

Minneapolis Digital Equity Program

The City of Minneapolis is seeking grants and sponsorships to help overcome the digital divide and close the racial employment and achievement gaps. For those who don't have access to the Internet, or who don't know how to use it, it can be difficult to get by in today's digital environment. Applying for a job, paying a bill, or getting education online can be a challenge without the Internet. Minneapolis recognizes the need for our residents to have computers with Internet at home and to be digitally literate if they are going to have success in the future.

Opportunity to close the gaps

Digital Divide Exists: Results from the 2014 Minneapolis Community Technology Survey show:

- 24,750 households in Minneapolis (15%) do not have computers with Internet access at home
- Only 6% of whites don't have any Internet access at home, compared to 24% of African Americans and 10% of other races/multiracial or Hispanic respondents. Ninety percent of whites have computers with Internet at home compared to 66% of African Americans and 81% of other races or Hispanic.
- Families with children: 97% of white alone/non-Hispanic households have access to a computer with Internet at home compared to 81% of households with children from all other races/ethnicities.

Racial Employment and Academic Achievement gaps: Minneapolis Civil Rights Department and Generation Next

- Minneapolis and the metropolitan region has the worst employment disparity between whites and blacks in the nation.
- In June 2012 the average unemployment rate was 7% for whites and 18% for nonwhites.
- Even though 40% of residents in Minneapolis are people of color 83% of jobs in Minneapolis are filled by white workers and only 17% are filled by people of color.
- 39.6% of nonwhite residents of Minneapolis live in poverty compared to 13.1% of whites.
- By the end of 3rd grade, reading proficiency is achieved by only about 50% of students of color, compared to 80% to 90% of white students in Twin Cities public schools.
- By the end of 8th grade, 60% to 70% of white students achieve grade-level math proficiency, compared to 15% to 26% of American Indian, African-American and Hispanic students in Twin Cities public schools.
- Just 52% of students of color graduate from high school on time.

Digital Equity

Access to a computer and the Internet, and having the skills to use these tools is critical to employment and academic success. **Factoid:** *The existing public PC availability in Minneapolis will only allow one hour of online access per week per household for the 26,580 households without computers and Internet at home.*

Computers, Internet and Digital Literacy Training for:

- 500 Job Seekers
- 500 Students in Minneapolis Public Schools
- 500 Households in Minneapolis Public Housing

By sponsoring the City's Digital Equity program, we can provide resources that address both the digital divide and the racial employment and academic achievement gaps.

Empower People: \$150 per household covers the cost of a refurbished computer with Microsoft Office software, 6 months of Internet service and technical support. After 6 months, individual participants can continue their Internet service with *PCs for People's* arrangement with Mobile Citizen for \$13.35 per month (\$10 per month if paid for 12 months in advance).

Sponsorships

10 Minneapolis Households =	\$1,500	100 Minneapolis Households =	\$15,000
25 Minneapolis Households =	\$3,750	500 Minneapolis Households =	\$75,000
50 Minneapolis Households =	\$7,500	1500 Minneapolis Households =	\$225,000

Outreach and Distribution Planning: The City will identify the 500 job seekers, 500 Minneapolis Public School students and 500 Public Housing Residents through its partnerships with the Workforce Centers and employment service providers, schools, and youth programs.

Referral and Enrollment: the City and our partners will schedule pre-session(s) that include program overview and commitment, taking the *Northstar Digital Literacy Assessment*, and either a) overview of employment tools or b) Parent Portal and academic tools.

Distribution: *PCs for People* will host distribution events with the City – planned and scheduled with the partner organizations. The distribution events will include: participant registration including email account set up if needed, demonstration of PC set up and Internet start-up, training plan and community resources, and overview of and commitment to follow along program.

Training and personal goals: Digital literacy training is available at several community sites and available through the City’s partnership with the CTEP AmeriCorps program. In preparation for PC distribution, the City will create a list of training resources customized with the partner organization that participants can take advantage of. Participants will commit to a digital literacy training plan that meets their needs, and identify personal goals that the computer and Internet will help them achieve.

Progress and successes: The City will communicate quarterly with partner organizations, program participants and sponsors to collect and share progress notes, outcomes, success stories, and community technology resources.

Resources

Sponsors	Provide funding for PCs and Internet access
City of Minneapolis: IT Interagency Coordinator Urban Scholar CTEP AmeriCorps Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program coordination and implementation • Compile training / publish calendar • Support initial set up with participants • Follow along activities including evaluation and program celebration
<i>PCs for People</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCs, Internet service, technical support • Distribution events
Partner organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify potential participants • Coordinate rollout for their group(s) with the City • Space for distribution events • Personal connection, support training plan and help participants reach their goals.
Community Technology Centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support participants by promoting their existing technology and specialty services

Success Measures

Employment goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the program help you with your employment goals? Move from unemployed to employed; find a better job; improve at your current job?
Academic goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be established with partners
Personal goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the program help you achieve the goals you listed at the beginning of the program? How did you use the computer and Internet to meet your goals?
Digital literacy and Internet access goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant response to the follow along program emails • Northstar Digital Literacy Assessment Certificates earned • Participants able to maintain Internet service at home after the 6 months of service

For more information: www.minneapolismn.gov/it/inclusion See Digital Equity page
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