

Western NY Digital Equity Coalition Steering Committee Meeting

2025-01-08

Attendance

Present

- Christine Carr-Barmasse; Executive Director; Mission:Ignite
- Don Matteson; Chief Program Officer; Peter & Elizabeth Tower Foundation
- Al Meyers; Connecting Communities in Action
- Simone Ragland; Bits & Bytes STEM Foundation
- Bob Spino; Director of Technology; Erie 2-Chautauqua-Cattaraugus BOCES

Excused

- Steve Heist; VP, Information Technology & CIO; OneBridge Benefits
- Sam Mattle; Executive Director; Center for Self Advocacy

Coalition Finances

- The remaining balance on our Schmidt Futures grant is approximately \$3,300, which will be used for community member stipends over the next 3-4 months.
- Our 2022 Moving Forward Together grant has approximately \$116,000 remaining, with pending reimbursements of around \$1,000 to be submitted.
 - Annual operational expenses (Canva, Jotform, Zoom) along with some monthly expenses (MailChimp) recently hit and will be reflected in the January 2025 financials.
 - There's an outstanding reimbursement for a \$100 gift card expense for Annabeth Hayes (CNY Digital Inclusion Coalition) for her work on the NYS Digital Equity Network convening. Christine will submit this with appropriate documentation, and this will also be reflected on the January 2025 financials.

ConnectALL Digital Equity Technical Assistance Grant Update

- Christine and Don had a conversation with Nazeer at ConnectALL about the grant on Friday, January 3, 2025.
 - The grant is structured as a lump-sum reimbursement, meaning that we will need to expend the full \$100,000 before we can submit for reimbursement.
 - No spending can begin until contract is signed. Christine is awaiting the contract from ConnectALL. We were told to expect it early this week.
- The reimbursement structure means that the Coalition needs to secure additional \$30,000 in funding to execute the grant properly

- Don will approach Moving Forward Together/WNY COVID-19 Community Response Fund for either a direct grant of \$30,000-100,000 or a similarly sized no-interest loan.
- The grant has five main components, all of which require staffing:
 - Results-Based Accountability training
 - Two additional people will be obtaining RBA Certified Professional certifications (Don is finishing his certification now)
 - Don and the two additional people will be trained as RBA trainers
 - The entire coalition will get an RBA 101 training
 - Deploying a centralized data repository for community indicators and program performance measures
 - We will be working with Clear Impact Scorecard
 - Developing Digital Inclusion Performance Measures:
 - Two people currently signed up for digital literacy measurement
 - We do not have any volunteers yet for broadband access or equipment access
 - Regional Digital Literacy Survey
 - We will be working with Buffalo State's Center for Health and Social Research
 - This will be the first community-level digital literacy measurement in our region
 - Covered Populations Workshops to help share baseline knowledge about working with the eight covered populations identified under the Digital Equity Act

Project Updates

- Strategic Casemaking
 - Don has done some work on the slide deck, but there hasn't been much progress.
 - We will not have anything to share this month.
- Digital Equity Stories
 - Don shared some preliminary prompts with the workgroup, but has not received feedback.
 - No other indications of progress from workgroup members.

Miscellaneous

- A new community member will be joining next month as a disabilities advocate, connected with Self Advocacy Association of New York State

Action Items and Next Steps

- Don will:
 - Break down the Digital Equity Technical Assistance Grant components into concrete action steps
 - Create more detailed project descriptions for each component

- Continue to work on the Strategic Casemaking slide deck
- Christine will continue to check with ConnectALL on the grant contract's status
- The next full member meeting is scheduled for January 15th at 9:00 AM. Don will send out a reminder Monday or Tuesday of next week.