

Western New York Digital Equity Coalition Meeting Summary

November 21, 2024

Attendance

- Eileen Anderson; School Library System Director and Library Automation Supervisor; Erie 1 BOCES
- Ann Battaglia; Executive Director; Healthy Community Alliance
- Stacy Beardsley; Associate Planner; Allegany County Office of Planning
- Christine Carr-Barmasse; Executive Director; Mission:Ignite
- Courtney Deuro; Data Analyst; Center for Self Advocacy
- Katie Earl; Community Recreation Coordinator for the Aging; Erie County Senior Services
- Noah Goodling; Director of Programs; Nonprofit Support Group
- Vicki Haas; Business Assistance Specialist; Erie County Department of Environment and Planning
- Amanda Horner; Outreach Specialist; Americorps and Mission: Ignite
- Matthew Hubacher; Vice President for Research; Invest Buffalo Niagara
- Nekia Kemp; Executive Director; Police Athletic League of Buffalo, Inc.
- Hex Kleinmarten; Digital Literacy Coordinator; Literacy Buffalo Niagara
- Brett Lawton; Chief Executive Officer; Universal Primary Care/Southern Tier Community Health Center Network
- Dennis Lee; Community Coalition Member; Hopewell Baptist Church
- Don Matteson; Chief Program Officer; Peter & Elizabeth Tower Foundation
- Alan Meyers; Fatherhood Connection Facilitator; Cattaraugus Community Action
- Amy Miranti; Communications & Administrative Coordinator; Liftoff & Nonprofit Support Group
- Katie Pieri; Director; Nonprofit Support Group
- Simone Ragland; Co-Founder/CEO; Bits & Bytes STEM Foundation
- Colleen Reedy; Director of Talent Solutions; Per Scholas Buffalo
- Sherry Sherrill; Coalition Community Member; Covington Associates
- Bob Spino; Director of Technology; Erie 2-Chautauqua-Cattaraugus BOCES
- Robb Szczesniak; Senior Vice President - Technology Manager; M&T Bank
- Heidi Ziemer; Outreach & Digital Equity Coordinator; Western New York Library Resources Council

Announcements

- Don noted that this was the final Full-Member Meeting of 2024.

Active Project Updates

Strategic Casemaking Workgroup

- The workgroup is developing a case for digital equity to enlist people as allies and move them to action.
- Currently working on completing a draft slide deck by the end of 2024.
- Plan to share the completed deck at the January 2025 meeting.
- Progress can be tracked on the [shared Notion project status board](#).

Digital Equity Stories Workgroup

- Had a productive kickoff meeting earlier this month. Established scope and timeline.
- Initial focus will be on Erie and Niagara counties.
- Working on developing:
 - Process for approaching potential storytellers.
 - Methods for story collection.
 - Systems for coding and transcribing stories.
 - Shared portal for story access.
- Once processes are established, they will be documented and distributed to enable wider participation from all Coalition members.

Grant Updates

Digital Equity Technical Assistance Fund Grant

- We received a preliminary commitment of \$100,000 from New York State.
- The scope of work included in the Coalition's proposal included:
 - Developing a centralized data repository.
 - Creation of common metrics for organizations working on broadband access, equipment access, and digital skills.
 - Western New York-wide survey on digital literacy and skills.
 - Results Based Accountability (RBA) training and certification opportunities (RBA Certified Professional, Trainer).
 - Workshops focusing on eight NTIA-identified "covered populations" with digital access barriers.

Steering Committee Updates

- Jeff Sanderson is retiring from People Inc. and leaving the Steering Committee.
- Currently seeking three new steering committee members:
 - Preference for representatives from outside Erie County.
 - Looking for more community voice on the Steering Committee.
 - Monthly one-hour time commitment via Zoom.
- Finances remain fairly stable. The majority of remaining funds are for re-granting, but need to be held back for now to cover up-front Digital Equity Technical Assistance grant expenses.

- Website revisions planned for late 2024/early 2025. The site has been fairly static for about four years.

2025 Planning

- Primary focus will be on implementing Digital Equity Technical Assistance Grant activities.
- Other key priorities include:
 - Planning Western New York convening.
 - Rolling out digital equity case making messaging.
 - Collecting digital equity stories.
 - Developing regional advocacy agenda (to complement the statewide agenda being developed through the NYS Digital Equity Network).
- We need volunteers for:
 - Results-Based Accountability certification training (Certified RBA Professional and Trainer)
 - Performance measure development
 - Convening planning committee
 - Various workgroup activities

Miscellaneous Updates

- Please consider submitting news, events, and highlights for inclusion in the Coalition newsletter at <https://wnydigitalequity.link/submit-news>.
- Amanda Horner will be leaving her AmeriCorps position at Mission:Ignite at the end of this month and will resume her Coalition Community Member role.
- Don has updated the job description for Coalition Community Members to include bi-monthly check-ins to get updates on community need and CCM outreach efforts.
- Mission:Ignite received a formal no-cost extension through the end of 2026 for the Coalition's 2022 Moving Forward Together grant.