

BROADBAND ADOPTION IN ILLINOIS

Panel presentation for Illinois
Association of County Board Members

October 20, 2022



Featured Panelists:

· ConnectWaukegan/Lake County –
Elizabeth Ramirez, Community
Digital Navigator

· LatinX Digital Leaders Now
– Caroline Sanchez Crozier, CEO &
Founder

· Housing Authority of Champaign
County
– Stephanie Burnett, Director of
MTW

· Fairmont City Library
-Katie Heaton, Library Director

Moderator:

Dr. Adrienne Pickett, Visiting
Coordinator for Broadband, Illinois
Broadband Lab

Broadband Adoption panel: 2:00-2:30pm

1. Each organization's mission related to adoption (i.e. digital skills training, affordable broadband)
2. Barriers to broadband adoption in each community
3. Efforts each organization has made to enhance community broadband adoption through outreach and engagement
4. Future outreach and engagement activities each organization plans to participate in to advance community broadband adoption
5. Common themes across community organization efforts to enhance broadband adoption through outreach and engagement

Digital divide: the gap between those who have affordable access, skills, and support to effectively engage online and those who do not



Bridging the digital divide is concurrent and consists of navigating multiple pathways

- affordability
- digital literacy
- device access
- attitudes about technology



Waukegan, Illinois

Panelist: Elizabeth
Ramirez,
dig.nav@connectwaukegan.org

Connect WAUKEGAN

Finding solutions that meet everyone's needs is our goal.

Imagine a future where every resident, business, and institution can connect in a way to conduct their lives with twenty-first century success.

No limits, no obstacles, no barriers, just access to opportunity.



Partnering with local and national organizations is quintessential for advancing broadband adoption.

Expanding partnerships will help us combat all aspects of digital equity.

Mission

To advance digital equity policies and initiatives for Latinos to thrive in how we *live, learn, work, and play.*

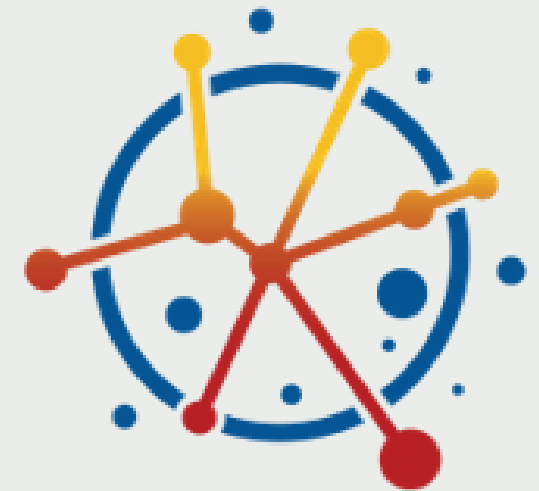
Core Pillars

Computer
Science
4Latinx

Tech
Diverse
Workforce

Broadband
Equity

Disrupting the Tech Status Quo



LATINX
DIGITAL LEADERS NOW

Chicago,
Illinois

Panelist: Caroline
Sanchez Crozier,
caroline@latinxdln.org

Our Work - One Community at a Time



Latinx DLN and the Village of Summit

- Barriers
 - Accessibility (red lining)/ affordability
 - Ownership of devices, e.g. tablets, computers
 - Knowledge of existing and potential sustainable, circular economic models enabled by Broadband
- Key Efforts
 - Awareness - Coalition building
 - ACP Enrollment Events - Schools and libraries
 - Bilingual cybersecurity virtual courses to diverse stakeholders
 - Digital Literacy via training Digital Navigators or "NeighborSquad Techies"
- Future Engagement Activities
 - Workforce development and community stakeholder engagement with Broadband Institute and Fiber Optic Association
 - # DigitalEquity toolkit planning for building member owned co-op Community Broadband Networks
 - Promote # OpenAccess fiber to enable local ISP competition
- Common Themes
 - Community stakeholders are key in taking ownership of the solutions
 - Building and continuing community self determination
 - Partnerships are key to address equity, inclusion, representation, and access
 - Ongoing funding strategy

DCEO Illinois Connected Communities Grant

HACC was the recipient of a \$12,000 broadband grant in June 2020. As one of only 39 Moving to Work housing authorities in the country, HACC is committed to offering wraparound services both in-house and through our community partners to expand economic and learning opportunities for our clients.

The broadband grant, which allowed HACC to improve broadband access and utilization in our community, was a valuable complement to our existing services and goals.

Notable Accomplishments

Small Business & Workforce Development Center at Oakwood Trace – 20 Chromebooks, a charging cart, projector and screen were purchased to equip the community room. The space is used for workforce development trainings, financial literacy classes, a business hub and career development.

EnVision Center – HACC received the EnVision Center designation in October 2020. An EnVision Center is a centralized hub that provides community members with resources and support needed in order to excel. Grant funds were used to purchase 10 all-in-one pcs to equip a computer lab.

Virtual Tutoring/Homework Assistance – HACC partnered with students at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign during the pandemic to provide virtual tutoring and homework assistance to students in need. Additionally, technical support was provided to parents trying to navigate the various online platforms their children needed to use during that period of virtual-learning.



Growing & Moving Forward Together

Panelist: Stephanie
Burnett,
stephanieb@hacc.net



Partnerships & Ongoing Activities

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign – UIUC’s Community Data Clinic, recipient of the DCEO READY grant, partnered with HACC, PCs for People, the State of Illinois and other local agencies to expand internet and technology access for low-income families in Champaign and Vermilion Counties. This initiative provided 500 families with low-cost laptops and free internet hotspots, 150 of which were HACC households.

Champaign County Broadband Task Force – Champaign County established a Broadband Task Force, of which HACC is part. The purpose is to strategize methods to bring broadband to underserved areas of the county with ARPA funds and other grant sources. This project will significantly affect our rural communities and low-income neighborhoods.

Volo Internet + Tech – Volo is a local internet service provider that is partnering with HACC on a DCEO Connect IL Round 3 grant. This grant will provide us with the opportunity to get all 18 of our developments access to affordable, high-speed broadband, wireless routers, free devices, and technical support and education.



Fairmont City Library Center

Fairmont City
Library Center

Fairmont City,
Illinois

Panelist: Katie
Heaton,
katieh@mvlid.org

Barriers

Poverty rate in the community is 27%. Fiber is available near but not widely in Fairmont City. Before 2021, 50% of the population only had internet service through cell phones.

Activities

Worked with local officials and Charter/Spectrum to complete infrastructure upgrade project in Spring 2022. Guided community members as they enrolled in the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP).

Future activities

Fairmont City Library Center will conduct digital skills training and collaborate with PCs for People for device giveaways. Will make hotspots available for check out from the library.



(L-R) Collinsville Community Unit School District 10 Superintendent Dr. Mark B. Skertich, Fairmont City Library Center Director Katie Heaton, and Fairmont City Mayor Michael Suarez with U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth, May 13, 2022.

READY Teams

Cohort 1:

Regional 1 Planning Council: Northern
Stateline

Eastern Illinois University: Southeast

Southern Illinois University: Southern

University of Illinois - Urbana Champaign:
East Central

Cohort 2:

Bloomington Normal EDC: North Central

Chicago State University: Northeast

Northern Illinois University: Northwest

Southern Illinois University – Edwardsville:
Southwest

University of Illinois – Springfield: Central

Western Illinois University: West Central

Program Highlights

Cohort 1:

Southeast Region's librarian-based train the trainer digital skills program at Mattoon and Charleston schools and libraries

Southern Region's Eurma C. Hayes Community Technology Center Ribbon Cutting in Carbondale

Cohort 2:

Southwest Region's collaboration with PCs for People's affordable computing device distributions in East St. Louis

West Central Region's digital literacy training courses in cybersecurity and data analytics

Next steps:

- Resource mapping in communities, throughout counties, and in regions
- Collaborate with regional leads to determine planning capacity and resource management within regions
- Build capacity to support regional efforts at broadband outreach and engagement

Thank you!