Digital Navigators

VFN 2024 Annual Conference
May 8, 2024

Digital Navigators
Help People Get Online and Make the Most of It!

Digital Navigators can help someone:

✓ Sign-up for Internet Service

✓ Get a device

✓ Connect to skills training and other resources

• Digital Navigators are community-based organizations. They are that trusted voice for those who may not know where to start.

  ✓ Nonprofits (e.g. YMCAs, Code VA, Computer CORE)

  ✓ Health Centers

  ✓ Libraries

• Baltimore City, MD saw a greater than 10% increase in internet subscribers from 2019 to 2021. With ACP, we expect that number to have climbed even more.

•

Examples of Digital Navigators Efforts:

• Community College of Baltimore County (MD) paid enrolled students to drive awareness and enrollment in the Affordable Connectivity Program (access/ affordability focus).

• SER Jobs in Houston has navigators helping job seekers learn basic digital literacy skills to prepare for more advanced workforce training programs.

• United Way of Greater Philadelphia uses navigators to support the local UW211 Helpline and conduct Train-the-Trainer trainings for other nonprofits.

• University of Maryland – Marylanders Online, a state funded resource to provide resources, access to digital skills training, device distribution, government services.

Boston Consulting Group Study "A Human Approach to Closing the Digital Divide" (June 2022):

• 65% were able to obtain internet access or a computer or tablet at home;

• 85% said they now use the internet more;

• Nearly 80% of users praising digital navigators for helping quickly fix their issues and making them feel more confident.

• If properly resourced in communities, Digital Navigators can expand access to more people, build digital skills and advance economic mobility for those most at risk of being left behind.

COMCAST

Digital Navigators
Beyond Affordability to Skills Development

Affordability

Digital Navigators can still provide information about low-cost internet service plans available.

- Comcast has two (2) low-cost offerings for income constrained:

  - Internet Essentials
    - ✓ 50/10 - $9.95
    - ✓ 100/20 - $29.95
    - ✓ Includes equipment cost, no credit check, no cancellation fees.
    - ✓ Designated CARE team.
    - ✓ Access to training and subsidized device.

  - NOW by Xfinity
    - ✓ Mix-&-Match internet, mobile and TV (includes equipment, no credit checks, no cancellation fees)
    - ✓ 100/20 - $30
    - ✓ 200/10 - $45
    - ✓ Mobile - $25 per line unlimited data
    - ✓ TV - $20 for 65+ channels, DVR and Peacock streaming premium

Cost of Digital Divide

- 2021 Pew Research Center survey found that while 205 of white Americans lack a broadband subscription; that percentage is higher for Black and Hispanic Americans – 29% and 35%, respectively.

- People without broadband tend to have lower incomes and lower levels of educational attainment.

- *American Economic Journal* paper showed that households that adopted internet service were:

  - ✓ 8.1 percentage points more likely to be employed, on average; and

  - ✓ Earned on average $2,202 more in annual household income.

- National Skills Coalition in partnership with Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta reports that 92% of all jobs require digital skills.

Skills Training and Workforce Development

- Always invest in digital inclusion – helping people wherever they are in connectivity journey (e.g. Libraries, schools, YMCAs – community anchors).

- Creating a pilot with ByteBack to partner with existing workforce development organizations to fill basic digital literacy gap so residents are better prepared for workforce training.

- For every $1 in the digital adoption program a projected $2.40 in social value is generated through increased earnings well-being and cost savings (Ecotone Analytics of MN program).

COMCAST

Comcast
Customer and Community Resources

Internet Essentials Community Partner Portal

- https://partner.internetessentials.com

- Free resource to Internet Essentials flyers in up to 33 different languages.

- Free online curriculum:

  - ✓ "Your First Computer – Digital Sills Training"

  - ✓ "Online Safety Tips: Guide for Parents"

  - ✓ "Minions: The Rise of Gru' Activity Kit"

  - ✓ . . .and more.

- Access to $150 subsidized laptop

- Internet Essentials Partnership Program

  - ✓ Local government or a nonprofit (e.g. Housing Authority) may sponsor the monthly cost of internet on behalf of residents.

American Connection Corps (ACC)/ Lead For America

- www.americanconnectioncorps.org

- A program from Lead For America to bridge the digital divide. Trained Digital Navigators hosted by a local nonprofit or community institution to assist residents along their connectivity journey.

- Apply to be a host location!

COMCAST

Comcast
Project UP

Project UP is our comprehensive initiative to advance digital equity and help build a future of unlimited possibilities. Backed by a **$1 billion commitment** to reach tens of millions of people, Project UP encompasses the programs and community partnerships across Comcast, NBCUniversal, and Sky that connect people to the Internet, advance economic mobility, and open doors for the next generation of innovators, entrepreneurs, storytellers, and creators.

Contact: Misty Allen, VP Government & Regulatory Affairs Community Impact

misty_allen@comcast.com