

2017-2018 ConnectHome Resident Engagement - Return on Investment, 11/27/18

Chloe Quiroga: Many of our resident councils because they attended our convening but also having low-cost internet tables and just physically being on site and getting to know the staff members as well as the residents, that has really been an amazing experience for me because it had us -- it opened up the door for some fantastic conversation which actually helped me develop some programming for particular sites because they specifically requested it. Wait --

Briana Alterman: We have a -- oops, sorry. We have another question. Rachel asks, who staffs your lab?

Chloe Quiroga: Oh, who staffs our computer lab? I actually staff the computer lab, but I do have a resident and volunteer who is very helpful as well in case I need to step out to a meeting or another -- something else. But most of the time, I'll sit here with my laptop, work remotely, and I'm more than happy to be interrupted as many times as needed if the residents need help with anything.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: And Alicia, can you talk about who staffed your Makerspace?

Alicia Springs: Sure. We -- I have four staff members and we all rotate. We are in the process of working on seeing if we can get a Vista that will be their sole role, that would be to manage the Makerspace, but the Makerspace is open to residents during office hours, so they can go in freely and we take turns overseeing what they're doing, or we have one of our community coaches, they are the ones that facilitate the actual workshops that we have and we try to have two per month. And then, like I said, outside of that time they can come in free flowing.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Great, thanks.

Briana Alterman: We have another question from Michael. How have you dealt with security risks, i.e. thefts of hours? Additionally, how do you insure a return for computers rented out at Parkway Place?

Chloe Quiroga: Any computer that is given to a resident is theirs to keep. And so the 230 computers they're the residents' and it's their property at that point once we relinquish rights and that they sign the computer agreement. With security risks, we had somebody, honestly, they actually got into the computer lab and they didn't take anything. So I think it's -- I work on site so I know many of the residents.

And so I had about 10 people come up to me that Monday morning saying, we saw somebody get into the computer lab and they protected the computer lab. So I think that everyone's just really respectful of the space, but we do have a security system as well, it just didn't deploy the police for whatever reason.

Alicia Springs: And this is Alicia. For our laptops and technology, when residents come in to use them, we actually have all of our devices locked in a charging station. And so when the resident comes in and asks to use it we exchange it for their I.D.

Briana Alterman: It looks like we have a question from Veronica Thomas, so I'm going to take her off of mute.

Veronica Thomas: Yes. I was typing it in, but I guess it wasn't going. I just wanted to know if Chloe, first of all thank you, the presentation's been awesome, if Chloe wouldn't mind sharing her email address, if that's possible.

Briana Alterman: Chloe's email is now in the chat box as is Alicia's.

Veronica Thomas: Thank you.

Briana Alterman: Are there any additional questions? Rachel asks are there any particular language groups that you are serving? I think this is meant for both speakers.

Alicia Springs: We primarily serve English and some Spanish speakers.

Chloe Quiroga: At the Housing Authority we have a majority English speakers. We do have a few Somalians families as well that commutes [ph] translation services if needed, but all of their children who come to the program speak fantastic English.

Briana Alterman: She also asks, how do you differentiate instructions at different literacy levels?

Chloe Quiroga: For me personally at the Housing Authority I have learned, especially through the Grow with Google digital skills platform, that's fantastic but it's not a one-size fits all. And if somebody comes into the computer lab they may need me to sit with them to help them fill out a job application because they may have some literacy issues. So just being there to help them through that process, that goes back to that one-on-one computer help and resume help that we provide at the Parkway Tech Center. It is a need and so that one-on-one help is really helpful for residents who do struggle with literacy.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: This is Dina. While we're waiting for additional questions I did want to share a model for staffing your computer lab that we've come across from a variety of sites, and that is a digital ambassador program where you can train residents to work in your computer lab and also, as the name would imply, be an ambassador for your digital inclusion program.

I think you probably know better than I, since you're working at the ground level, that when residents talk about a program it's one of the best kinds of advertising you can have. And so word of mouth is a very powerful advertising tool. So if you have a resident that you've trained who can work with other residents and spread the word about your program, I think that can be an effective model as well. Are there any other questions, Briana?

Briana Alterman: None have shown up. Oh, one more has. The next question is from Rachel and she asks if the community rooms or lobbies have Wi-Fi.

Alicia Springs: This is Alicia. At our Jobs Plus site we have Wi-Fi for residents and it's a separation from the internet for staff.

Chloe Quiroga: We also use a separate server for our computer lab.

Briana Alterman: We have a couple more questions. Jennifer asks are there any other platforms in addition to Grow with Google that you'd recommend for learning? Also, is it the computer reimaging information that Chloe will be emailing to us?

Chloe Quiroga: There's actually one website, it's in my favorites so I'll have to pull it up, and it has some fantastic printed material that's really helpful especially for those who like to have a printed page for one-on-one steps to do a variety of different tasks such as opening an email, a Facebook page, that's been something that's been really helpful for our senior sites as a lot of them want to get on Facebook to talk to their family.

And so I'll provide that link to the website as well, but I can't recall the name. And I can also provide the link to all the information for the computer refurbishing.

Briana Alterman: One more question, Veronica asks how long did it take you to get your program off the ground?

Chloe Quiroga: Louisville Metro Housing Authority, well we -- to get the program off the ground, I would say that it really took off once I started working on site as I was working at another location where I wasn't directly engaged with residents. But now that I'm working on site I not only see the direct need -- I've seen it with my own eyes, but there's also requests that come in and it's easier for me to provide programming. So I would say it probably took about six months to get everything organized and I would say that we're still reorganizing and troubleshooting as things move forward.

Briana Alterman: We have a question from Michael. He asks, does the necessity to provide proof of lack of internet as a precursor to getting a computer create any resentment from residents who already pay for internet access and computer?

Chloe Quiroga: To date I have not received any negative comments about other people receiving a computer for free because they can receive a computer themselves if they need one. As for internet access, we do not cover anybody's internet at the Housing Authority. We just promote the low-cost internet programs that are available in our city, and many of our residents just so happen to be eligible for these programs, but they are taking that bill on their own.

And for the precursor of having to need to get the internet in order to get a computer, that does frustrate some residents because they feel kind of a chicken and the egg situation where they feel they want the computer before they get the internet.

And with that being said, with the Google operating system, it's unlike a traditional computer in that the applications are not directly on the computer. Everything is cloud based and the only way that you can use a Google operating system computer is if you are connected to the internet, otherwise there's really not anything that you can do on there. And just explaining that to residents, I feel like it's very helpful.

And I actually have a letter that I send to residents who apply for a reimaged computer and who may not have internet service. I have a very kindly written letter that explains why we make the same [ph] requirement and just having that clarification and open dialogue with residents has been able to resolve the one resentment issue that I had with one resident.

Briana Alterman: We have a few more questions. I'm going to go in the order that they came in. The first question is from Jennifer. She asks, if either of you faced any challenges getting residents to become engaged with these programs? And if so, how did you overcome those challenges?

Alicia Springs: This is Alicia from Phoenix. Yes, we did face some challenge just with the whole concept of Makerspace, it's new. And so not a lot of people even had an idea of what it is. And so with our Jobs Plus program we hosted orientations for residents to come in and we gave them tours of the building and then showed them the things that were available and then that helped with the interest.

Chloe Quiroga: In Louisville, I have not struggled very much with getting residents engaged. If anything, I have residents asking me to do digital skills classes and if there's -- I'm like we have to wait until next month or maybe into the New Year. But I think the best way is just those low-cost internet tables.

And I actually would set up meetings with the resident councils just to talk to them and know that I was here to make the program work and we could work together in making the program fit the needs of the residents as best as we can. And so that has been really helpful through residents hearing from other people that they've taken a training or may have received a computer or that they have been at the tech center, that has really just made the program blow up, especially at the tech center we have so many people in here sometimes we don't have enough devices for everybody.

Briana Alterman: Great. We have a question from Rachel. She asks about Louisville. What is your position, Chloe? Are you part of the property management or resident services?

Chloe Quiroga: I actually was first on the Choice Neighborhood Initiative grant team and over the summer I transitioned to an administrative coordinator that is paid from a Ross Service Grant, so I work directly with the Jobs Plus, but I'm kind of my own little bubble department at the Housing Authority.

Briana Alterman: Great. We have a question from Vivian Crawford. She raised her hand so I'm going to unmute her.

Vivian Crawford: Okay. Hello everyone. And I want to say that this presentation has been wonderful, it's really helped to enlighten me even more about the ConnectHome Program. One of you mentioned about a letter that you send to the residents to explain either why they can or can't get a device. I had to step away from my desk just for a second and by the time I came back in I heard the tail end of that. So I just wondered if you would please include that letter as well with the other material that you're going to send just as a sample. Hello?

Chloe Quiroga: Yes, absolutely.

Vivian Crawford: Okay. All right. Thank you.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Are there other questions, Bri?

Briana Alterman: A question just came in. Michael asks, for the Makerspace and Park Place Tech Center, how did you choose where the space would be? We have eight major [inaudible] sites and I was wondering if you found it difficult to choose one in particular.

Alicia Springs: This is Alicia. So for the Makerspace it was written into our grant for Jobs Plus so when the Jobs Plus site was being remodeled it's just kind of like a conference room that we transitioned into Makerspace. So if you saw the picture from the presentation we put in the special lighting and then everything else is just equipment that we've purchased.

We did purchase everything on wheels so that if we need to rearrange anything it's always quick and easy to move. We have tables that adjust so that it can meet ADA standards as well as if we're working with younger kids or adults. If the classes that we have if they for some reason are too large for the capacity in the Makerspace we are able to wheel everything into our large conference room. So basically, it's just a room at our site where we've kind of created a space basically.

Chloe Quiroga: The Parkway Tech Center is actually, I'm in a residential building and, so, we have two apartments that we had a wall torn down and so it's like a really big apartment.

Briana Springs: Are there any more questions? If there are no more questions, then I would like to thank everyone for joining this call and for bearing with us through our technical difficulties. Thank you so much. I hope this was informative. And this webinar is now over.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Thank you.

(END)