2017-2018 ConnectHome - Devices, 1-30-18

Deena Lehmann-Kim: I want to welcome everyone to another webinar in our ConnectHome series. This one is covering devices. And I know we all know -- everybody who works in digital inclusive -- that obtaining devices for our residents can be a challenge.

So we're very pleased to have three speakers who will share really good information about their experience in this area and tips that you can use in your own programs back home to help you obtain devices for your residents.

So on our lineup we have Dave Sevick who is executive director of Computer Reach. He will be speaking first. Then we have Catherine Crago, who I'm sure many of you have heard speak before. She's the head of strategic initiatives and resource development at the housing authority of the City of Austin and Austin Pathways. And she will be followed by Paulina Sanchez who's a program manager at human-I-T.

Before I turn it over to Dave, I would like for Anna to tell everybody about the ins and outs of the system that we are using for this webinar so you can know how to ask questions when we do Q&A at the end of the presentations. Anna?

Anna: Yes. So we're actually going to use a IM feature at the top right-hand of your screen. You should see three menu bars, participants and chat and under chat, you will see a Q&A section.

And that's where you will be able to type in any questions you have and at the very end, once all the presenters have gone through their presentation, we'll take questions. So Deena, if you have any other announcements, otherwise we can hand it over to Dave.

Deena Lehmann-Kim: Yes. Dave, take it away, please.

Dave Sevick: Hi, everybody. Can you hear me all right?

Deena Lehmann-Kim: Yes.

Anna: Yes.

Dave Sevick: Thanks. My name is Dave Sevick. I'm executive director of Computer Reach. We're located in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and we recycle computers and get them out to people and [inaudible] Pennsylvania and around the world. Our mission is to make technology available to people most in need through refurbished equipment, computer literacy, training and support.

And our vision is a computer literate world is a benefit to technology or shared by all. As of last week, we have refurbished for use over 4,500 computers. In our 18 years, we have posted over 2,400 volunteers as our labor force. Our computers are now located in 29 states across the United States and we also have computers through charities and NPOs across the world in 33 countries.

We serve about three people at every computer. So our impact metric is about 13,000 computers have -- 13,000 people have been helped with our computers. We strictly get our devices -- our computers from school districts in Western Pennsylvania. About 70 percent of those are for school turnover computers in the summer.

I'm also a consultant for Apple Computer. So I have a lot of connections to the education community in Western P.A. and Ohio and West Virginia. We get about 20 percent of our devices from local businesses that donate and they get a tax write-off in return and about 10 percent come from individuals in the area that have heard about us and want to donate.

We have some key partnerships that make us be able to function here in Western Pennsylvania. First is the housing authority in the City of Pittsburgh, the Allegheny County Housing Authority that forms a cohort in -- around the City of Pittsburgh in Allegheny County.

Those housing authorities work with Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh to provide training and devices to people in those regions. We have a second cohort in the ConnectHome program in Westmoreland County, which is just east of Pittsburgh.

The Westmoreland County Housing Authority partners with the Westmoreland Library network who partner with multiple libraries in that area. [inaudible] serves both cohorts to ConnectHome.

We put together MOUs, Memorandums of Understanding, with several of those organizations just mentioned and put them in a form of a grant request through the Pittsburgh Foundation in PNC Bank to be able to pay the teachers and my fees for driving around and setting up all of the digital literacy camps that we have. I'll talk about those in a minute.

We also partner with some national organizations that are critical to our success. First one is the National Cristina Foundation based in Philadelphia. The National Cristina Foundation is a clearinghouse for donated computers that are available as well as people that [inaudible] computers.

You need to be a 501(c)(3) to participate in the National Cristina Foundation and there's no cost involved. I encourage everybody to look into the National Cristina Foundation. There are about 1,300 people that belong to the National Cristina Foundation. They've been around for about 33 years.

They have a new division within the National Cristina Foundation of people that can actually provide computers. So out of the 1,300, there are about 85 organizations that can actually supply your housing authorities or your libraries with computers. We have branded ourselves as the Alliance for Technology Refurbishing & Reuse.

There, again, are 85 of us. We're all, basically, a trade association, and we share best practices, and certification ideas, and recycling partners, and shipping, and whatever we can do to work together better, because we're always competing against the for-profit reflectors. We try to grab up all the computers.

And we're all dedicated to reuse of computers. Another national organization that's critical to our success is the National Digital Inclusion Alliance. Angela Siefer runs that and Bill Callahan, they really lobby for better broadband for people that are low-income. So those three organizations are critical for -- to our success at Computer Reach.

One things that's happened with EveryoneOn.org is an agreement that they would understand that computers are not free. There is a cost in recycling and refurbishing computers across the United States. It takes a lot of labor to get a computer ready, put software on it and prepare it, make sure it's not crashing.

And so we set the lowest price of $50 per computer for the lowest-end computer. We also stress with EveryoneOn.org that instructors need to be paid well, because they're driving a lot to these locations to do training. They have to teach a class of eight people that are usually beginners and frequently elderly and it's not an easy class to teach.

So through the foundations, we've set a price of $75 an hour as an instructor, more of an educational consultant to teach on the devices that we distribute. So those [inaudible] -- the Pittsburgh Foundation and Pittsburgh National Bank, PNC Bank, understands the need to pay teachers well.

So those two numbers are critical when you're looking at putting a budget together to do device deployment and training. We settled on the Northstar Digital Literacy system out of St. Paul, Minnesota. We looked at several different curriculum vendors and we found this one to be the easiest to use and the most cost effective.

If you're a nonprofit, it's basically $500 a year and you get access to a lot of the administrative tools, ability to do reporting and such. As you can see, in the Northstar Digital Literacy system, there's been over 1.9 million people that have taken the test. So it's pretty significant [inaudible] times since 2012.

There are 10 modules you can see below. Those icons and symbols -- the first one stands for basic computer information and then the web, number 3 is windows, number 3B is Apple and then there's email, number 4, number 5 is information literacy -- I'm sorry, number 5 is Microsoft Word and then there is number 6, the social media.

Number seven is Excel and number eight is PowerPoint and number nine is information literacy about how to surf the web to get a job and to do banking and such. I could talk all day about Northstar.

We really love the system. Next, additional considerations for literacy is that when you're dealing with housing authorities or libraries, there are a lot of people that you have to talk to to make things work. We need a champion, someone on the phone to make sure all the agencies are talking and working together.

It takes libraries and staff time to execute surveys and select the right people for the classes that we teach. Libraries and teachers all have varying schedules. So you need to be able to do all the

scheduling and there shouldn't be any [inaudible]. We went one step further and worked with Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh to find a better way to transport the desktop computers.

We use desktop computers with monitors. And so we developed a sturdy cart based on a hand cart and then we build a box around it and made it so you fit the computers inside and put a few more on top in the boxes and cart them around. This is what it looks like set up in a classroom in our model.

This is what it looks like when it's all packed up and put in the closet to put away. Libraries frequently have very little space to accommodate a class and leave the computers in the lab out all the time when you don't have to put it away.

So we designed a cart. I'd be glad to talk about that later if people have questions, but it was designed by a university, Urban Design Build Studio, the architecture school at the University of Carnegie Mellon University.

Additional considerations for putting our digital literacy camp together with devices is the ability low-income residents to attend because of lack of a car or not able to get to the library, all kinds of issues about attendance and transportation. Frequently, they have childcare, older people are babysitting or young families have to bring their kids with them.

So the library [inaudible] in childcare. In Pittsburgh, first couple of camps had really bad weather, we had snow. So we had to consider canceling camps. A lot of the [inaudible] around Pittsburgh have immigrants that don't speak English and we weren't able to offer people classes in Spanish or any other language at this time.

And when you're teaching eight people, you don't know how much education they already have, how much computer experience we have. So we have people that come in with usually no computer knowledge at the first camp and we also have people that have never seen -- used a computer in their life.

So we need good instructors that are [inaudible] a wide range of educational abilities. Again, we offer low-cost computers at $50 apiece. We bundle it with a free monitor and we put Linux Software on every computer and we use Chrome as the web browser and we use LibreOffice, which is basically a free form of Microsoft Office, free software.

Camp instructors, we pay them $75 an hour as a consultant. There's a bit of typo there. If you're an assistant in one of our camps, it's actually gratis, not $24 an hour. And for someone to be a teacher, they actually have to be an assistant for a while so we can vet them to make sure that their teaching skills are up-to-speed.

So gratis is the pay for the assistant, teachers get $75 an hour. Software on our level 1 we split all 10 modules into sections. Five of those sections really don't require a Mac or a Windows machine. We do them on Linux. We use a Ubuntu Linux, specifically, Xubuntu Linux, but then we use LibreOffice for a word processing spreadsheet slides.

We use Google Chrome, Firefox. And again, we're very big on the Linux platform if I know whether people [inaudible] on Linux. We also have level two for people who want to do Mac and Windows. We can take them to the next step if they want to learn a little bit more, we call that level C of all the [inaudible] and -- that are available to Northstar digital literacy system.

For warranty service, we are unable to go out and do home repair or repair at the library. They have to come to our warehouse in Pittsburgh any Friday from 9:30 to 3:30 and we do free warranty service on a computer that's been distributed. If they need tech support or any updated instruction, we'll do that for free on a Friday.

They just have to find a way to our warehouse. We also have training neighborhood folks to be able to support people in the area. We're working on that right now.

So my last slide is that we do provide devices to people at a low price paid for by foundations and we do offer a digital literacy certificate opportunity via the curriculum that we teach in our class, which is an example of a Northstar digital literacy certificate. And I guess I will take questions that you post at the end. Thanks very much.

Deena Lehmann-Kim: Thank you. And now we'll turn over to Catherine Crago. Catherine.

Catherine Crago: Good afternoon, everyone. I'm Catherine Crago and I head up strategic initiatives for the Housing Authority of the City of Austin and Austin Pathways. We serve about 5,000 people in public housing and 14,000 in Section 8 housing.

You may have heard of our Unlocking the Connection program. It is an initiative to connect every single public housing authority resident with an Internet connection, digital literacy and an earned computer. And we've been fortunate to have partnerships with Google Fiber and U.S. Phone for Internet.

We've connected about 40 percent of our residents now with a free Internet connection and we've also been fortunate to have some funding and volunteers and other partners who provide digital literacy training. But of course, like many people around the country, it's really hard to get ahold of computer devices.

And so we had initially, in December, 2014, $50,000 set aside for devices. We thought how could we spend this money? Should we use it to buy tablets for youth or desktops for seniors or something along those lines? And we kind of sat down and said, what could we do that would give us the best longevity for all of our residents over time?

And these are a few things that we knew. We knew that residents who earn a device are more likely to value that device and more likely to keep it in their home. So we believe that earned is better than given. We believe that reusing and recycling high-quality devices is better than buying new.

We could buy a $75 tablet and that tablet may break in 8 months or in a year, year and a half, but reusing a desktop computer that was originally a $2,000 desktop computer, which is probably

engineered with higher quality will actually end up lasting longer for our residents. We also believe desktop is just as important as a smartphone.

Smartphone memory is expensive, desktop memory is less expensive. Smartphone screen size is not optimal for many tasks and for many of our residents, if they can't purchase additional smartphone memory, that means that every time they watch that Khan Academy video or apply for a job, they may have to pay for additional bandwidth if they've used their cap.

We also believe that the resources here in Austin, at least, were out there to help us to find these devices and refurbish them and we agreed to start with a -- the patience to experiment and to iterate, to try and try again and that by doing that, that would help us go faster, ultimately. So how do we obtain devices?

We have device partnerships that provide the hardware. We refurbish and reimage with software that is free and open source and then we have some partnerships to help us actually deploy these devices to our residents. So this is really -- it's about the technology. This is how we secure the hardware.

First, we were very fortunate, a couple of years ago, to establish a partnership with Austin Community College. Austin Community College serves about 41,000 credit students and they have computer labs on multiple campuses. They refresh those labs every one to two years when the equipment is mostly five years old.

Five-year-old equipment is really at the end of its business life, but it's still at the beginning of life for a resident who wants to use that equipment to check email or apply for jobs or use applications which are mostly browser-based.

So we've been very fortunate in the past several years to receive about 600 devices from Austin Community College, which would normally go to recyclers.

Now instead of calling the recycler when those devices are de-asseted and sitting on pallets waiting to be taken away and pieced and parted, we come, and pick them up, and bring them to our facilities, and refurbish, and reimage them. About seven months ago we started a pilot project with the City of Austin and it's called the PC Community Loan Program.

So the City of Austin also has an asset disposition policy and that policy doesn't currently enable the city to donate the asseted devices. The city's worked very hard to establish this pilot and as a part of this pilot, we've received 25 laptops, which we have loaned to our residents for 1 year and those residents are HACA scholarship recipients.

And those laptops are reimaged at the Dewitty Center with Microsoft. We have a very new corporate partnership. There is a local company that is fast growing, high-tech. It is a Mac computer shop and they refresh computers every two to three years.

So we have just received the first set of laptops from that company and we're providing those to our family self-sufficiency graduates, our A/B honor roll students and students who show extraordinary initiative in STEM.

And then finally, another new partnership, Austin Forum on Technology & Society, is a trade association that invites about 200 to 300 people who work in tech in the community every month to talk about the intersection of technology and society.

And at the beginning of each meeting in December and January, and we'll keep doing this for the next year, we are able to provide a one-minute overview of our digital inclusion programs and we ask members of the audience to participate by providing their youth devices to us, mostly smartphones, tablets and e-readers.

We received about $1,100 in devices the first meeting and $1,200 the second meeting. And so those are really helpful working and they're mostly quite new, actually. So they have a long life ahead of them. Now, how do we refurbish and reimage the hardware? The bulk of what we've deployed are these Dell OptiPlex 760s from Austin Community College.

And they're sturdy and they have two or three megs of RAM. So what we learned really quickly is we can't put Microsoft on these machines, the current Microsoft, and have it work very effectively. So we deploy these machines thanks to Uni [ph]. Uni is a computer scientist who has been traveling around the world helping big companies and he agreed to take this on.

We reached out to several refurbishers around the country and asked how they do their work and most of them said you need a lot of Internet to reimage computers using Internet. Uni developed a way to reimage computers using just a USB and a CD-ROM and what we do is put Linux operating system on those machines and LibreOffice.

Now, what if a resident doesn't have Internet at home, how can they use their computers? Well, there's an organization called World Possible that aggregates content that you might normally find online. So we deploy these machines with about 32 GB of educational content, the Khan Academy, Wikipedia for Schools, MedlinePlus, Great Books of the World.

We put over 400 books on the machine, but also things like Codecademy, Typing Tutor and other kinds of resources that are helpful for kids to be able to do their homework at home even if they don't have Internet. For the City of Austin devices, we use Microsoft certified refurbisher through the City of Austin.

And our corporate partner agreed to refurbish and reimage the laptops that they provide to us with Mac OS. They don't provide any local software on the device, but we add Rachel and World Possible for those folks that earned that computer so that they can use those tools at home. Now, how do we get these out?

Because technology is helpful, it's a tool, but it's people -- it's other people, the human connection that helps us learn how to use those tools and adopt them to help us. And so we,

about a year and a half ago, established a partnership with Austin Community College again, we're very fortunate.

And we have 6 to 15 work study interns who work about 19 hours per week on our property. We provide them hands-on experience related to course work. They're able to reimage -- each semester refurbish and reimage a couple of hundred machines and then they go out and do the deployments.

Deployments. When we meet HACA residents who have earned a device after about 32 to 60 hours of digital literacy, our interns are sitting side-by-side with those residents when they receive their devices.

One of the important things we do at a deployment is tell residents that they are going to change the password on the device from a HACA password to their own password. But as we're going through this process, the inters are able to share with them their own experiences working in IT making the decision to go into IT fields.

Our partnership with the City of Austin includes an opportunity for our interns and digital ambassadors who are HACA stipend paid residents to go to the Dewitty Center and actually learn how to reimage machines with Microsoft.

And then through our corporate partner, we're able to have folks come and teach our residents how to set up their passwords and explore their devices and this is, again, very helpful, because it's another person in the community who is working in the field and they're giving us really good insight into the kinds of jobs that are available out there for our residents and their families. So ownership, the device lifecycle, we ask residents who earn devices to sign an earned device agreement. The resident who receives a device, they have to be, of course, a HACA resident and in good standing.

And the agreement says that they're accepting the device as-is, there is no guarantee, there is no warranty. So we want to make sure, in that two-and-a-half-hour deployment, that everything is working just like it should be. We ask them to keep it for one year, to use the device for self-sufficiency related activities, including school and job searching and entertainment.

And then of course, they do change their password at the deployment. Tech support, the first year, year and a half, that we're doing this, we really offered very little tech support.

Some of our digital ambassadors who worked in the classroom or doing outreach to our residents or in our computer labs would offer help and formal help, but we didn't have a way to track formally how many requests were coming in once those devices were out in the field.

And so what we do now is we provide a tech support number and residents call that number and we assign digital ambassadors who are trained on the machines, sometimes with our interns, to go out to properties once every other month or so to do a tech support day and then we encourage people who've earned the devices to come into our computer labs.

Some additional considerations include thinking about software for the devices and most software today is not software that you download onto your hard drive and use from your hard drive. Most software is moving into the Cloud and it's browser-accessible. With that said, some kinds of software require more memory than other kinds.

So I think going forward for us, doing some type of an intake where we determine what kinds of software residents are likely to use, if they're studying graphic design, for example or nursing or they're going to online community college or college, they may need more memory than other residents.

And then finally, we're just about to embark on a major evaluation going back three years to find out what has happened to those devices and those individuals who have earned them, how have they changed and what cases have people just kind of not used their device, have -- they've sort of failed to adopt it.

So that's just to give you a little bit of an overview of our program. And look forward to taking any questions and discussion at the end of the presentations.

Deena Lehmann-Kim: Thank you so much, Catherine. We'll turn it over now to Paulina Sanchez from human-I-T. Thank you. Paulina.

Paulina Sanchez: Hi, everyone. I hope everyone can hear me okay. I'm Paulina Sanchez, program manager for human-I-T. We are a nonprofit located in Los Angeles. We were part of the ConnectHome pilot in -- at the end of 2015 and then half of 2016. And so I'm here to really just share a little bit of our experience and hopefully help some of you guys out.

So a little bit more about human-I-T, our mission is to connect low-income individuals and nonprofits to technology, Internet and digital literacy training by reusing instead of recycling electronics. Our team transforms e-waste opportunities to promote digital inclusion and digital access.

Some of our programs that are currently active, we'll speak a little bit more about what we do, our [inaudible] program is a collaborative partnership between the City of Los Angeles, human-I-T and a number of other large corporation partners, such as Sprint. This program specifically focuses on donating technology and Internet connection to [inaudible] residents.

And we actually obtain all of the technologies from the City of Los Angeles. So it's definitely a very collaborative partnership, because when the city gets rid of their technology, human-I-T refurbishes it and then it goes back to its residence. With the partnership Sprint, we're also able to donate four years of free Internet, which is, as we know, necessary.

We need both components. Our PowerON [inaudible] program is through -- actually, it's nationwide. We provide at-risk LGBTQ youth in shelters and community centers access to technology, such as tablets, laptops and cell phones and other imported online resources.

Our partners for this program are The Trevor Project, Straight But Not Narrow and the LGBT Technical Institute. And then we have other programs, like Frontier and Spectrum where we donate technology as well, but this time it's through the provider.

So with our partnerships and grants, like Frontier and Spectrum, they allow us to connect households to Internet providers in their area, not specifically to Frontier or Spectrum, but just within their territory and we're able to provide free technology that they're using as an incentive to get low-income households connected.

No longer active, but [inaudible] part of the ConnectHome Los Angeles pilot. And one thing that was very important for us were establishing strong partnerships. Our key partnerships included the Housing Authority of Los Angeles, which was responsible for identifying participants. This is very important, because HACLA residents [inaudible].

So it wasn't just someone coming in saying, you're going to get free technology, come take a class with us. It was very important to have someone who the future recipients trusted and knew. CETF, or California Emergent Technology Fund, which was actually the main founder of the program.

So we were very lucky to have them on our side and be provided the funds needed to execute it. We also have experience with working with programs that are focused on digital literacy training and Internet connection. So it was great to have a partner who was allowing us the funds, but they were also experienced in the field.

So they knew what our approaches were and were able to guide us and suggest. The Information Technology Agency, which is the City of Los Angeles ITA and they were the ones who donated technology.

Again, we were very lucky to have a specific place that was donating the technology, because it was important for us to have similar or the same type of technology that we were donating. It would just facilitate the refurbishing process and it would also make sure that all the recipients felt like they were being treated equal, no one was getting something better than the other.

And then us, human-I-T, who were in charge of bringing all partners together, identifying the roles of all involved, refurbishing the computers, distribution and tech support. Our execution of the program, so again, it was very important to recruit our participants and have them trust us. So HACLA, Housing Authority, was the one in charge of recruitment.

We passed out flyers; we did presentations onsite about the program and informed the offices just in case anyone needed further information. We were also working with five housing sites in Los Angeles. It was important that we went to each site and provided information that was unique to each site.

HACLA also, again, identified the participants. We focus on time where we can go ahead and get -- do digital literacy training. We wanted to get as many participants involved and we had to

have time that was focused and allow more people to attend it. So we did the weekends, because we figured most households would have the time available.

We also did two classes, one in the morning and one in the early afternoon and we did them in Spanish and English. So we chose one class in Spanish and one class in English, because we had our [inaudible] 50/50 population of English speakers and Spanish speakers. Location, again, it was very important to get as many people participating.

So we actually did them onsite or very locally. So we worked with a lot of the housing sites to use their gyms when they weren't being used and we brought equipment, such as projectors and tables and chairs to be able to set up a class for them. Next component that was very important was the curriculum for the digital literacy training.

And we wanted to make sure we included content that was relevant to the participants we were working with. So if we were working with different communities, we would have to go ahead and edit it, but overall, it was very beginner training. A lot of the people that we were working with were parents who their children knew technology, but they didn't.

So it was basic training, such as how to put your computer together, how to access the Internet, maybe a couple of online resources to finding coupons or healthy recipes, whatever we felt that the participants needed, that's what we included in this curriculum.

Technology. The equipment that we were able to get from ITA, the City of Los Angeles, to refurbish were, again, desktops from the city. So all of the computers included a monitor, a desktop peripheral, which are keyboards, mice and all the cables needed.

We also have a partnership with Microsoft and this is actually very important to us, because we wanted to equip the computers with as many resources as we could to make sure that the parents were able to use them as well. We knew that a lot of them were struggling with finding jobs or wanting to build resumes or children were trying to get into college or working for schools.

So a lot of offices and businesses work with Microsoft and that's why we included Microsoft on these computers, specifically. Another great partnership that we had was with Sprint. Through Sprint, we were able to get, also, four years of Internet. CETF, California Emergent Technology Fund helps fund the money to go ahead and get hotspots for each household that participated.

And the distribution happened onsite. So we would have a two-hour digital literacy training and then the household participants would go ahead, line up and pick up their devices. The distribution was very important, but also, because we were working with such large numbers is to have a lot of help.

So we were very lucky to have volunteers. Something that I would suggest, if you are going to be working with large numbers or just looking for volunteers in general, are to look up what organizations that have a volunteer program. So for us, we partnered with Best Buy. Best Buy actually has a branch that specifically works with helping their community out.

So they would send their technician, someone from Geek Squad, and they would come and it was good to have people who were familiar with technology, because again, we were working with a lot of first-time users. So any kind of questions they would have we weren't depending on just our team, we had another set of volunteers that could help answer them.

Tech support human-I-T provided six months of tech support. This included any kind of swap that they needed. So if the computer, the monitor, the keyboard, mice stopped working, they would be able to get a swap free of charge in the first six months. And if they needed any kind of software, again, we would be able to help them or switch it if needed.

Best practices and lessons, so a couple things that we learned along the program is that it's very important to have your roles and responsibilities. Accountability for everyone is very important as well as commitment to the mission in the program. I know it's sounds a little cliché, but this is a big part of a program being successful.

As many programs usually do, we hit a few roadblocks and along the way, we were able to overcome them, because everyone was very committed to making it work.

Lessons learned, interactive trainings, because we were working with large numbers, which I'm not sure that I mentioned at the beginning, but we roughly had about anywhere between 50 to 75 participants taking a class at a time and we weren't able to do a lot of interactive training as we wish we could've.

It was a projector. We gave them notes, we gave them a curriculum so they could take notes. But we did feel like we were providing a lot of tech support, because it wasn't enough training for them one on one. We do believe it's specifically for people who aren't used to technology. It's important that they get used to touching the mouse, opening a screen.

And we did that towards the end of this, but it is something that we do wish we would've done from the beginning and I think moving forward that's how we proceed with any kind of training. The next thing is low-cost Internet options. We had provided them free Internet for four years with Sprint, but some households wanted a little bit more speed.

They needed something else. Maybe this connection wasn't best in their area. So definitely being able to provide them a place where they can find resources to low-cost Internet. Specifically, now and maybe early 2016 low-cost Internet wasn't as popular as it is now. So now there's a lot of options.

So definitely giving them the tools so they can feel empowered to go ahead and search for low-cost Internet is very important and I think something that I would recommend. I know this is a webinar, but I'll define technology. And human-I-T was very lucky and we had a very unique situation where we were able to get funding and technology.

One thing that I would advise is just reaching out to your local businesses around the area, any kind of schools. It is -- it does help to go ahead and have technology that is almost similar. It just

simplifies a refurbishing process for anyone that you're working with and again, it'll make sure that you are able to -- if you're going to providing tech support, able to help them.

It's easier if it's one type of system or at least close or alike as well as when you're distributing, you're not going to have recipients wanting one device versus the other.

AFTRR, which is Alliance for Technology Refurbishing & Reuse is a committee, pretty much a group of people, whose mission is to support the refurbishing and reuse of nonprofit communities to provide low-cost or free technology to those in need and it is really a big network, it's nationwide.

Nonprofits, students, teachers can do this with refurbished devices and it's a very good way to find a place where you can go ahead and partner and get your devices refurbished if that's not something that you have on-hand or something that you need. I know Dave Sevick, who spoke earlier today, is part of the AFTRR alliance.

So Dave, maybe if you want to speak a little bit about your experience or any suggestions that you might have that would help.

Dave Sevick: Sure. Can you hear me okay?

Paulina Sanchez: Yes.

Dave Sevick: Yeah. So the Alliance for Technology Refurbishing & Reuse, as I mentioned earlier on my slides, came out of the National Cristina Foundation, about 85 organizations across the United States, easy to find if you go to their web page. There's a Google map with little red dots.

You can just put your mouse over the red dot and it'll give you the contact information to reach out to the recycler and nonprofit refurbisher in your area and they can give you all the rest of the information. We are the AFTRR member for the City of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania. So we get calls daily.

We just share best practices. We actually just had a meeting here in Westmoreland, Virginia over the last couple days. So I'll be glad to answer any questions at the end of the slideshow.

Paulina Sanchez: Thank you, Dave. And as you briefly mentioned, I have put the link here where you can go in, just type in your zip code and it will show you all AFTRR members near you that you can reach out if you're in search of a refurbisher to help you with your ConnectHome pilot. Thank you.

Deena Lehmann-Kim: Great. Thank you so much. Sorry. So we can take questions now. And Anna, if you don't mind, going over, again, how people can ask questions. That would be awesome. And thank you very much to our presenters.

Anna: Sure. If you would like to submit a question, you just hover -- go over to the chat box that's on the top right-hand of your window and you'll see an option for Q&A and you can use that chat box to type in any questions you have. So our first question is if we can email a copy of the presentation. And we can.

HUD will make the slide deck available probably and also make them available on the HUD Exchange, but if you'd like it before that, I'm sure we can coordinate with Deena and get you a copy of the slide deck.

Deena Lehmann-Kim: Absolutely.

Anna: So I don't have any other questions right now, but again, feel free to use the chat box to type in any questions that you might have for the presenters.

Deena Lehmann-Kim: So this is Deena. While other people are hopefully typing away some questions, I do have questions. Paulina, if you could talk a little bit about how you developed the partnerships with Sprint and how that worked.

Paulina Sanchez: Definitely. So actually, our partnership with Sprint came through the City of L.A. through our Cycle [inaudible] program, which is one of the first programs that I talked about. That's what they use in order to connect the recipients.

So when we -- when the City of L.A. became a partner through the ConnectHome pilot, they were able to bring certain connections that they had, such as Sprint.

I do know that in order to apply for the Sprint ConnectED, you do have to be some type of -- I'm going to say either have like a city collaborative that you're going to be working with low-income residents or households or be a nonprofit to apply. I'd be willing to look into it a little bit more how the city specifically applies for it and share any details that I have.

Deena Lehmann-Kim: That would be helpful. Thank you. And Catherine, maybe I can ask you how your partnership with the community college came to be.

Catherine Crago: Yes. Well, we're fortunate, because we had some connection with community college previously. The community college provides ESL classes to our residents and also supports folks who are taking a GED test.

Actually, I'm just thinking, when we first started, we just really reached out to folks who were in senior positions at a variety of organizations not knowing what would come of it.

You know, I knew there were computer labs that Austin Community College and -- that we had heard in the press that they were moving to a virtualized computer lab model where basically, there aren't desktops at each monitor where students can come and log in, but they're logging into a remote server.

And so I knew there might be some devices, but I had no idea that they were about to go through a major refresh.

So I think the first ask was really just would you have 20 to 30 minutes, not even an hour, for us to share a little bit about our program and what we're trying to do and we'd love to get your perspective on how we might be able to do these kinds of things cost effectively.

And it's really through those conversations in learning that this organization would normally be recycling those computers and they would have to pay to do that, that it works -- it's a win-win for everyone if we pick them up instead. And so I think that's been a strategy that's been effective is just finding that person who's doing a new initiative.

You could almost Google the name of a potential partner and initiative and see what press comes up. And so that person in the organization who has experience starting new things in that organization is probably a good person to sit down and brainstorm with.

Deena Lehmann-Kim: Mm-hmm. Those are really good pointers for everyone listening. You know, just look where -- you know, look around your community, think about large organizations that are nearby that might be transitioning their equipment. You know, usually organizations do it on a regular basis, maybe every three years or something like that.

So it doesn't hurt to think creatively and do as Catherine suggested, Google initiative in local organization or just reach out to -- look up the directory of staff at a large bank, maybe or a community college and see who the right person might be who could help you.

And as Catherine said, it's a win-win. It can be a win-win for you and the organization itself. So thank you, Catherine, for those great tips.

Catherine Crago: You bet.

Deena Lehmann-Kim: Anna, do we have any questions?

Anna: No. We haven't had any more questions come in.

Deena Lehmann-Kim: Okay. Do any of our speakers have parting tips that they -- or best practices or lessons learned that you'd like to share with us?

Catherine Crago: Well, I sort of have a thought and a question. It's interesting, as I think about Dave's presentation and Paulina's, we each have partnerships and we each had kind of a slide that talked about the relationship between these partners and I'm just kind of wondering that may seem daunting to some.

You know, do you have to get all your partners at once, does it just evolve? You know, how do you start?

Deena Lehmann-Kim: That's a really good question. Yeah. I imagine you're posing it to Dave and to --

Catherine Crago: Dave and Paulina. Yeah. I mean, because I have my own perspective on how it worked and part of my strategy was we're just going to go talk to folks and say --

You know, even if they say, I'm not in charge of partnerships, you're just a really interesting person or you're a really smart person and we just need 20 minutes to hear what your thoughts are about how to do this. But I wonder if the strategies were different, maybe sitting all the partners down together or other kinds of strategies.

Deena Lehmann-Kim: That's a really good point. Dave, would you like to take the first crack at answering it? Maybe he can't hear us. Dave?

Catherine Crago: He may be on mute.

Christina Payamps-Smith: I think we might have actually lost Dave. Yeah. Because all the presenters are on mute. Paulina, did you want to take that question?

Paulina Sanchez: Sure. So for us, it's just been over time, but it's definitely a lot of sometimes just going and really trying to see who will hear us out and say, this is what we're doing, this is what we would like to do with you and sometimes it's showing some kind of incentive really helps.

I know for, specifically, a partner that we just established with Swiss Markets [ph] here in Los Angeles and we said, we know that you are trying to promote a lot more healthy eating and the use of your website, we can go ahead and create a page where people can have the link to you and also, just have you present during our distributions that we have in order to just encourage and get people talking about [inaudible] and thinking about it.

So sometimes just finding a common ground of what they're looking for and how maybe we can help with some kind of incentive really helps. But definitely, just a lot of going almost door-to-door, this is what we're doing; I think this would be a great partnership.

And sometimes it doesn't work out, just timing isn't right with the person or the company, but at least they know who you are and you never know if a year, five months down the line something opens up where you're able to work together.

Deena Lehmann-Kim: Mm-hmm. And the beauty of this, to me, is that you can be as -- you know, the sky is the limit. You're as successful as you are creative and thinking outside the box of who you might be able to work with.

There's no set rules; right? You're the one setting the agenda, and setting the rules, and how you're going to proceed, and design your program, and who you're going to reach out to. So I think that's really exciting. And thank you very much, Paulina and Catherine for those extra tips that you shared with us.

And sorry that Dave had to, I guess -- or somehow dropped off. But it looks like we're close to the end of our hour, a long time together. But before we close, I just want to double check with Anna to see if there's any other questions that may have come in.

Anna: No. We don't have any new questions.

Deena Lehmann-Kim: Okay. So with that in mind, Catherine and Paulina, any parting thoughts? If not, we can close.

Paulina Sanchez: Well, good luck to everyone. I also am not sure this is something someone's looking for, but we do have our curriculum that can easily be edited to match the -- what you're trying to work with your participants. And so if anyone is interested in just taking a look at it, feel free to send me an email and I'll be happy to share it.

It's kind of nice to not have to start from scratch. [inaudible] still have the content needed, it's already there.

Catherine Crago: That's a great thought. Paulina, thank you for offering that and -- because I think we've benefited so much by folks around the country who are willing to share what they're done so that we don't have to duplicate their errors and we can kind of stand on their successes. And we have the toolkit about how to reimage computers with Linux and Rachel.

We have those and also, we could send you a master of a USB and a CD. You would have to make the copies of them so that you can reimage as many computers as you would like to, as many as you have USBs.

And also, if you'd like copies of our earned device agreements or a process flow, we'd be happy to share any of that as well. We're part of the open source community and grateful for everyone who's gone ahead of us.

Deena Lehmann-Kim: That's wonderful. You guys are just -- you know what, that's why I love this work, because everybody is so collaborative and willing to share. Thank you so much, Catherine and Paulina and I also want to thank Anna and Christina from Enterprise for organizing this webinar. And of course, to all of our participants, thank you for joining us today.

I know there were a few technical difficulties. So we will try to do better next time, and we will share the recording, and the PowerPoint presentation, and other materials that may come our way on this topic with everyone who is on our listserv. So thank you, again, and I hope everyone has a wonderful afternoon and we look forward to our next webinar.

So stay tuned for the announcement for that next webinar, which will be next month. Thank you so much and see you next time.

(END)