleans County (\$7,100)
    - UB Clinical and Translational Science Institute (\$12,500)
    - Literacy Buffalo Niagara (\$12,500)
    - People Inc. (\$5,000)
    - First Shiloh Baptist Church (\$12,500)
    - Southern Tier Healthcare System (\$12,500)
    - Tonawanda City School District (\$5,000)
    - ACCORD Corporation (\$2,900)
  - Reporting will be very light-touch. A simple description of how the re-grantees were able to make progress against their stated outcomes from the proposal.
- Several members asked about communications and possibly a press release regarding these regrants. We will initially rely on the Community Foundation's communications staff to help with that.
  - The review committee consisted of seven people:
    - Christine Carr-Barmasse (Mission: Ignite)
    - Curtis Robbins (John R. Oishei Foundation)
    - Dean Bellack (United Way of Orleans County)
    - Jeff Sanderson (People Inc.)
    - Liz Freas (Erie 1 BOCES)
    - Richard Zink (Southern Tier West Regional Development Board)
    - Rolanda Ward (Niagara University)

- Several of these reviewers expressed conflicts of interest, so they were sent to the waiting room during the Zoom meeting while the proposals for which they had conflicts were discussed.
- The review discussions were built on a rubric that reviewers completed in advance to provide a starting point, but no decisions were made solely on rubric scores.
- Some of the reviewers commented that they felt the process ran smoothly. There was a diverse range of perspectives among reviewers as well as a wide range of innovative projects and programs proposed.
- This process went well enough that there is some chance that we will be able to secure additional dollars in the future for regranteeing.

### Schmidt Futures/National Digital Inclusion Alliance Grant Update

- The Coalition was awarded a \$30,000 coalition planning grant from Schmidt Futures/National Digital Inclusion Alliance.
- Healthy Community Alliance is acting as the Coalition's fiscal sponsor.
- The grant kickoff meeting will be tomorrow afternoon. We'll learn more about expectations and guidelines for administering the grant.
- The award is pending some budget revisions because Schmidt Futures felt the administrative overhead rate of 15% was too high. We are able to reallocate those dollars to direct program expense, so they're not lost.
- Don was able to find some other sources of funding to cover some of the originally budgeted expenses. Between that and the reduction in administrative overhead, Don moved all unallocated dollars into additional stipends for community members.
- This does mean that we need to get recruiting fairly quickly, as this grant has a six-month timeline. Don will compile a job description and share that with the Coalition members to help with recruitment.
- Don asked everyone to start thinking about possible candidates to tap as Coalition community members.

### Next Meeting

- Our next meeting will be on Wednesday; February 16; 2022 at 9:00am.