

Western New York Digital Equity Coalition Full-Member Meeting

2024-07-17

Attendance

- Ann Battaglia; Chief Executive Officer; Healthy Community Alliance
- Rachel Bonsignore; Director; Liftoff WNY
- Christine Carr-Barmasse; Executive Director; Mission:Ignite
- Isaac Carrasco-Ortiz; Digital Inclusion Coordinator; Action for Boston Community Development Elder Services
- Trent Hamilton; Community Coalition Member; Entrepreneur School of Thought
- Steve Heist; VP; Information Technology & CIO; OneBridge Benefits
- Amanda Horner; Outreach Specialist; Americorps and Mission: Ignite
- Jacqueline Hovey; Librarian I, Branch Manager; Buffalo & Erie County Library
- Matthew Hubacher; Vice President for Research; Invest Buffalo Niagara
- Hex Kleinmarten; Digital Literacy Coordinator; Literacy Buffalo Niagara
- Heather La Forme-Maldonado; Bureau of Native American Services; Office of Children and Family Services
- Brett Lawton; Chief Executive Officer; Universal Primary Care/Southern Tier Community Health Center Network
- Don Matteson; Chief Program Officer; Peter & Elizabeth Tower Foundation
- Alan Meyers; Fatherhood Connection Facilitator; Cattaraugus Community Action
- Amy Miranti; Administrative & Communications Associate; Liftoff & WNY Nonprofit Support Group
- Jenn Northrup; Member Engagement Services Coordinator; Western New York Library Resources Council
- Tianna Porter; Director of Economic Development; Native American Community Services
- Adrianna Seewaldt; Executive Community Relations Coordinator; Literacy West
- Sherry Sherrill; Coalition Community Member; Covington Associates
- Bob Spino; Director of Technology; Erie 2-Chautauqua-Cattaraugus BOCES
- Rolanda Ward; Director; Niagara University Rose Bente Lee Ostapenko Center for Race, Equality & Mission
- Heidi Ziemer; Outreach & Digital Equity Coordinator; Western New York Library Resources Council

Announcements

- No announcements

Mission Statement Update

- A small group has been refining the mission and vision statements following the May 17 convening.
- The latest draft separates the mission and vision for clarity.
- Emphasis on collaboration without being overly prescriptive in strategy.

Mission:

The Western New York Digital Equity Coalition works collaboratively with community members and organizations to achieve lasting digital equity for all Western New Yorkers. We advocate for the access, literacy, support, and resources necessary to thrive in today's digital ecosystem.

Vision:

We envision a world where quality of life is enhanced through equitable access to technology.

- The full membership will vote to adopt or not by the next full member meeting in August.

Steering Committee Update

- Steve Heist offered a summary of the most recent Steering Committee meeting.
- The committee reviewed financial updates and potential regrating efforts.
- There was some conversation about the upcoming statewide convening in Syracuse.
- There is an opportunity to purchase an online course from the Marconi Society. The Committee wants to evaluate content and determine affordability before making a recommendation to proceed or pass on the opportunity.
- The Committee discussed future projects for the next 12-18 months, including revisiting Strategic Casenaking and engaging with the ConnectALL Digital Equity Technical Assistance grant.

Digital Equity Technical Assistance Grant Proposal

- Don provided an overview of the current draft of the proposal for the Digital Equity Technical Assistance Grant opportunity released by the NYS ConnectALL Office.
- \$1.4 million available statewide with individual grants capped at \$100,000.
- WNYDEC is preparing to submit an application focusing on three main components: data development, centralized data system, and Results-Based Accountability training.

Data Development

- The goal here is to measure digital literacy, privacy/cybersecurity, and accessibility at the community level. Right now, we only have data from programs that provide digital literacy training, which doesn't give us the full picture. We'll bring in consultants to help figure out the right measures to capture these metrics across the entire community, beyond just those participating in specific programs.

Centralized Data System

- We need a dashboard to visualize the community-level data and aggregate outcome data from various programs, offering a comprehensive view of our progress in digital equity. The challenge is that different programs use different systems, from paper records to advanced data management platforms, causing fragmented data. We'll implement a centralized system with an API to facilitate data exchange between these

platforms. We'll also create templates for easy data export and entry, ensuring everyone can contribute regardless of their current system.

Results Based Accountability (RBA) Training

- RBA is a framework that helps improve community well-being by tying community-level goals to program-level performance. We'll start with a three-hour virtual RBA 101 session for all Coalition members to get everyone on the same page. Then, we'll train and certify two members as RBA professionals (Don is almost finished with his certification), and three individuals (Don and the two RBA Certified Professionals) will be trained as RBA trainers. This will allow us to consistently evaluate, improve, and sustain our digital equity efforts, making it easier to track and compare outcomes across the coalition.

Discussion Points and Feedback

- There was a question regarding the possibility of integrating the centralized data system with existing platforms like the NYS Digital Equity Portal (managed by Cornell University).
- Members underscored the importance of common metrics across programs without forcing drastic changes to existing measures or data systems.
- There was a question about whether there might be a need to have language translation associated with any data gathering efforts. Don wasn't sure what we might need.